

Property Tax Assessment Grievance Hearing May 12

Tompkins County Assessment Grievances Scheduled

Tax assessments for Tompkins County homes increased by about 5 percent to 15 percent in several towns, but local hearings to contest the appraisals start May 7.

Tompkins grievance dates

All hearings scheduled from 3 to 6 p.m. People will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

- **Newfield:** May 12, Newfield Town Hall, 166 Main Street

For property owners who think their appraisal is wrong, the Tompkins County Department of Assessment has scheduled walk-in grievance hearings throughout May, according to department Director Jay Franklin.

Grievance tips

To win a grievance, residents need to show that a tax assessment is wrong, according to Franklin.

It's good to bring proof of a bank appraisal or pictures of the house into the hearings, but arguments about too-high property taxes or complaining about a large jump in the assessment won't win a grievance, Franklin added.

Double-checking the county's inventory of a home's bathrooms, bedrooms and square footage is a good starting point for the grievance, he said.

"If that inventory is incorrect, then the assessment is probably incorrect as well," Franklin said.

Another important part of assessment is the property's condition, according to Franklin. Property owners aren't required to allow tax assessors into the home, and without that, the county has to make assumptions about a home's condition.

"Obviously, if the foundation is cracking or there is a water leak, that's something we might not know about," Franklin said.

Grievance filing

The Tompkins County Department of Assessment is accepting property assessment grievances until 8 p.m. May 26. Property owners can file grievances online at tompkinscountyny.gov/assessment/grievance.

- The form also can be obtained via mail by calling (607) 274-5517 or visiting the assessment department's office from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 128 E. Buffalo St.
- The assessments will be finalized on July 1.