Tips on how to appeal property taxes offered

Property owners can challenge their latest property assessments by meeting with their local board of review. Board members meet annually with Individual property owners who have tried to work out their concerns with the assessor's staff, but couldn't. A home's acsessed valuation is supposed to be half the market value. Under Michigan law, 50 percent of the true cash value of property is the taxable value. True cash value is the value from the cash value of property. Assessments are based on sales that

the state Tax Tribunal, P.O. Box 20230, Lansing 48909. The telephone number is 1-517-373-8550. There is no fee.

Tribunal hearings can be held in local county governmental offices. Appeals to the Tax Tribunal must be requested by June 20.

TO ASSIST property owners, the Michigan Consumers Council has brochutes outlining how to review property tax assessments, what to look for individual transition in the housing market, "said Kent Wilcox, council director, "However, errors are made frequently. These can range from Incorrelated with the appears of the control of the country of the coun

are simply incorrect, such as stating that the house has a finished basement when it deem;

"The appraisal may have also missed defects that might tend to reduce the house's value, such as settling or shifting on the foundation."

THE COUNCIL advises discussing errors first with the local assessor. Some assessors may be willing to adjust appraisals, saving consumers and themselves from going through a formal protest.

Small assessment increase expected in Hills

Some Babb said. Of the total 25,600 assense, Babb said. Of the total 25,600 assense Babb said. Of the total 25,600 assersed parcels of property in the IIIIIs,
the majority is residential.

MUCH OF the reason for increased
are back to using a 24-month saids,
study as opposed to a -30-month study,
which was used back in the early 1980s
during Michigan's recession. The 24month study includes housing sales in

Although this year's expected intrease is considered conservative, next

being sold. And based on his own study, Babb estimates that the value of houses in the Hills have increased about 10 percent. Low interest rates are greatly

percent. Low interest rates are greatly helping the housing market.

If homeowners received an assessment increase this year it means one of two things. An improvement was made to the house or, when Babb reviewed housing sales in the area, the level of assessments was below 50 percent of the mented value.

assessments was below by percent of the market value. An assessment, Babb said, is gener-ally 50 percent of the "usual selling price" of a house. Babb uses both sales and a house's current assessment to determine if this year's assessment on the house is at 50 percent of the market value.

"A 5 percent assessment increase does not necessarily mean the market value of that house went up exactly 5

Hardship cases increase

ties, and are afraid to visit the assessor, or meet with the board of review to ask for tax reliet. The elity of Farmington has a 4,169 parcel count, Including personal property Items, which are also assessed. Sailer added.

The part-time assessor encourages all taxpayers to call, and visit his office, or make an appointment to come before the board of review if they don't agree with their property assessments. "They can have a better understanding of the process," Sailer said.

HARDSHIP CASES and non-resident property owners can appeal their as-sessments by mail — forms are sent out each year to many of the known hardship case residents, which should be sent back to the assessor's office im-

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mediately. These written requests are reviewed at the board's initial meeting before meetings with the public begin, Sailer said. Others must appear before the beard of rapidate.

Sailer sald. Others must appear before the board of review.

Sailer is proud of Farmington's computerized record-keeping and eard system, detailing parcel information. All property — residential, commercial and industrial — is reviewed annually before assessments are sent out.

"It's up to the taxpayer to keep us informed also," he added.

Farmington assessments are atready in the mill. Like all assessments, they are based on true cash value of the property, with 50 percent of the value taxable. As assessments fluctuate, so do property taxes.

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Farmington assessments are already in the mall. Like all assessments they are based on true cash value of the property, with 50 percent of the value taxable. As assessments fluctuate, so do property taxes.

This year's board of review meets at Farmington City Hall Monday, March 10, from 9 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m., and Wednesday, March 12, 2-5 p.m. and The property was always to be a made to be a many to be a made to the cludes William Bliss, flert Cumbo and a third person to be named by the City Council tonight, according to Salter. The third person replaces former member Joan Sundt, who recently moved from the city.

ALL BOARD members are always to be a made to be a more than the city.

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The city records the property was a made to the country moved from the city.

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ALL BOARD members are city residents. A minimal stipend of \$45 per year covers their expenses.

The \$2 tax appeals received last year was an increase from the \$5-60 heard several years ago, Saller said. And recent activity in home sales in the city may generate a larger number this year and next.

The interest rate decline, which began in 1985 and spurred home sales, shows in this year's assessments, which are up 7.7 percent, Saller said. This is the largest net average linerase in val

are up 7.7 percent, Saller said. This is the largest net average increase in val-ues since 1981, when a 12.75 increase was noted. This year's figures also in-clude new commercial building, includ-ing the Crossroads Shopping Center at Nine Mile and Farmington Road.

ue for Farmington was \$162,190,200, compared with a tentative assessed value for 1986 of \$174,750,000, he sald. This value is adjusted before and during the board of review, when reductions in taxes are allowed.

mg tue board of review, when reduc-tions in taxes are allowed. In 1985, a total of \$648,580 in tax re-ductions were approved by the review board, including \$98,000 in hardship re-quests and \$550,580 for property own-ers disputing taxes due to market val-

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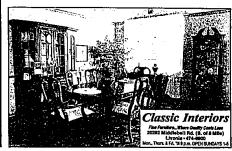
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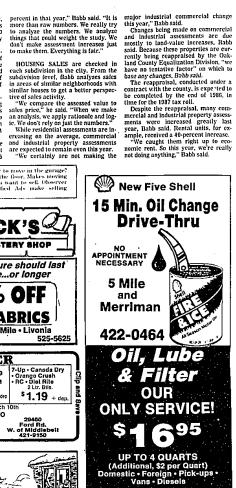
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