



**City of Bell
Pension Assessment (Tax) Rebate to Bell Property Owners**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happened? Following the resignation of the former Bell Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), the new CAO, Mr. Pedro Carrillo, called for an independent audit of the City of Bell by the California State Controller John Chiang. Soon thereafter, the State Controller informed Mr. Carrillo that under the previous Administration, the City had over assessed (taxed) Bell property owners \$2.9 million from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010. As a result, the following corrective action was taken:

- 1) The new Bell CAO immediately reduced the Bell pension assessment (tax) to a .187754% rate. This item, in addition to the Measure A assessment, will be reflected at a .311413% rate on your 2010-2011 property tax statement under Voter Indebtedness – City of Bell.
- 2) Although Bell property owners were over assessed, State Law required that rather than refunding property owners, the overpayment be transferred to the local school district. However, the City of Bell, along with State Legislators, successfully advocated for the passage of Assembly Bill 900. This bill allows the County of Los Angeles, upon receiving funding from the City of Bell, to refund those qualified Bell property taxpayers that were over assessed.

Who qualifies for the refund? Bell property owners that paid property taxes on land, home, mobile home or building from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010 qualify for the refund. Renters are not entitled to refunds since they have not paid property taxes.

When will I receive my refund?

- 1) Property owners that have owned their property from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010 will begin receiving their refunds during the first week of November 2010.
- 2) Property owners that have sold or purchased their property during the same period will receive their refund by mid-December 2010. Also, if you only owned the property part of the three years, the County will calculate the refund based upon the proportional property taxes you paid.

If there is more than one person listed as property owners, who will receive the refund? The refund will be issued under all names and will be mailed to the address the Los Angeles County currently has listed for the property owner. All payees are responsible for endorsing the check before it is cashed.

Do I need to fill a claim or fill out a form? No, the Los Angeles County Department of Auditor-Controller will mail the refund automatically. If you have moved to another address, you may complete an Address Update Form, available at Bell City Hall, to assist us in refunding you quickly.

How did you calculate my refund? Your refund will be based on the Assessed Value of your property (at the time the overcharge occurred), multiplied by the Excess Rate listed below:

| <u>Tax Year</u> | <u>Rate Charged</u> | <u>Legal Rate</u> | <u>Excess Rate</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2007-08 | .237554% | .187754% | .05% |
| 2008-09 | .257554% | .187754% | .07% |
| 2009-10 | .277554 % | .187754% | .09% |

Following is an example of how the refunds will be calculated. This example assumes an Assessed Value of \$100,000 and that the taxpayer owned the property for the entire three-year period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010.

| <u>Tax Year</u> | <u>Assessed Value</u> | <u>Multiplied by</u> | <u>Excess Rate</u> | <u>Equals</u> | <u>Amount of Refund</u> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 2007-08 | \$100,000 | X | .05% | = | \$50 |
| 2008-09 | \$100,000 | X | .07% | = | \$70 |
| 2009-10 | \$100,000 | X | .09% | = | \$90 |
| Total Amount of Refund if property was owned all three years | | | | | \$210 |

For additional information and questions, please contact: Los Angeles County Property Tax Public Service at (213) 974-8368. You may also call Bell City Hall at (323) 588-6211.