Updated Property Tax Information Now Available for Texas Taxpayers

New and updated property tax information has just been compiled by Edwards Central Appraisal District and is available now to assist taxpayers. This property tax information is current and covers a wide range of topics, such as taxpayer assistance, exemptions and appraisals, and has information for select groups, such as disabled veterans and persons age 65 or older. (Sample quote you may want to use) "Whether you are a homeowner, business owner, disabled veteran or taxpayer, it's important you know your rights concerning property tax laws" said Renn Riley, Chief Appraiser of the Edwards Central Appraisal District. "You can contact us about any property tax issues with full confidence that we will provide the most complete, accurate and up-to-date information available to assist you."

This includes information about the following programs.

• **Property Tax Exemptions for Disabled Veterans** – The law provides partial exemptions for any property owned by disabled veterans or surviving spouses and surviving children of deceased disabled veterans. Another partial exemption is for homesteads donated to disabled veterans by charitable organizations at no cost or not more than 50 percent of the good faith estimate of the homestead's market value to disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. The exemption amount is determined according to percentage of service-connected disability. The law also provides a 100 percent homestead exemption for 100 percent disabled veterans and their surviving spouses, surviving spouses of U.S. armed service members killed or fatally injured in the line of duty and surviving spouses of veterans who died as a result of a qualifying condition or disease.

• **Property Tax Exemptions** – Nonprofit organizations that meet statutory requirements may seek property tax exemptions and must apply to their local appraisal district by a specific date. Child-care facilities; medical or biomedical property; businesses that receive tax abatements granted by taxing units; ship inventory out of Texas that may be eligible for the freeport exemption; store certain goods in transit in warehouses that are moved within 175 days; construct, install or acquire pollution control property; own and operate energy storage systems; convert landfill-generated gas; or store offshore drilling equipment while not in use may also be eligible for statutory exemptions

• **Rendering Taxable Property** – If a business owns tangible personal property that is used to produce income, the business must file a rendition with its local appraisal district by a specified date. Personal property includes inventory and equipment a business uses. Owners do not have to render exempt property such as church property or an agriculture producer's equipment used for farming.

• **Appraisal Notices** – Normally, taxpayers receive a notice of appraised value from the appropriate local appraisal district. The city, county, school districts and other local taxing units use the appraisal district's value to set property taxes for the coming year.

• **Taxpayer Assistance Pamphlet** – This Comptroller publication explains in detail the functions of a taxpayer liaison officer, how to protest a property appraisal, what issues the county appraisal review board (ARB) can consider and what to expect during a protest hearing. The publication also discusses the option to request limited binding arbitration to compel the ARB or chief appraiser to comply with a procedural requirement and the options of taking a taxpayer's case to district court, the State Office of Administrative Hearings or regular binding arbitration if the taxpayer is dissatisfied with the outcome of the ARB hearing.

• **Homestead Exemptions** – A homestead is generally defined as the home and land used as the owner's principal residence on Jan. 1 of the tax year. A person who acquires property after Jan. 1 may receive the residence homestead exemption for the applicable portion of that tax year immediately on qualification for the exemption if the preceding owner did not receive the same exemption for that tax year. A homestead exemption reduces the home's appraised value and, as a result, lowers property taxes. Submit applications to the appropriate local appraisal district.

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• **Productivity Appraisal** – Property owners who use land for timberland production, agricultural purposes or wildlife management can be granted property tax relief on their land. They may apply to their local appraisal district for an agricultural special appraisal which may result in a lower appraisal of the land based on production, versus market value.

• **Residence Homestead Tax Deferral** – Texas homeowners may postpone paying the currently delinquent property taxes due on the appreciating value of their homes by filing a tax deferral affidavit at their local appraisal district. This tax relief allows homeowners to pay the property taxes on 105 percent of the preceding year's appraised value of their homestead, plus the taxes on any new improvements to the homestead. The deferral postpones the remaining taxes, with interest accruing at 8 percent per year but does not cancel them.

• **Property Tax Deferral for Persons Age 65 or Older or Disabled or Disabled Veteran Homeowners** – Texans who are age 65 or older or disabled, as defined by law, or who qualify for a disabled veteran exemption may postpone paying current and delinquent property taxes on their homes by signing a tax deferral affidavit. Once the affidavit is on file, taxes are deferred, but not canceled, as long as the owner continues to own and live in the home. Interest continues to accrue at 5 percent per year on the unpaid taxes. You may obtain a deferral affidavit at the appraisal district.

• **Protesting Property Appraisal Values** – Property owners who disagree with the appraisal district's appraisal of their property for local taxes or for any other action that adversely affects them may protest their property value to their county's ARB.

• **Informal Meetings** – Property owners can request an informal meeting with appraisal district staff to try and resolve their disputes prior to attending ARB hearings

For more information about these programs, contact Edwards Central Appraisal District at 205 W Austin Street or edwardscad.org.

The Comptroller's Property Tax Assistance Division provides more information on its website: comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/property-tax/.

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