



TOWN OF SUNAPEE

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Frequently Asked Questions

- *What is the 2015 tax rate?* **\$15.01 per thousand of valuation**
- *What is the 2015 assessment ratio?* **96.5 %**
- *When does the tax year begin?* **The tax year runs from April 1st to March 31st.**
- *When are property taxes due?* **The Town of Sunapee bills for property taxes semi-annually. Bills are due July 1st and December 1st of each year.**
- *What types of tax credits and exemptions are available in the Town of Sunapee, and what are the qualifications?* **Please refer to our exemptions and credits link on the Assessing page.**
- *How do I better understand my assessment?* **Take the following steps: 1) Go to the Online Database and obtain your property card; 2) Review the card and discuss any questions or errors with the Assessors; 3) Determine your equalized assessment (see below); 4) Estimate the property's maker value and 5) Compare the value estimate with the equalized assessment.**

Use the following equation to determine your equalized value:

Equalized Assessment - \$ Assessment ÷ Applicable Equalized Ratio

Example: Assessment = \$120,000
 Equalized Ratio = 96.5%
 \$120,000 ÷ 96.5% = \$124,352

- *What if I don't agree with my assessment?* **The assessors are in the office on Monday and Tuesdays and welcome your phone call, email or visit to discuss your concerns. If you would like to meet with the assessors, we ask that you schedule an appointment with one of the assessors. During this informal session you can learn how your assessment was made, what factors were considered, and what type of records we have on your property.**
- *What if, after this informal meeting, I still disagree with the assessment?* **If any property owner believes their assessment is incorrect and wishes to apply for an abatement, they shall first appeal to the local assessing officials in writing, within 90 days of the notice of tax bill (RSA 76:16) or by March 1, 2016, whichever occurs first. The assessing office has the necessary form which must be completed in full. It is also available on our website (www.town.sunapee.nh.us) under Departments/Assessing/Forms/Municipal Abatements.**
- *When is the deadline for filing a tax abatement for 2016?* **Wednesday, March 1, 2017**

- *What if I have missed the filing deadline for abatement?* **Legally, you are not entitled to request an abatement for the prior year if you miss the March 1st deadline. However, you may request to review your property assessment with the assessor.**
- *Do I need an appraisal for my abatement request?* **Not necessarily, however, it can be helpful.**
- *Must I pay my taxes while my abatement request is pending?* **Yes. Filing an abatement does not relieve the taxpayer's obligation to pay the taxes owed. The municipality has the right to charge you with interest on unpaid taxes (even in an abatement is granted), to place a lien on your property, and take other collection steps while your application and appeal are pending. If an abatement is granted, the abated taxes will be refunded to you with 6⁰% interest.**
- *What if, after the abatement has been granted or denied by the local assessor, I still disagree with the assessment?* **You have a choice. You may either appeal to the NH Board of Tax and Land Appeals OR appeal to the Sullivan County Superior Court. In either case, your appeal must be filed by September 1, 2017.**
- *How will my taxes change as a result of the new assessment?* **Although the value of your property affects your share of taxes, the actual amount you pay is determined by the budget needs of the schools, municipality, county, water & sewer district, etc. All of these taxing units decide what services they will provide in the coming year and how much money they will need to provide these services. These items are then presented to the Board of Selectmen and the School Board for approval or disapproval. Once the decision to approve the budget is made, a tax rate is set by the state that will generate the needed dollars. Your property taxes are then determined by taking your assessment, dividing by 1000, and multiplying by the tax rate.**

Example: Assessed Value \$250,000 divided by 1000 = 250 multiplied by Tax Rate \$15.01 = \$3752.50 annual taxes

- *When was Sunapee last reassessed?* **The Town of Sunapee underwent a full in-house cyclical valuation which began April 1, 2015. The resulting values were effective as of April 1, 2015 and were the basis for the tax bills which were mailed in October 2015.**
- *When will the update of values begin?* **The cyclical revaluation will begin again in April 2015.**
- *What is a cyclical revaluation and why is it necessary?* **A cyclical revaluation is an update of all assessments in the municipality conducted under the direction of the assessor. The assessor is a state-certified individual whose duties are to discover, list and value all taxable real property in the municipality, in a uniform and equitable manner. The State of New Hampshire recommends that all property in a municipality be assessed within 10 percent of market value. Further, the NH Constitution requires that each municipality takes value anew every five years. A cyclical revaluation is the most equitable way to accomplish this.**
- *Is it necessary that you view the inside of my property?* **To make a proper assessment on a building, it is desirable that an inspector see the inside as well as the outside of your property. The law requires that property be valued from an actual view, or the best information available. We do not always have current data on the physical characteristics of each property in Sunapee. If we are unable to enter your property, we will estimate your assessment based on the data that is available and sales of properties similar to yours.**

- *What if I refuse to allow assessment personnel in my property?* **To ensure an accurate assessment, it is to your advantage to allow the assessor inside your property when an inspection is requested. By denying your inspection, your assessment will be estimated based on the data that is available yet the burden of proof still rests with you before the Board of Tax and Land Appeals or Superior Court.**
- *Will all property values change?* **Most likely, yes. However, not all property values will change at the same rate. Market value will have decreased more for some neighborhoods and property types than for others. Some neighborhoods and property types may have increased in value and others may have remained the same. One purpose of a cyclical revaluation is to make sure that the assessed values reflect the changes that have occurred in property values.**
- *When will the update of values begin?* **The cyclical revaluation will be again in April 2020.**
- *Will I be notified if there is a change in my assessment?* **The Assessing Department prides itself on its efforts to communicate with taxpayers. Normally, letters are mailed monthly to property owners whose values have changed, along with a copy of the updated record card. We recommend that you review your record card regularly to ensure data accuracy**
- *What is the Cyclical Inspection Project?* **The purpose of this program is to ensure that the Assessing Department has up-to-date information as it relates to physical improvements, inventory, and condition of all residential property in the town of Sunapee. Correct inventory and measurements are extremely important in the assessing process and result in data accuracy and equity. Both assessors will be out and about collecting the data for this project. The scope of the project is to visit 1/5th of improved parcels per calendar year, the ultimate goal being fair and equal assessments for all.**