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## *Greetings Seasonal Property Owners:*

Happy Thanksgiving to all MSRPO members. We hope that you have a lovely weekend with family and or friends. We all have much to be thankful for.

The challenge this year will be to try to forget the recent 2009 property tax proposals most of us received in the mail last week. My statement had an increase in Estimated Market Value as well as an increase in Taxable Market Value due to the phase-out of LMV. My property tax jumped 24.8 percent.

It is outrageous in a down real estate market for assessors to be still raising market value estimates. But with a Levy Limit imposed from last session, local governments are scrambling to raise revenue any way they can.

We can and should appeal these increases at the local board of appeals hearings. Because of the work that MSRPO did last session, it is easier than ever to get the information you need to win an appeal. On your proposed tax statement it should tell you not only when and where the appeals meeting will be held, but also where you can find the information used to establish your value. Assessors are required to base assessed value on recent sales prices of similar property's in your area.

The MSRPO web site has guidelines to help you win your appeal. Browse the **Frequently Asked Questions** area to learn more about how assessors arrive at your value, and how property taxes are levied. [Here](#) is a link.

On the **Useful Links** section of the MSRPO Web Page is [Minnesota Department of Revenue's guide to appealing your property's classification](#). This page will give you detailed information on how to make an appeal and win.

Even if you lose your appeal, it is worthwhile to take the time. Assessors often claim that assessments are in line because of the few taxpayers that appeal. And remember, in order to appeal you must go through the entire system: First appeal at the local level, where you will most likely lose. Then you must appeal at the County level, where you are probably headed for frustration. At the state level, you stand a very good chance of winning, if you can point to specific reasons why your assessment should be lowered, like a sale of a comparable property, or the fact that your property differs substantially from the comparable property upon which your assessment is based.

But if you make a good case, you can often get justice even at the local level. MSRPO Board member Dale Carlson won an appeal last year, and we did hear from many members who were able to get their values adjusted downwards, usually over some blatant error on the part of the assessor, like listing an extra bathroom, or having the square foot of your cabin wrong, and getting the size of your shoreline wrong.

Hope you are all safe and happy this Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,



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