



**Meredith R. Green, CPA**  
**Kitsap County Treasurer**

614 Division Street, MS-32 • Port Orchard, WA 98366-4678

Dear Taxpayer,

February 2020

Tax bills for 2020 bring increases for most taxpayers, which are largely a result of state legislation. Read this letter on our website at [www.kitsapgov.com/treas](http://www.kitsapgov.com/treas) to access the links and your [property tax bill](#). The Treasurer serves as the bank for the County as well as all [41 junior taxing districts](#). Over 55% of the property taxes we collect go to schools, with less than 10% going towards the County general fund, and the remainder to roads, cities, fire, port, water and other districts we serve.

Your property tax bill reflects your property's share of the state, county, and other taxing districts, such as school, fire, emergency services, and ports. Except for the State tax, all property taxes are budget-based, and the State allows local districts [budget](#) increases of 1 percent, plus an allowance for new construction. Changes in taxes for individual properties vary, depending on that property's change in value as compared with others in the district. Other increases may only come in the form of voter-approved levies.

The State tax is levy-based, which means that it fluctuates with assessed value. For 2019 taxes, the [state legislature](#) reduced the State levy by 12.5% for one year only. The return of this 12.5%, plus the impact of increased assessed value resulted in an overall increase of 23% County-wide for the State portion of taxes.

The local school "enhancement" levy cap increased to \$2.50, and [South Kitsap](#) restored previously voter-approved levies to that cap, resulting in a 59% increase district-wide. Voters approved new capital or enrichment levies, which resulted in increases for [Bainbridge Island](#) (11.5%), [Bremerton](#) (17%) and [Central Kitsap](#) (7%) school districts. Voter-approved Fire or EMS levies led to increases to [Bremerton](#) (11%), [North Kitsap](#) (10%) and [Poulsbo](#) (4%).

2020 brings a change to the senior/disabled exemption, with increases in the income level and residency requirements. Seniors with household income of \$48,574 or less who live in their homes more than nine months a year may be eligible. This program is administered by the Assessor, so please check with them for details.

2020 also brings a graduated real estate excise tax (REET). REET is reduced for sales under \$1.5 million and increased for sales over \$1.5 million. Kitsap's excellent information technology staff was able to get us ready to implement this graduated REET by January 1.

We work closely with [Assessor Phil Cook](#) and his staff, who are responsible to ensure that district budgets are evenly distributed amongst the district's properties. Tax bills for 2020 are based on the property value on January 1, 2019 and Kitsap values generally increased. If you have any questions regarding the levies or assessed value of your properties see the [Assessor's website](#) or call 360-337-7160.

### **Paying your tax bill**

Many taxpayers have elected to receive their bills electronically, which you may do at [eNoticesOnline](#) with the code that is provided on your statement. Visit our [website](#) to view payment options. Some taxpayers automatically pay their [taxes monthly](#) or [semi-annually](#) through our office. Tax bills can also be paid by [e-check](#) (\$1) or [credit card](#) (2.4% fee). If you mail your check, we highly recommend taking it to the post office a couple days in advance, which reduces mail fraud and ensures a postmark by the due date.

**More resources**

The Dept. of Community Development ([DCD](#)) reminds property owners in unincorporated areas that they may be near agricultural lands on which commercial activities can occur. Washington State (RCW [7.48.300](#)) and the county support the right to farm and may protect these agricultural uses and activities. Please see [Kitsap County’s Agricultural Code](#) or contact DCD at (360) 337-5777 for more information.

Kitsap County’s “[Parcel Details](#)” tool continues to evolve. In addition to information regarding taxes and values, additional information such as well and septic history, voting districts, plat and permit data is available. Please take a look! We also encourage you to explore our [property tax distribution](#) tool to understand the allocation of your property taxes.

[Public Works](#) gave a presentation to the Poulsbo Rotary Club, where I’m a member, regarding what happens to our trash. This talk was the impetus for club members’ efforts to reduce the amount of trash we send to the landfill. We learned that CLEAN and DRY is a must for any type of recycling, and that while Styrofoam and thin plastic wrap cannot go into bins, they are a valuable commodity when separated and collected the right way. Taking an idea from Sakai Elementary, Rotarians collected plastic and worked with [Trex’s](#) non-profit recycling program to get benches for our community. Additionally, promoting Public Work’s [Styrofoam roundup](#) (next one July 25, 2020!) converted our food trays and other packing supplies into high-density Styrofoam blocks used for crown molding, picture frames and light switch covers. With these programs and armed with County’s [WhatToDoWithIt](#) site we also attempted zero-waste at our Viking Tour Bicycling event and reduced our waste from a huge dumpster to an 8 pound bag. Please contact [Public Works](#) for additional information. It is for the good of our environment and future generations.

Although no one enjoys paying taxes, we know that the money is needed to fund public schools, police and fire services, and many other important public functions. We work from 8 AM – 4 :30 PM Monday through Thursday. On Fridays, we’re open from 9 AM – 4:30 PM to allow time for staff training. We strive to make your interactions with us positive, and we welcome your questions, comments or suggestions. Please complete the [online survey](#), stop by, call us at 360-337-7135, or email [treasurer@co.kitsap.wa.us](mailto:treasurer@co.kitsap.wa.us). As public employees, we are here to serve you.

Regards,

*Meredith Green and Staff*

**Change of Address**

If your MAILING ADDRESS has changed from the address shown on the enclosed tax statement(s), complete this form and return it with your payment, mail it to us, or see our [website](#). Note: Completing a change of address does not change legal ownership.

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City                      State                      ZIP

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number (in case we have questions)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date                      Owner’s Signature

**List of all Account Numbers affected by this change\***

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\*Refer to tax statement for Account/Parcel Numbers