
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Small Business and Revenue

PROPERTY OWNERS RETAIN RIGHT TO APPEAL 2009 ASSESSMENTS

VICTORIA – On Nov. 1, the provincial government announced it will maintain assessed property values for the 2009 assessment roll at the July 1, 2007 valuation date (2008 assessment roll) to give property owners more certainty in response to the downturn in the real estate market.

New construction that takes place in 2008 will be assessed at a value as if it existed July 1, 2007.

As in previous years, every property owner in British Columbia can expect to receive an assessment notice by mail in early January. After receiving a notice, owners are encouraged to review it and contact BC Assessment if they have questions or concerns.

The right to appeal is unchanged, and will continue to be available to any property owners who believe their assessments are too high, even at the July 1, 2007 level.

The assessment notice provides property owners with information on how to file a formal notice of complaint to be heard by a Property Assessment Review Panel, the first level of appeal, if they disagree with their property assessment (based on a valuation date of July 1, 2007). The property owner must file a formal notice of complaint in writing by Jan. 31, 2009 if they disagree with their property assessment.

More than 70 panels across the province, each consisting of three community members appointed by the Minister of Small Business and Revenue, hear property assessment complaints between Feb. 1 and March 15. These panels are free-of-charge and provide an informal process for a fair and impartial hearing.

If a property owner disagrees with the decision of the Property Assessment Review Panel, they have the opportunity to proceed to the second level of appeal, the Property Assessment Appeal Board.

Taxing authorities in B.C. (e.g. provincial government, municipalities and regional districts) are responsible for setting property tax rates based on their budget requirements. These budget decisions will take place in the new year. The Ministry of Small Business and Revenue, Ministry of Community Development and BC Assessment are working closely with local governments to address specific questions related to the freeze.

More information about the 2009 property assessment freeze, including frequently asked questions, can be found online at the Ministry of Small Business and Revenue website: www.gov.bc.ca/sbr or BC Assessment website: www.bcassessment.ca. More information about the Property Assessment Review Panel process can be found at www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/parp.

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