

The Quarterly Property Tax Billing Schedule

The format of quarterly property tax billing divides property taxes into 4 billing periods spread out over a year. The dates that you will usually receive your bills are:

January 1st - April 1st - July 1st - October 1st.

The Massachusetts state fiscal year (and all Massachusetts cities and towns) starts July 1st and ends June 30th the following year. However, the actual tax rate for a city or town for the new fiscal year is generally not computed until around October or November. This means that the tax rate, and therefore the final tax bill values, cannot be computed until after the first, or possibly the second, tax bills are sent out. These first two quarterly tax bills are therefore estimated bills and are simply the same as the previous fiscal year's bills.

The July 1st and the October 1st Quarterly bills are called "Preliminary or Estimated Tax" bills and will be the same as the 4th Quarter of the previous fiscal year.

January 1st is the start of the 3rd Quarter billing period and it is the first actual tax bill with the new tax rate established by the new fiscal year budget. It also reflects all property valuations changes (increases or decreases) as dictated by the real estate sales that occurred in the previous calendar year. The first 30 days of this quarter is the **ONLY** time that the taxpayer may apply for a property valuation abatement. Forms are available in the Assessor's office and must be turned in on or before the 30 day deadline.

April 1st is the start of the 4th and last Quarter billing period of the fiscal year. The 4th quarter tax bill will be the same as the 3rd quarter (January) actual tax bill. Abatements may not be applied for after receiving this bill since the abatement application window is only after the 3rd quarter (January) bills go out.

All previous payments made on the "Preliminary Tax" bills sent out on the 1st and 2nd Quarters, are applied to your overall total tax and the 3rd and 4th Quarters are adjusted for the balance due.