

Information about your Fiscal Year 2010 Real Estate Tax Bill

This insert is intended to provide you with some information about your enclosed tax bill. The following questions are most commonly asked by residents about their tax bills.

Did all property values in Westwood change from FY09 to FY10?

Yes. The value of every home changed for FY10. Values are required to be updated to reflect market conditions and sales activity. As always, values also change due to home renovation or improvements. The value of all real estate in Town declined 4.5%, with residential value declining 3.4% and commercial value declining 11%.

A report listing all home values for FY09 and FY10 can be found on the Town's web site at www.townhall.westwood.ma.us (left side of home page under "Important Links") or in printed form at Town Hall. For more detail, you may also access the Assessors' on-line database, which is also located on the Town's web site under "Important Links". If you notice any data errors when viewing the on-line Assessors' database, please contact the Assessors' Office. The Board of Assessors is committed to making sure that each property is fairly and accurately assessed.

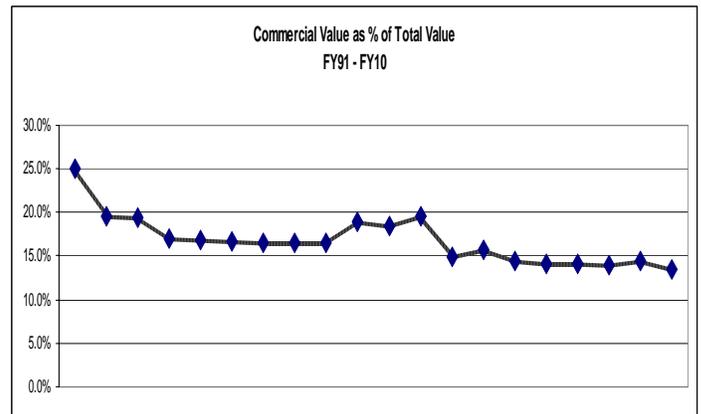
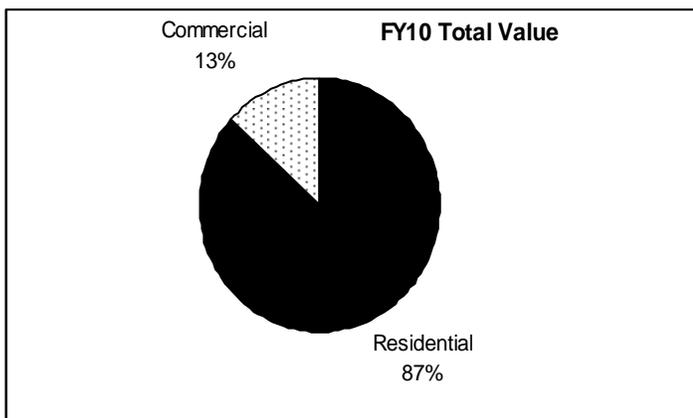
Why didn't all assessed values decline since the news reports that homes are selling for less?

News reports are based on state wide averages and do not necessarily reflect the Town's market value. While news reports are also reflecting current conditions, state tax law dictates that your FY10 tax bill is based on assessed home value as of **January 1, 2009** and home sales during calendar year **2008**.

Was there any change or shifting in tax burden between residential and commercial properties?

Yes. There was a slight shifting of the tax burden. This shift was due to the residential value decrease of 3.4% while overall commercial value declined 11%. In FY10, commercial property will be 13.4% of the total Town value, down from 14.3% in FY09.

The Town of Westwood has a split tax rate, taxing commercial and industrial property at a higher rate than residential property. The Board of Selectmen, in consultation with the Board of Assessors, voted to set the FY10 shift factor at the current 1.65 rate. This means that in FY10, commercial property, while only representing 13.4% of the Town's value, will pay 22% of the total taxes. This split rate provides a \$782 or 11.7% savings to the average home.



What is the change in real estate tax rates for FY10?

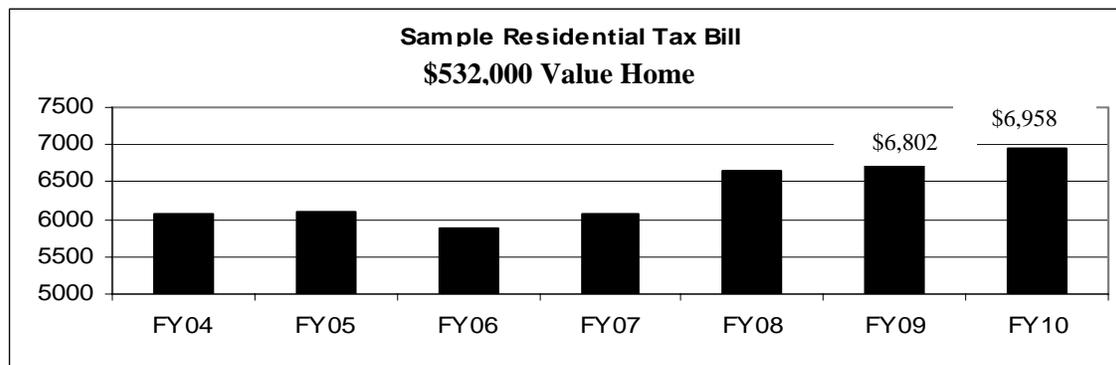
Because overall value declined, the FY10 tax rates must correspondingly increase to meet the Proposition 2 ½ levy.

The FY10 tax rates per \$1,000 of valuation are as follows:

Tax Rate	FY09	FY10	Rate Increase FY09 to FY10	% Increase in Rate FY09 to FY10
Residential	\$12.01	\$13.07	\$1.06	8.8%
Commercial	\$22.25	\$23.98	\$1.73	7.8%

What happened to my individual tax bill?

Proposition 2 ½ places limits on the total amount of taxes that can be raised by a city or town. It does not apply to an individual tax bill. While the total taxes collected by the Town, without new growth, increased by 1.6%, each individual tax bill is determined by the change in the tax rate and the change in valuation for that particular parcel.



This sample home has a tax increase of \$156, or 2.3% from FY09 to FY10 and a decrease in assessed value of 6% from FY09 to FY10.

What debt outside Proposition 2 ½ is included in this bill?

There are two components to the total taxes collected by the Town: 1) the general tax levy, and 2) the exempt debt, which is the principal and interest costs for the debt approved outside the limits of Proposition 2 ½.

The FY10 tax levy includes principal and interest payments that the Town will be making for the Proposition 2½ debt exclusion projects listed below. All other debt projects approved outside of Proposition 2 ½ have been completed, meaning the bond has been fully repaid and the cost removed from the tax levy.

Project/Bond Issued	Fiscal Year Debt Will Be Completed	FY10 Debt Payments	Net Amount of Debt in FY10 Levy
Downey School Construction - \$6,500,000	2012	8 th of 10	\$90,157
Martha Jones School Construction - \$7,200,000	2012	8 th of 10	\$194,620
High School Construction - \$39,262,300	2023	7 th of 20	\$1,686,035

The Town is now receiving state payments for all the school projects. This money directly reduces the taxes that must be raised for the debt. Only the net amount is paid by the residents.