

We have compiled a list of frequently asked questions and hope you will find your answers. If not, please call us at 781-246-6386.

Frequently Asked Questions

When is a real estate/personal property tax bill due?

The real estate and personal property taxes for the Town of Wakefield are due on the following dates:

- August 1 (preliminary)
- November 1 (preliminary)
- February 1 (actual)
- May 1 (actual)

If the first falls on a weekend or a holiday, taxes are due the following business day.

How often are real estate and personal property tax bills mailed?

While the taxes are due four times per year, there are three mailings. The preliminary bills, due August and November, are combined on one mailing. That bill is mailed by the end of June. Once the tax rate has been set by the Assessing Department, the actual bill for the third quarter, due February 1st, is mailed by the end of December. The fourth actual bill, due May 1st, is mailed by the end of March.

What months are covered for each bill?

August 1: July, August, September

November 1: October, November, December

February 1: January, February, March

May 1: April, May, June

What if I did not receive a tax bill?

Failure to receive your tax bill does not excuse you from payment of taxes, or from the interest and fees that accrue on the outstanding balance. A tax bill is generated and mailed for every parcel in the Town of Wakefield. It is the responsibility of the property owner to pay taxes regardless of receipt of a bill. The bill is mailed to the record owner as of January 1 of the previous fiscal year. New property owners can have their name added to the bill (indicated as “c/o” on the bill) by contacting the Assessing office at 781-246-6380.

Can I pay my bills online?

Yes. Real estate, personal property, motor vehicle excise and water/sewer bills may be paid online. Go to www.wakefield.ma.us and follow the “Online Payment Center” link on the Town of Wakefield’s main page. Click on “select activity” and complete each screen to process your payment. Remember not to confuse personal property (business) with real estate (home). Also, be sure to check with your financial institution to verify the correct routing number. When supplying the data, be sure to use caution to avoid payment returns. There is no charge when paying with your check, but there is a processing fee when paying with a credit card. Master Card and Discover are accepted

I do not have Internet Explorer. Why can't I pay my bills online?

While the online payment provider supports Internet Explorer at the present time, that will change in the near future. **UniPay**, the online payment provider, is in the final testing stages of a product upgrade, **UniPay Gold**, to be introduced by the summer of 2009 and will support other browsers. Firefox, Safari, Opera and Google Chrome along with Internet Explorer will be supported.

Where do I mail my tax payment?

Please mail payments to P.O. Box 269, Wakefield, MA 01880 or drop in the "drop box" to the right of the back door at the William J. Lee Memorial town Hall, 1 Lafayette Street, Wakefield, MA 01880

May I use my bank's online service to pay my bills?

We encourage the use of the Town of Wakefield's online payment center to pay your real estate, personal property, motor vehicle excise and water bills. While it is possible to use your bank's online service, it is our understanding that payments to municipalities are excluded from many online banking institutions. When the Town of Wakefield's online payment center is not used, please remember that a paper check is produced, mailed and typically takes approximately a week or so after you make the payment online with your bank to arrive in the collector's office. Also, there is no bill coupon that accompanies the check and we must make a copy of the check and research the account to which the payment should be applied. When the needed information is lacking, you're at risk of not having the payment properly credited. The payment method is not efficient for the town.

Do you accept postmarks for the date payment is received?

Bills are considered paid "when received" and not when mailed. Postmark dates on envelopes are not accepted as the date of payment. All payments are to be received by the collector by the due date. Payments received after that date will incur interest.

If I pay my real estate tax bill late, will I be charged any interest/penalties?

Yes, interest is assessed at a rate of 14% per annum from the due date of the bill. If there is an outstanding balance due after the May 1st due date, a pink "**Demand**" notice is mailed. In addition to the interest that has accrued, there is a \$5.00 demand fee.

How do I update my billing address?

In order to update your address for your real estate or personal property tax bill, please contact the Assessing Department at 781-246-6380.

My mortgage company pays my taxes, why did you send me a bill?

As mandated by Massachusetts statute, A tax bill is generated for every parcel in the Town of Wakefield and mailed to the mailing address on file with the Assessing Department. We do not bill individual mortgage companies. Generally, the mortgage companies in conjunction with the tax servicing companies receive an electronic file of the updated tax information. They choose the accounts they wish to pay and mail the checks in payment of their accounts to be received by the due date

How much do you charge for a Municipal Lien Certificate?

The cost for a MLC varies:

CHARGE

\$25.00

\$25.00

\$100.00

\$150.00

PROPERTY

Single, two, three family residences

Residential condominium

Four through eight family residences

Commercial, mixed use, industrial