

San Juan County property owners will receive their tax bills by the end of this week according to San Juan County Treasurer Jan Sears.

County Assessor Charles Zalmanek says most property values have dropped due to the continued economic recession; however for many property owners, a reduced valuation will not translate into a lower tax bill.

Levy rates are determined by dividing the authorized levy of each taxing district by the total taxable assessed value of the district. A taxing district is generally authorized to increase its levy by 1% each year, so when property values decrease, levy rates increase to fulfill the levy amount.

Property owners receiving lower tax bills will be those whose property values decreased by a greater percentage than the percentage of increase in the consolidated levy rate for their property. The consolidated levy rate is different for each property and is the total of the levy rates that apply to the property. These consolidated levy rates are posted about half-way down the [Assessor's web page](#).

Most taxpayers will notice a significant difference in the bottom line of their tax statements this year due, in part, to the implementation of annual countywide property revaluations. Property was previously re-evaluated every three or four years with one-third or one-fourth appraised each year.

The largest drop in assessed values occurred on Orcas Island. Orcas was last appraised in 2008, when the County's real estate market was at its peak.

Total countywide property taxes are \$2,114,341 or 4.7% lower than in 2012.

The Assessor has a posted [web page](#) for property owners to compare their 2012 property tax to their estimated 2013 tax. The [web page calculator](#)

does not include special assessments, such as stormwater, fire patrol, noxious weeds and conservation).

Also posted are [charts](#) showing the levy and the change for each district, and other tax statistics.

Information about paying property taxes, the first half is due April 30, is posted on the county [Treasurer's web page](#)