

## UPTON COUNTY APPRAISAL DISTRICT NEWS

As everyone knows the legislatures met this year therefore, lots of changes for the appraisal district and our taxpayers. We just went to a Legislative Update in Plano and received education on some bills that we wanted you as our taxpayers to be aware of.

HB 1597 deals with quarterly property tax installment payments for qualified seniors, disabled citizens, disabled veterans and unmarried spouse of disabled veterans. The quarterly installments pertain only to the aforementioned. If you qualify you must pay 1/4<sup>th</sup> of the total tax due before February 1<sup>st</sup>, the first installment is due by April 1<sup>st</sup>, second installment before June 1<sup>st</sup> and the third and last installment before August 1<sup>st</sup>, when paying in quarterly installments as long as you pay on time you pay NO penalty and interest. HB 1597 extended your window of opportunity from February 1<sup>st</sup> to March 1<sup>st</sup>, for your first payment, however, unlike a timely first payment, a qualified property owner who makes a payment after the delinquency date but before March 1<sup>st</sup> will now be assessed a penalty of six percent and one percent interest as determined by Sec. 33.01 © of the Texas Tax Code. The bill only extended the window during which the first one-quarter payment can be made.

HB 1597 also deals with contracts for the payment of homestead taxes (where you live, your residence). You may enter into a contract to pay your homestead taxes in 12 months to 36 months, but it must be in equal amounts. Example you cannot set up a contract for a few months for a token payment because you will be able to pay them off when you get your IRS refund, you have to set it up in equal installments and make those installments on time until you get your refund and at that time if you want to pay off what is left you may do so. If you have had a contract on your homestead within the last two (2) years you may not enter into another contract. When you miss a payment it will be defaulted and you cannot enter into another contract on your homestead for 2 years, in other words you will have to make your payments and on time. The amount of taxes you owe when you enter into the contract will be what it is at that time, that is what it will be set for but from that time forward, as long as you are paying on time, you will accrue interest only, there will be no penalty added during that time, once again as long as you are paying on time. If you default then the penalty and interest will go back to what it would have been had you not been on contract.

The above bills will go into effect September 1, 2013. These will be law and there will be no exceptions.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to call our office 432-652-3221 or come by 700 East 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, McCamey, Texas.

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