

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ASSESSORS

The assessor's office is the primary generator of Wellesley's revenue with approximately 75% of the town's budget funded by property taxes and automobile excise. The office functions as part of the town government system but must comply with Massachusetts General Laws and is regulated by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR). The dependence on property taxes and the vital *new growth* component of the tax levy reinforces the importance of the assessors' office and the need for administrating Massachusetts's property tax laws effectively and equitably to produce accurate, fair assessment of all taxably property.

Prior to mailing actual tax bills for fiscal year 2009, the department was certified by the DOR. In order to meet the standards established by the DOR we collect, record and analyze a great deal of information about each property for statistical and comparative analysis. A necessary component is an extensive assessment-sale ratio study. In addition to testing assessment levels, it is used to evaluate the major coefficients used in our valuation models. Ratios were stratified by coefficients to assure horizontal and vertical equity standards amongst all properties.

The Board of Selectmen holds an annual tax classification hearing after the assessors receive preliminary certification from the DOR and prior to final certification. The assessors provide data and information for tax classification hearing. Public input is sought by the selectmen prior to their decision to continue with a single tax rate for all properties or to tax different classes of properties at different rates. The vote *does not* increase the town's tax levy but merely shifts the tax burden from one group of taxpayers to another.

Total assessed values for each major class of properties, the number of parcels, and their share of the Tax Levy are shown below:

Class	Parcel Count	Valuation	Percentage of Levy
Residential	8,178	\$8,226,771,000	87.33%
Commercial	236	1,103,525,000	11.71
Personal Property	979	90,616,000	.96
TOTAL	9,344	\$9,420,912,000	100.00%

The tax rate for fiscal year 2009 was \$9.47/1,000 of valuation. The levy limit was \$89,216,916 and the Town levied \$89,216,036. The levy included payments towards four exclusions totaling \$6,833,306 and new growth of \$1,697,001. There were 205 real and personal property tax abatement applications for the fiscal year and 88 were granted some adjustment in their assessed value and corresponding abatement.

The total personal exemptions for fiscal year 2009 were:

Exemption Type	Count	Total Tax Amount
Clause 22 – Veterans	102	\$65,644
Clause 37 – Blind	20	\$10,000
Clause 41A – Deferral	49	\$314,049
Clause 41C – Elderly	49	\$36,750
Community Preservation Exemption	78	\$3,869
Senior Work Program	24	\$15,254

Taxpayers experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to consult with the assessors' office to determine eligibility for deferrals and exemptions as options to allow them to remain in their homes.

The total number of Motor Vehicle Excise Bills issued during fiscal 2009 was, 22,678 that generated \$3,727,575 in tax receivables.

Office Staff:

Donna McCabe, AAS	Chief Assessor
Lauren O'Sullivan	Assistant Administrator
Tara Damiano	Assessor Technician
Louise Burns	Secretary
Judy Keefe	Assistant Secretary

Respectfully submitted,
Board of Assessors
L. Deborah Carpenter, Chair
Stephen D. Mahoney
David Livingston