

PRESS RELEASE

Submitted by Kathy Wagner, RMA
Jefferson County Appraiser
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Real Estate Valuation Notices To Be Mailed Soon

The County Appraiser is gearing up to send out about 14,500 pieces of mail. Jefferson County Appraiser, Kathy Wagner, stated that the 2006 valuation notices for all real estate properties in the County would be mailed out on February 28th.

Value information:

Wagner stated that studies of the residential real estate market values for 2006 indicated an overall inflationary increase of 4% to 5% countywide. Values on specific areas and neighborhoods may not follow this general trend because of changes in the property, correction of descriptive information or adjustment of values based on sales of similar properties. Several neighborhoods will see increases substantially greater than the typical.

Valuation increases are fueled by the market sales of property, which has occurred in Jefferson County and the Appraiser's Office has seen a 5.6% increase in the average countywide sale price. The average sale price has risen to \$112,130 in 2005 from \$106,210 in 2004. Wagner did state that it is important to note the difference in sales markets in various parts of the county. In addition, construction costs have risen, which does have an affect on the market as well.

For Jefferson County commercial properties, the property valuation increases are typically between 6 to 10 percent. This is also due to rising construction costs as well as sales being much higher than the county's appraised values.

Vacant land in portions of the central and southern parts of the county experienced moderate to large increases in land values. Percent of increases vary depending on the sales within the specific neighborhoods. Several towns and subdivisions will see no increase to only moderate increases in their land value, with the largest increases in the rural area. She added that valuations for properties used for agricultural purposes are based on an eight-year income average and are set by the Property Valuation Division of the State Department of Revenue. The 2006-year values produced by the Property Valuation Division indicate an approximate 2%-5% decrease in grassland values and an approximate 5% decrease in cropland values.

Appeal process:

An explanation of the appeal process will be located on the reverse side of the notices. For those who wish to appeal their properties' 2006 appraised value, the appeal deadline is thirty days after the mailing date.

A property owner can initiate an appeal by calling into the office or simply filling out the bottom portion of the valuation notice and returning it to the Appraiser's Office by mail or fax.

Once an appeal is initiated, the Jefferson County Appraiser's Office will schedule an informal meeting to discuss the property's value. It is important to bring in some kind of documentation to support the appeal. Documentation can include such things as a recent fee appraisal, pictures of a condition not seen from the exterior of the property, comparable properties that have sold that the taxpayer feels more closely represents the value of the property, etc.

Due to state law, once property owners initiate the appeals process, it is very important that they follow through on that process; as a taxpayer will not be able to initiate another appeal when they pay their taxes.

For taxpayers who are dissatisfied with the decision at the county level after they receive their result letter from the informal meeting, the next step is typically the Small Claims Division of the State Board of Tax Appeals if it is a residential property.

Brochures concerning the appeals process will be available in the Appraiser's Office located in the basement of the Jefferson County courthouse.

Appraisal data on the web:

Available to the public on the Jefferson County Appraiser's web page are the most frequently requested appraisal and tax data. This information can be found on-line at www.jfcountyks.com/appraiser.

If you do not have internet access, information can also be made available to you at the Appraiser's Office located in the basement of the Courthouse at 300 W. Jefferson St. in Oskaloosa or you can call and request information at (785) 863-2552 or toll free at 1-877-278-4118.