

TOP TEN TREASURER'S OFFICE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. When are taxes due?

Taxes are collected in two installments in Portage County, payable January 31st and July 31st. Many taxpayers pay their bill in full by December 31st, so they can claim this payment on their income taxes for that year.

The City of Stevens Point has opted to collect taxes in three installments: January 31st, April 30th and July 31st.

2. Is there a grace period?

Yes, a few years ago legislation was passed that implemented a five business day grace period for each due date.

3. When do my taxes become delinquent?

Due to the grace period, they become delinquent on the sixth business day after they were due. The entire bill becomes due if the due date for an installment date is missed. Interest begins accruing at 1% per month on the unpaid balance, beginning the month after the due date. For instance if a first installment is missed, February 6th after the grace period, one percent interest is added to the bill. In March another percent interest is added. Interest keeps accruing until the bill is either paid in full or foreclosed on through the Tax Deed process.

4. How long can my taxes remain delinquent before the County forecloses on my parcel?

A lien is placed on your parcel September 1st of the year it was due. You then have two years before the County will foreclose using the tax deed process.

5. Do we have payment plans available?

There are many taxpayers who are unable to pay their bill in full when it is due. We accept payments of any amount weekly or monthly. We help them figure out an amount they can handle, that will be enough to get them caught up in time to avoid the foreclosure timeline.

6. Do we accept credit cards? Why is there a fee to use a credit card?

We do accept all credit cards for payment of taxes. There is a 2.39% fee charged by our vendor, Point & Pay. This is the lowest fee available. We are not able to absorb this fee into our budget, so it must be paid by the taxpayer if they opt to use a credit card. The fee is then kept by Point and Pay, which enables us to use their services.

7. Do we send out reminders or bills for the second installment?

We send out one tax bill each year, which has two installment stubs. It is up to the taxpayer to remember to pay in July. I do advertise in the newspapers and on my website to remind the public of the due dates. I send out reminders to taxpayers who forget to pay their first or second installment, as a courtesy. I also send out reminder letters for delinquent tax bills throughout the year.

8. Where do we pay our taxes?

The Portage County Treasurer collects for 22 of the 27 municipalities. There are 9 area banks that collect taxes for the Portage County Treasurer. For the 5 municipalities that collect their own taxes, you must either pay at their municipal offices or mail your payment to them. For a detailed list of this information please visit my website at www.co.portage.wi.us.

9. Are there credits available to decrease a property tax bill?

Yes: Lottery and Gaming Credit (must apply for this credit at the County Treasurer's Office)

First Dollar Credit (automatically applied to tax bill by the County Treasurer)

School Levy Tax Credit (automatically applied to tax bill by the County Treasurer)

10. What is the Lottery and Gaming Credit and how do I apply for this credit?

This is a credit available to home owners in Wisconsin.

It is applied to the 1st installment of taxes due on the parcel number of your primary residence

You may only receive one Lottery Credit each year.

Currently an average Lottery Credit is around \$80.00

Funds are available from revenues generated by the Wisconsin lottery, pari-mutuel on-track betting and bingo during the year.

The amount of the credit is based on available funds and an estimated number of properties that will qualify for the credit.

You must apply for this credit, by signing a form at the County Treasurer's Office. This will certify that you receive the credit for five years.