

SUMTER COUNTY, GEORGIA



SPRING 2017

Tag & Tax News

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The Tax Commissioner

A Publication of the Sumter County Tax Commissioner's Office

Wilkie Smith, Tax Commissioner

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2017 Mobile Home Tax Bills

Mailed: January, 2017 ♦ Due: April 1, 2017

Owners of pre-billed mobile homes should have received your 2017 Sumter County Mobile Home Tax Bills. All bills were mailed in January, 2017, to the address of record. This tax bill serves as your *Notice of Assessment & Appraised Value*. You have the right to appeal the values to the Board of Tax Assessors. An appeal must be filed no later than March 17, 2017.

If you are the owner of the mobile home on January 1 of the tax year, you are mailed the bill and are responsible for all the taxes. All mobile homes are required to have a Georgia Certificate of Title.

The 2017 Mobile Home Tax Bills are due on or before April 1, 2017. Interest accrues for each month the bill remains past due at a rate set by State Statute. The rate is currently 6.75% annual (.5625% per month). A 5% penalty is assessed each 120 days the taxes remain unpaid. The maximum penalty is 20% on each tax year.

The 2017 Mobile Home Tax Bills also contain the amount of back taxes due, if any. If your tax bill indicates back taxes, call the Tax Commissioner to discuss these delinquent taxes. Delinquent tax years remaining unpaid may make a mobile home eligible for public auction at a Tax Sale.

If you have not received your mobile home tax bill, please contact the Tax Commissioner's Office. Not receiving tax bills or notices does not relieve a taxpayer's responsibility for payment of the taxes. If you should have any questions, please call the Sumter County Tax Commissioner. We will be happy to help you.

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS — APRIL 1, 2017

Privacy of Motor Vehicle Information

Your Motor Vehicle registration information is a private record. The Driver's Privacy Protection Act states motor vehicle records are exempt from open records request. The disclosure of personal information, such as ID numbers, name, address, & telephone information is prohibited. Tags, lien information, previous owners, and such should not be disclosed.

That is the reason that you are asked to show your driver's license when you visit the Tag Office. We must be able to identify you as the vehicle's registered owner or connect you to the owner in some way.

If you are sending someone to conduct tag business on your behalf, it is suggested you call ahead to the Tag/Tax Office.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Personal property refers to the Ad Valorem tax on furniture, fixtures, equipment, inventory, and supplies used in the operation of a business. Boats, motors and aircraft are considered personal property. Ownership of personal property is established January 1 of each year. A property tax return must be filed with the Tax Assessor annually, prior to April 1.

You are required to send in a tax return each year you are in business. If a tax return is not filed, state established values are assessed on the property, and tax payment is due.

After you receive your personal property assessment notice from the Tax Assessor's Office, there is a period of 45 days in which you have the right to appeal.

COUNTY, SCHOOL, & CITY TAXES

The State of Georgia no longer collects any state taxes on property tax bills. The Georgia General Assembly passed the Property Tax Reform Bill which completely eliminated this state tax.

County taxes are levied on all properties in Sumter County by the Board of Commissioners to fund most county operations and services. The BOC usually sets the millage rate at the July Board meeting.

The local Board of Education is the governing board that sets the school millage rate independent of the Board of Commissioners. The Tax Commissioner bills and collects taxes on behalf of the County school system. School taxes collected by the Tax Commissioner are distributed bi-monthly to the Sumter County Board of Education.

The Tax Commissioner does not collect any city real property taxes. Each city collects their own taxes. For information on taxes for the cities of Americus, Plains, or Leslie, contact the particular city's tax department.

OTHER ASSESSMENTS – GARBAGE & FIRE FEES

Fees and assessments that are not related to Ad Valorem property taxes include fees for solid waste services and fire protection. These fees are set by the Board of Commissioners, are billed on the taxpayer's property tax bill, and due on or before the due date.

***NEW * MILITARY LICENSE PLATES**
FREE to those who qualify. Ask our Tag Agents for details.

Special Gift

Recently, Nita and Jerry Battle, of Americus, presented Wilkie Smith and the Tax Commissioner's Office with a beautiful replica of the old Sumter County Courthouse.

In 1883, the General Assembly authorized a referendum for Sumter County to borrow \$30,000 to construct a new Courthouse.

The replica is a copper rendition of the Sumter County Courthouse which was built in 1887 at the corner of Forsyth & Lee Streets. The building, designed by Atlanta architects Bruce & Morgan, was completed in May 1988 and served until May 1959

Pictured (L-R):

Christy Spivey, Deputy Tax Commissioner; Nita Battle; Wilkie Smith, Tax Commissioner; & Jerry Battle.



Pay Your Property Taxes Online

County Property taxes may be paid on-line. Go to: www.sumtercountygatax.com

Click on *Search & Pay Taxes*, read and *Accept* the Disclaimer, and begin searching.

Cards accepted on-line are VISA®, MasterCard®, Discover®, and American Express®. Transaction fees apply (2.25% & 30¢ per transaction) and are indicated prior to finalizing your payment. Partial payments are not accepted on-line.

You do NOT have to set up a PayPal account to pay. Call us if you have questions.

Other features now on this website are:

[Overview and Pay](#) ♦ [View & Print Receipt](#) ♦ [View & Print Bill](#) ♦ [Address Change](#)



A new Georgia statute O.C.G.A. 48-3-3 (2016) reads:

"In the discretion of the Tax Commissioner, a taxpayer shall have the option of receiving tax bills or subsequent delinquent notices via email in lieu of receiving a paper tax bill via first class mail."

The Sumter County Tax Commissioner has elected to implement this option for the 2017 County Property Tax Bills.

"This law allows property tax bills to be sent electronically, replacing, when requested, the printed paper tax bill sent by first class mail. It is easy to sign up, and you will receive your 2017 Property Tax bill securely by email," explains Tax Commissioner Wilkie Smith.

- Visit our website, click on the logo, print the form and send it to our office.

IF YOU HAVE MOVED ... WE NEED THE CHANGE !

If you have moved, we need the change for your motor vehicle information so that you will receive the proper vehicle renewal notice.

If your address changes, we need to send the property tax bill to the new address or to an address you specify for us.

Give us a call and we can offer several options concerning address changes.



Renew your tag before it expires!



KNOW
WHEN
YOUR
TAG
EXPIRES

A vehicle registered in an individual's name has a birthday expiration. A vehicle registered in a business name has an expiration date at the end of the month designated by the first letter on the registration. A penalty will be assessed the next day unless your expiration date falls on a weekend or the tag office is closed for a holiday.

Not receiving a renewal notice does not relieve the registered owner from the obligation to renew the vehicle's registration by the due date. If the owner does not receive a renewal notice, it is still the owner's responsibility to renew by their expiration date. Penalties will not be waived because the owner did not receive the notice.

Additionally, law enforcement "frowns" on persons who drive on an expired tag. With new technology and "tag readers", don't risk being caught driving on an expired tag.

Call the Tag office if you do not get your renewal notice. We can tell you the amount of the renewal. Bring your driver's license or tag number to renew.

**Sumter County
Office of the Tax Commissioner**

Sumter County Courthouse
P. O. Box 1044
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Americus, GA 31709

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The Tax Commissioner is an elected Constitutional Officer responsible for the collection of property taxes, including preparation of the county tax digest, billing of taxes, and the accounting and distribution of those taxes.

Property taxes include those assessed on real estate, inventory and equipment, public utilities, heavy-duty equipment, timber sales and *ad valorem* taxes on motor vehicles and mobile homes. These collections are disbursed to state, county, school, and city governing authorities.

The Tax Commissioner also acts as an agent of the State of Georgia for the titling and registration of motor vehicles, and is responsible for the operation of the tag office in the Sumter County Courthouse.

We have an outstanding staff who can provide you excellent service concerning your tags or property taxes.

It is my pleasure to serve the citizens of Sumter County.

Wilkie Smith
Tax Commissioner

Email: wsmith@sumtercountyga.us
cspivey@sumtercountyga.us

If you cancel the insurance on your vehicle,
YOU MUST CANCEL YOUR TAG.
Failure to do so will result in "insurance lapse" fines from the State.
Call us today if you need help.

Renew Your Tag Online

Your vehicle tag may be renewed online. Go to the Sumter County Tax Commissioner website www.sumtercountygatax.com In the Quick Links section, click on *Online Tag Renewal*, which takes you to the DOR website. There is a convenience fee of 2.35%, charged (by a DOR third party) to your credit or debit card.

You must have your 12-digit RIN renewal number to renew tags online. Tags renewed online will be processed by the Tag/Tax Office and the new decal will be mailed to the owner's address of record usually within 3 business days. If the address on the renewal notice is not correct, then please DO NOT RENEW ONLINE. If you experience any issues in renewing your tag online, please give us a call at the Tag Office.

Sumter County does not accept E-Checks. Credit cards accepted online are:

