



A Different Perspective on Municipal Taxes for Your Citizens

There are three things that are certain in life: 1. death, 2. taxes, and 3. the general public's well-known aversion to the first two items on the list. However, you can help diminish your residents' dislike of municipal taxes by offering a different perspective on why they are writing out a large check to their town or city.

Paying property, excise and other local taxes is not just their obligation as citizens. It is an investment in the future: their future, their families' future and their community's future. Much of the funds collected from the public are returned back in a variety of forms, ranging from services to more tangible amenities such as streets and municipal buildings.

Ask your taxpayers to consider all that is supplied to them through their taxes.

- **Roads** connect everything in the municipality, making it possible to commute to work, run errands, attend meetings, keep appointments, and transport goods and materials. Taxes pay for the construction, repair, plowing, sanding and sweeping of these essential passageways.
- **Emergency services** like police and fire protect the public from danger and re-

spond promptly with aid during a crisis.

- **Libraries** allow readers to explore countless places, both real and imagined, with that all-access pass called the library card. They also preserve the accumulated knowledge of society, ranging from science to history.
- **Parks** provide a safe and scenic place for kids to play, adults to run and families to bike, as well as the athletic fields and open space needed for a variety of community events such as Little League games and fireworks displays.
- **Trash, yard waste and recycling pickup services** give residents a convenient way to keep their neighborhoods clean and beautiful.
- **Schools** educate future doctors, engineers, lawyers and accountants. To fulfill that awesome responsibility, schools require numerous resources that include textbooks, lab equipment, computers, desks, chalkboards, projectors and, of course, teachers.
- **Senior centers** are dedicated to maintaining the well-being and independence of the community's golden-agers. They accomplish this through an



impressive menu of free or low cost health, educational, exercise, social and recreational programs that may include blood pressure checks, transportation services, oil painting lessons, line dancing, weekly matinees, book clubs, nutritionally balanced meals, tai chi classes, bocce and tax preparation assistance.

- **Town or City Hall** supplies the staff and storage necessary to process and retain citizens' vital records such as marriage licenses, birth certificates, building permits, voter registration, dog licenses and business certificates.
- **The Health Department** safeguards the health of the entire community by inspecting business establishments such as restaurants and day camps to verify they meet all applicable health codes, by offering vaccine clinics to pre-

vent the spread of communicable diseases, by reviewing all plans related to the construction of septic systems and wells to ensure a safe water supply, and by rendering a number of other services related to public health.

When the amount an individual household contributes in local taxes is weighed against the value of these and other benefits received from the municipality, the public's perception of taxes starts to shift from "burden" to "bargain." Without the funding of taxes, after all, residents would find that acquiring similar products and services is substantially more expensive.

It's unlikely that your citizens will ever put "Thank You" in the memo line of their tax payment check. With a little education, however, they may feel a bit of civic pride when writing it.



Calendar of Events

Date(s)	Event	Location
Feb. 5, 6, 12, 13 & 19	MAAO Course 3: Income Approach to Value	Tewksbury Police Station 918 Main Street Tewksbury, MA
Feb. 26	USPAP Update Workshop <i>Offered by the Mass. Association of Assessing Officers</i>	Tewksbury Police Station 918 Main Street Tewksbury, MA
Mar. 4	IAAO Forum 907: Valuation of Cell Towers <i>Sponsored by the Litchfield Area Assessor Association</i>	Harwinton Town Hall 100 Bentley Drive Harwinton, CT
Mar. 5, 6, 12, 13 & 19	MAAO Course 5: Mass Appraisal of Real Property	Tewksbury Police Station 918 Main Street Tewksbury, MA
Mar. 21-24	InterSystems DEVCON2010	Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek 14100 Bonnet Creek Resort Orlando, FL

Point Software's 2010 Deputy Promotion Ending Soon

Point Software wants to remind tax collectors that this year's deputy promotion ends on **February 5, 2010**. You do not need to have the TaxValues™ excise billing and posting software to take advantage of this attractive offer, just a desire to attain a better business choice for deputy services.

Appointing Point Software as your Deputy is a smart decision as it includes a way to earn credits that can be used for other Point services such as forms or annual support. For many customers, it has solved the problem of their budgets being reduced while expecting their offices to conduct business at the same level as prior to those cuts. If you haven't fully examined this offer, you could miss your opportunity to yield a funding source for your office.

For more information, visit <http://www.pointsw.com/news/Deputy2010Deal.pdf> or call us at 1.800.368.9538.

FY2011 ALRUS Reminder

The FY2011 Annual License Renewal and Update Services (ALRUS) budget planner was mailed to all Point Software customers in early January. If you have not received your copy, please contact Debbie Goldaper at dgoldaper@pointsw.com or call 1.800.368.9538.

Remember to send in the options form on the back page of the planner, with the option you have chosen, by **February 12, 2010**.

Tech Tips

TaxValues™ Excise Abatements is designed to enable the assessors' office to manage the municipality's excise assessment data. Through this software, Assessors have the ability to export excise abatements as a file that the collector's office can use to automatically update their records. Exports can be made to a common network location or to portable media if needed.

During the export process, a control totals report is generated that shows the total number of abatements in the file and the total amount abated. The report also lists the individual abatements, showing the abatement certificate number, certificate issue date, amount abated, vehicle owner name and associated bill number for each abatement listed. The collector's office uses the report as a proofing document.

NOTE: If changes are made to the abatements after exporting them (i.e. edits or voids), the collector's office needs to be aware of this so they can make the changes in their records as well.

To export excise abatements:

1. Access the abatement export utility.
2. Specify the tax year for which the abatements were issued.
3. Specify the abatement certificate issue date range of the abatements to be included in the excise abatement file.
4. Specify the path and filename to use for the excise abatement file (e.g. C:\POINTTMP\ABT.DTA).
5. Select the printer where you want to send the control totals report.
6. For those using portable media, make sure the media you are using is write enabled.
7. Confirm that you want to export the abatements.