

News from Avon Township

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Now that income Tax Day is a few hours behind us, let's chat about the other major tax we pay – property taxes. As you likely know, these taxes are based on the estimated market value of your property.

To estimate the market value of a property, the Stearns County Assessor's Office examines an assortment of data including the sale prices of comparable properties. It's important that the estimated market value is accurate otherwise you will be paying more, or less, than your fair share.

One way the Assessor's Office measures the accuracy of their property valuations is to calculate an assessment sales ratio (actually a percentage). This is done by dividing the estimated market value of properties that were sold in the past year by their actual sale prices; then multiply by 100.

For example, if a property were valued at \$100,000 but sold for \$90,000, the assessment sales ratio would be 111 ($=100,000 / 90,000 \times 100$). Or, if the estimated market value was \$90,000 but the property sold for \$100,000 then the ratio is 90. In the first case, the property was overvalued because it sold for less than estimated. In the second case, the property was undervalued because it sold for more. By law, assessment sales ratios must be between 90 – 105.

Even though the Assessor's Office strives hard to ensure estimated market values are accurate, sometimes it might be too high or low. If you think that the estimated market value for your property is incorrect, you have the right to challenge it. To do so, you should attend your local Board of Appeals and Equalization meeting. These meetings, which are held annually, provide an opportunity for residents to appeal the valuation made of their property. The Avon Township Board of Appeals and Equalization meets next Monday, April 23, at 7 PM in the Town Hall. Although you are welcome to just show up, it is best to get on the agenda by contacting the Assessor's office.

On a different subject, this coming Saturday, April 21, a bicycle race will be held in the City and Town. Racers will ride a loop that runs from Avon down Co Rd 54 to Tower Road to 360th to Co Rd 9 and then back to Avon. Motorists are encouraged to be particularly cautious.

I love bicycle riding and watching bike races. However, not everyone shares my enthusiasm for this race. In the past there have been some problems. The riders have complained of rude motorists and residents, while residents have complained about rude bicycle riders and race organizers. We hope that this year, everyone has a safe and fun day. If you have any comments about the race, contact me. I'll see you at the race.