

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

YOUR REAL ESTATE TAXES

Real Estate Taxes are due May 20, 2020; this is the second half payment of the 2020 real estate taxes that cover the period July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. The amount of your tax bill is determined by the amount of money needed to operate the town for a year, voted on at the annual Town Meeting in June, applied to what each property owner has for a valuation on their real estate.

If you aren't able to pay real estate taxes by the next due date May 20, 2020, you will be charged 7% interest. As an example, if you paid your first payment Nov 20, 2019 and cannot pay your May 20, 2020 payment and your payment amount due is \$1869.07 you will pay .36 per day.

If you can pay part of your taxes, but not all, by May 20, 2020, you will be saving some money in interest charges.

If real estate taxes remain unpaid by July 31, 2020, we have a strict timeline in which to collect. This is called the real estate tax lien process. This process must start between the 9th month and 12th month period after your tax bill was created. The day the tax bills are created is called the commitment date. Tax bills are mailed to you very soon after the commitment date, which in Norway is typically sometime in August.

For real estate taxes that are unpaid, we typically start the real estate tax lien process in early August with a "30 Day Notice" that comes to your address via certified mail (you will have to sign with the post office that you received it). Once that is sent, you have 30 days to pay the taxes, a \$3.00 cost and certified mailing fees, to avoid a real estate tax lien.

If you are unable to pay, during the "30 Day Notice", the real estate tax lien is generated and recorded at the Register of Deeds at the Oxford County Court building in South Paris. If this happens, we notify your mortgage holder and any other parties that may have an interest. When a tax lien is created there is a minimum of \$45 in extra costs added to your tax balance to cover costs of certified mailings and processing, as well as the interest that continues to accrue.

Please note that when tax liens are recorded, the credit report companies receive that information and liens will show on your credit report and affect your credit.

You have 18 months to pay a real estate lien. When a real estate lien is paid in full, we file a "Discharge of Real Estate Tax Lien" at the Register of Deeds. Credit report companies, should collect this data as well, so on your credit report it will show the lien and then it should show the discharge.

30 to 45 days before the real estate tax lien will foreclose, which is 18 months after it was recorded, you will receive a certified mail notification that foreclosure is coming up. The mortgage holders or interested parties should also receive this same notification.

If the real estate lien does not get paid 18 months after it was recorded, the lien forecloses and the Town of Norway automatically receives title/ownership of your property. If you have a mortgage holder, many times they will pay the taxes for you to prevent the foreclosure and add that amount to the balance you owe them.

If a foreclosure does occur, the Town of Norway will typically allow you up to two years to catch all taxes up that are owed and get title/ownership back.

Yearly, on April 1, we enter a new tax assessment year and another tax amount is generated on your property and becomes due.

It is a good idea to communicate with your mortgage holder/bank, if you are unable to pay your real estate taxes, since they will find out eventually.

We accept partial payments anytime, for whatever amount you can afford. If you think it will benefit you, we can generate a payment booklet that might be helpful to keep you on track with payments.

Real estate tax payments, as well as sewer payments can be made on line with a credit card or electronic check at norwaymaine.com. (fees apply)

Please note that the lien procedure for delinquent sewer charges is very similar to the real estate tax lien procedure.