



Dates:



July 30
IFB Commodities Conf.

August 7-17
Illinois State Fair
• 9th Local Officials Day
• 12th Ag Day

August 14-15
IL Rural Health Assn.
Annual Conference

Aug. 22–Sept. 1
DuQuoin State Fair
• 23rd Local Officials
Day

Property Tax Bills
Some counties mailed the bill in May for a partial payment in June—the remainder due in September. Others will mail bills in late summer for full payment in September.

November 4
General Election

Legislative commission reports on local government in Illinois

DuPage County takes action to consolidate some of its 400+

by Brenda Matherly

Efforts through Illinois' legislative process have sparked interest in local government. That interest is primarily focused on the large number of units of local government that we have in this state.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, as of July 2012, Illinois had close to 7,000 units of local government, the most of any state in the country.

While local governments provide necessary services to residents, a surplus of these units can lead to the duplication of services. To study this issue, the Local Government Consolidation Commis-

sion was created in 2011 through the passage of the Local Government Consolidation Commission Act, 20 ILCS 3987/5.

The Illinois legislature recognized a need to investigate the structure of local governments and to further study:

- Laws governing the organization, powers, jurisdiction, and functions of local governments.
- The inter-relationships of local governments to each other and to federal and state governments.

Through their research, the commission was asked to publish a report and make

(See Commission on page 4)

Did you know...

146

Just that many counties account for half of the 316 million people in the US. The rest are scattered across 2,998 counties.



Critical Care Needed For 9-1-1

Could New Law Provide Life Support?

by Brenda Matherly

A change in state law, recently approved by Gov. Pat Quinn, could give funding for 9-1-1 systems in rural Illinois a much need shot in the arm.

Over the last few years, 9-1-1 services have begun facing what some might call an emergency of their own. Funding levels for 9-1-1 services have been signifi-

cantly reduced causing some 9-1-1 systems to consider cutting back on skilled personnel as well as delaying valuable technology upgrades. These cuts would impact important emergency services that are critical to all Illinois residents, and especially vital to farmers and those living in rural areas.

Funding for 9-1-1 services comes primari-

(See 9-1-1 on page 5)

Your Property Tax Bill

Understanding the rates and where your dollars go

by Brenda Matherly

Tis the season, warm weather, long summer days and a trip to the mailbox that will have you walking back to the house with your tax bill in hand. One thing is clear on that bill... the amount due. But what else is included on the statement, and how is that amount determined?

All real property in Illinois is taxable unless specifically exempted by statute. The property taxes you and your neighbors pay contribute to the lion's share of the revenue needed to operate the local units of government that serve your county and your community.

Each taxing district goes through an annual budget process to determine how much money they will need to operate. This information is based largely on past experience and projections. An example of taxing districts that might serve you include, counties, townships, school districts, fire protection districts, library districts, etc... As

a matter of fact, Illinois ranks number one among all states as having the largest number of local units of government; 6,994 to be exact.

district's total EAV.

Once each district has calculated their tax rate, the county clerk combines those totals to create an

aggregate rate. That rate paid by you, the taxpayer, is in proportion to the value of real property you own.

These individual tax rates are generally located in the center portion of the tax bill listed next to their corresponding taxing district.

The total tax bill is calcu-

lated by multiplying the aggregate tax rate by your property's assessed value. An example of an aggregate rate of 7.986 is provided below:

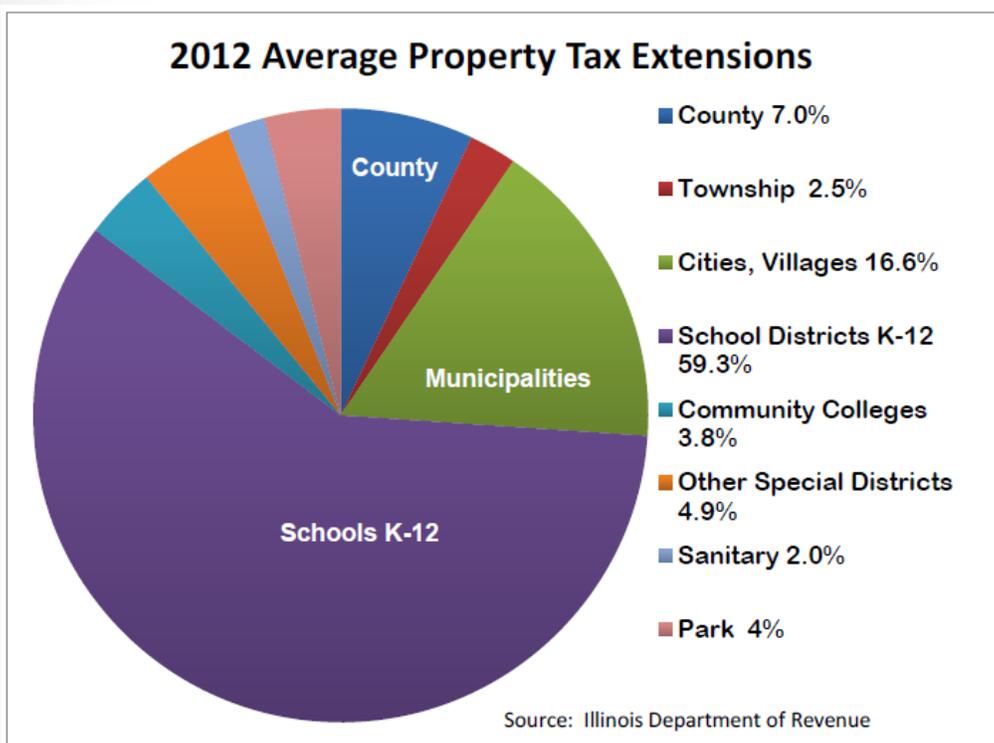
Example Tax Bill:

County	1.021
School District	4.468
Road District	1.490
Library District	0.219
Park District	0.788
TOTAL	7.986

Based on this example, a taxpayer with this tax bill whose property

(See *Understanding* on page 3)

2012 Average Property Tax Extensions



A large percentage of funding for these units of local government comes from your property tax dollars. The amount needed by each district is divided by the total Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) within the district's service area.

The term EAV refers to the total assessed value of all taxable property located within a district's boundaries (i.e. school district). Dividing the total EAV by the amount needed for each district determines the total tax rate for that district. The tax rate is stated in terms of a percentage of the

State of Illinois Economic Development Plan

Report identifies 10 regions of the state and specializations in each

Source: Based on Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity press release

On July 1, the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) presented its 2014 State of Illinois Economic Development Plan. DECO had traveled the state to listen to business owners, economic developers,

educators and government officials in order to gain input and design a plan that addresses the key issues and opportunities facing all of our communities.

The DCEO takeaway from these listening sessions is that "Illinois' resilient economy is well positioned to build on its strengths as

a major hub for international commerce. To reach its potential, the state must nurture the foundational elements of the economy, offer more support to business, and ensure that all of our residents benefit from accelerating economic growth."

The plan identifies seven key initiatives to achieve a goal of enabling "the state to continue to be a force in the global economy." Those initiatives include:

- Strengthen the state's ongoing business attraction, retention and support initiatives
- Promote economic development on a regional level
- Develop an increasingly competitive workforce
- Increase fairness and opportunity for distressed communities and the unemployed
- Make Illinois a top destination for entrepreneurs
- Implement a comprehensive statewide strategy to drive innovation
- Modernize and revitalize our infrastructure

For the entire report click:

http://www.illinois.gov/dceo/Documents/DCEOEcon-Plan_FULLPDF_vJuly1_2014.pdf

Understanding

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has an EAV of \$30,000 would have an amount due of \$2,395.

Your property's equalized assessed value is identified and labeled as such on your tax bill. This value equals 33 1/3% of the total value of the property. That equalized value is commonly located in the right-hand column of your tax bill. Included in that column may also be the township and/or county multipliers, and a list of property exemptions.

On your tax bill, you will also find the Property Index Number (PIN), each parcel of property in Illinois is assigned a unique PIN for the purpose of identification. This information is most often found in the top portion of the bill.

Along with the PIN, each property is given a tax code. This code represents the various taxing districts that levy taxes against your parcel. These taxing districts usually include the county, city, school

district, park district, library (just to name a few), in which the property is located. All properties with the same tax code have the same aggregate tax rate and are subject to the same taxing authorities.

Additional information on your bill

On your tax bill you will find a PIN and a tax code.

may include the name and address of your township collector, the name of the township where your property is located, a legal description of the property and perforated installment slips to include with your payment(s).

For additional information and definition of the terms used on your tax bill visit Illinois Department of Revenue's website at <http://www.revenue.state.il.us/localgovernment/PropertyTax/taxbill.htm>

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Commission

(Continued from page 1)
recommendations for legislation or constitutional amendments to:

- Permit effective management of local affairs,
- Encourage local policy decision making,
- Reduce the multiplicity of local governments,
- Eliminate overlapping and duplicating of unnecessary powers,
- Increase efficiency and economy in local governments, and
- Allow optional forms of local governments and increase their authority for cooperation among the levels of government.

The 90-page [report by the Local Government Consolidation Commission](#) advises that successful efforts to eliminate layers of government must be locally-driven and not mandated by the state. The report also suggests that in many cases, consolidation might not guarantee tax relief as much as governments sharing resources. The report was released in April.

A local example of government reorganization can be seen in DuPage County as they've begun work to consolidate some government responsibilities.

The consolidation effort in DuPage County began in 2012 with an audit performed by an independent consultant. The report found that, with DuPage County government having 24 independent agencies accounting for nearly \$300 million in public funds, some sort of consolidation was desirable. The initiative seeks to streamline county government through shared services, consolidation of taxing bodies where possible and the complete elimination of some government bodies if necessary.

Reports show that the initiative has saved taxpayers close to \$80 million in just a few years.

In August of 2013, Gov. Quinn signed into law legislation giving DuPage County the authority to eliminate up to 13, of the more than 400, local units of government, including fire protection, sanitary and mosquito abatement districts.

What about your County?

[LINK](#)

Highway funding policy debate

Remember to include local system maintenance in your discussions

by Kevin Rund

So much of the talk surrounding transportation funding lately has focused solely on federal and state programs. But local road jurisdictions are facing the same funding shortfalls.

In Illinois, the fortunes of local road funding is tightly linked to state-collected user fees, in particular, the motor fuel tax (MFT). And, since the state hasn't bothered to raise that tax since 1990, locals are feeling the pinch.

One important state program sets aside \$15 million each year to assist with township bridge building. That's helpful, but that program has been stuck at that same funding level for about 35 years, so it now provides only a pittance of the buying power it was originally intended to.

In a few weeks, *FarmWeek* will feature four discussion topics regarding Illinois Farm Bureau® policy issues. One of them will be focused on highway infrastructure funding. While state and federal funding programs will figure prominently in that discussion, don't forget to think about how we pay for our county and township roads.

Consider the user fee/property tax blend now in place, local effort (i.e.: tax rate), and any potential for other state assistance.

[LINK](#)

IFB® Policy Excerpts #116 – Local Government

We support the principle of strong local government and the assignment of responsibility for government services to that unit of general government which is closest to the people and can economically provide the service.

We will support legislation: Permitting consolidation of additional county functions between counties.

We support: The consolidation or combination of special taxing units or local government units and programs where such consolidation or combination is planned and approved by local initiative and referendum.

Local government's march to technology

Electronic access is inevitable, but getting there is a slow process for some

A recent check on the State's website that provides links to county government websites found fewer than half the counties were listed. <http://www.statelocalgov.net/state-il.cfm>. While not a certainty, it's a good indicator of how many counties host a website.

And on the sites that do exist, you'll find varying degrees of accessibility to information as basic as contact information, copies of ordinances or minutes of meetings—documents that are already produced, just not posted electronically.

What's holding back the inevitable march to electronic access for citizens? There are likely at least four major factors at work.

The first would be the will to get it done. It can be a tough slog to let go of the familiar and wade into new protocols, policies, coordination and learning curves. But if the will is there, they'll find a way to get it done—if only on a modest scale.

Funding is a definite hurdle. It takes some mullah to do things right. That's why we tend to see the more

elaborate websites done only by the larger, wealthier counties. It takes investment in people and technology to start, maintain, and secure a viable website.

Third, the laws regarding electronic recordkeeping, retention, and right to privacy have not kept pace with technology, creating uncertainty.

Finally, the technology itself keeps changing rapidly; you're always aiming at a moving target, making it tough to plan and begin.

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IIRA offers interactive website

Rural development guide outlines program basics

The Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA)—based at Western Illinois University—provides a searchable array of programs offering assistance in rural development.

The IIRA site points out that, "Finding the right program or agency to help with a specific local issue often is the key to success."

Titled the "Rural Development Resource Guide", the site brings together in one place "easy access to the main programs used by community leaders in rural areas."

Site users can search by program name, by category of programs, by organization, or by keyword.

Federal and state government agencies make up the preponderance of program providers, but non-governmental entities are listed, too, including Illinois Farm Bureau®.

If you're looking to find the right contact information for a given program, or you're just wanting to peruse the availability of offerings, this is a good site on which to find some basic information on rural development programs.

You can check it out at:

<http://www.iira.org/data/resourceguide/>

LINK

9-1-1

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hance 9-1-1 services, allowing callers to send texts, video and pictures, among other features.

In addition to redistributing the wireless 9-1-1 fee, this new law also calls for a year-long study on the funding and operations of 9-1-1 systems across that state. Results from this study could lead to more changes in how we fund the critical functions of our 9-1-1 systems in both rural and urban areas.

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