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● JULY - 2011

# The Tax Beacon

www.waltontaxpayers.org

THE WALTON COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION, INC  
'THE EYES AND EARS FOR WALTON COUNTY TAXPAYERS'

Bob Hudson - Executive Director


## Your Proposed 2012 Millage Rates

By August 19th the Walton County Property Appraiser will mail each property owner a Notice Of Proposed Property Taxes. This statement will identify the property by Parcel Number and very brief legal description. It will list each taxing authority and itemize the actual amount of taxes for last year the proposed amount for this year and the rollback rate if no budget change is made. The actual adopted millage rates will be set during the Public hearing phase of the budget process. They can be lowered but not raised from these rates.

## Who Pays For Walton County Government?

We wondered exactly who pays for the cost of government services in Walton County so we contacted the Florida Department of Revenue to get information on exactly which types of property in Walton County funded our county government as a percentage of the total ad valorem taxes collected.

See the chart below to see the distributions by property type for the 2010-2011 tax year. The data provided shows that 61.3% of ad valorem taxes collected come from residential non-homesteaded property owners.



### The Taxpayer's Tab

#### TAX RATE TALLY BOARD

| Taxing Authority                      |   | 2011 Actual Millage | 2012 Proposed Millage |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Walton County Board of Commissioners  | 😊 | 3.5563              | 3.5563                |
| Walton County School District         | 😊 | 5.0700              | 5.0110                |
| South Walton County Mosquito District | 😊 | 0.1138              | 0.1138                |
| South Walton Fire District            | 😞 | 0.8600              | 0.899                 |
| NW Florida Water Management District  | 😊 | 0.0450              | 0.0400                |
| City of DeFuniak Springs              | 😊 | 4.5000              | 4.5000                |
| City of Freeport                      | 😞 | 3.9300              | 4.7302                |
| North Walton Mosquito District        | 😊 | 0.4912              | 0.4912                |

### 2010-2011 Distribution of property taxes collected by property type

|                                    | % of Total | % of Total   |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Residential</b>                 |            |              |
| Homesteaded                        | 15.0%      | \$6,113,601  |
| Non-Homesteaded                    | 61.3%      | \$24,984,253 |
| Vacant Lots                        | 12.6%      | \$5,135,425  |
| <b>Non-Residential</b>             |            |              |
| Commercial                         | 5.3%       | \$2,601,139  |
| Industrial                         | 0.5%       | \$203,787    |
| Institutional                      | 0.1%       | \$244,545    |
| Agricultural                       | 0.6%       | \$244,544    |
| Other                              | 1.3%       | \$529,845    |
| <b>Tangible Personal Property</b>  | 3.3%       | \$1,344,992  |
| <b>Centrally Assessed Property</b> | 0.0%       | \$ 0.0       |
| <b>Tax On New Construction</b>     | 1.2%       | \$489,088    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                       | 100%       | \$40,755,346 |

# How Walton County Plans To Allocate Revenues for 2012 vs. 2011

| Expenditure by Department/Division               | 2011 Budget        | 2012 Proposed     | % of Total Budget |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Sheriff's Office                                 | 16,920,594         | 16,760,270        | 17.42%            |
| Roads & Bridges                                  | 31,990,311         | 16,461,823        | 17.11%            |
| Solid Waste                                      | 12,107,554         | 12,206,017        | 12.69%            |
| Tourist Development Council*                     | *27,011,471        | 10,891,183        | 11.32%            |
| Walton Fire & Rescue                             | 7,480,206          | 7,377,546         | 7.67%             |
| Corrections Department                           | 5,281,361          | 5,218,439         | 5.42%             |
| BCC (County Commission Budget)                   | 6,611,162          | 4,816,666         | 5.01%             |
| Tax Collector                                    | 1,942,386          | 2,162,321         | 2.25%             |
| Clerk of Courts                                  | 4,579,921          | 4,579,832         | 4.76%             |
| Housing and Urban Development                    | 1,885,116          | 1,885,666         | 1.96%             |
| Property Appraiser                               | 1,800,000          | 1,835,427         | 1.91%             |
| Facilities Maintenance                           | 1,518,593          | 1,550,714         | 1.61%             |
| Planning & Development                           | 1,389,342          | 1,303,374         | 1.35%             |
| Parks Department                                 | 783,083            | 751,498           | 0.78%             |
| Mosquito Control - North Walton                  | 1,042,931          | 698,155           | 0.73%             |
| Library Services                                 | 728,266            | 651,191           | 0.69%             |
| Building Department                              | 712,884            | 648,423           | 0.67%             |
| Supervisor of Elections                          | 647,927            | 637,377           | 0.66%             |
| Animal Control                                   | 674,274            | 558,767           | 0.58%             |
| County Administration                            | 432,126            | 555,134           | 0.58%             |
| Human Resources Dept                             | 487,282            | 430,282           | 0.45%             |
| Central Purchasing                               | 445,431            | 406,938           | 0.42%             |
| Budget Office                                    | 339,261            | 334,209           | 0.35%             |
| Custodial Services                               | 357,052            | 318,734           | 0.33%             |
| Probation Department                             | 321,192            | 317,520           | 0.33%             |
| GIS Department                                   | 382,366            | 305,045           | 0.32%             |
| Extension Services                               | 302,043            | 304,588           | 0.32%             |
| Code Enforcement                                 | 341,310            | 296,923           | 0.31%             |
| County Attorney's Office                         | 324,354            | 259,970           | 0.27%             |
| Medical Examiner                                 | 200,645            | 200,645           | 0.21%             |
| Circuit Court                                    | 180,467            | 190,727           | 0.20%             |
| Public Defenders Office                          | 16,490             | 16,240            | 0.02%             |
| Court Technology                                 | 201,000            | 180,900           | 0.19%             |
| Corrections Canteen Fund                         | 201,835            | 161,620           | 0.17%             |
| Citizens Services                                | 153,746            | 151,005           | 0.16%             |
| Recreation Board                                 | 214,389            | 128,400           | 0.13%             |
| Grants Department                                | 131,871            | 124,340           | 0.13%             |
| Veterans Services                                | 159,705            | 112,639           | 0.12%             |
| State Attorney's Office                          | 81,500             | 81,800            | 0.09%             |
| Soil Conservation                                | 96,857             | 84,692            | 0.09%             |
| Contracts Department                             | 83,260             | 82,052            | 0.09%             |
| Ambulance Billing                                | 60,000             | 60,000            | 0.06%             |
| Workmans Comp                                    | 59,000             | 59,000            | 0.06%             |
| County Court                                     | 58,055             | 57,142            | 0.06%             |
| <b>Total County &amp; Constitutional Offices</b> | <b>130,399,697</b> | <b>96,215,234</b> | <b>100.00%</b>    |

\* Includes BP Funding

## Public Hearing Dates

Taxpayers are given an opportunity through one or more public hearings on the proposed budget to comment on planned expenditures.

The tax rate is based upon the final budget approved by the taxing authority following the hearings listed below.

### Board of County Commissioners

**Sept. 12th**  
5:01 PM

South Walton Court  
House Annex HWY 331  
Santa Rosa Beach

### South Walton County Mosquito Control District

**Sept. 6th**  
5:01PM

774 Highway 393 North  
Santa Rosa Beach

### South Walton Fire District

**Sept. 8th**  
5:01 PM

Headquarters  
911 Highway 393 North  
Santa Rosa Beach

### City Of Freeport

**Sept. 13th**  
7:00 PM

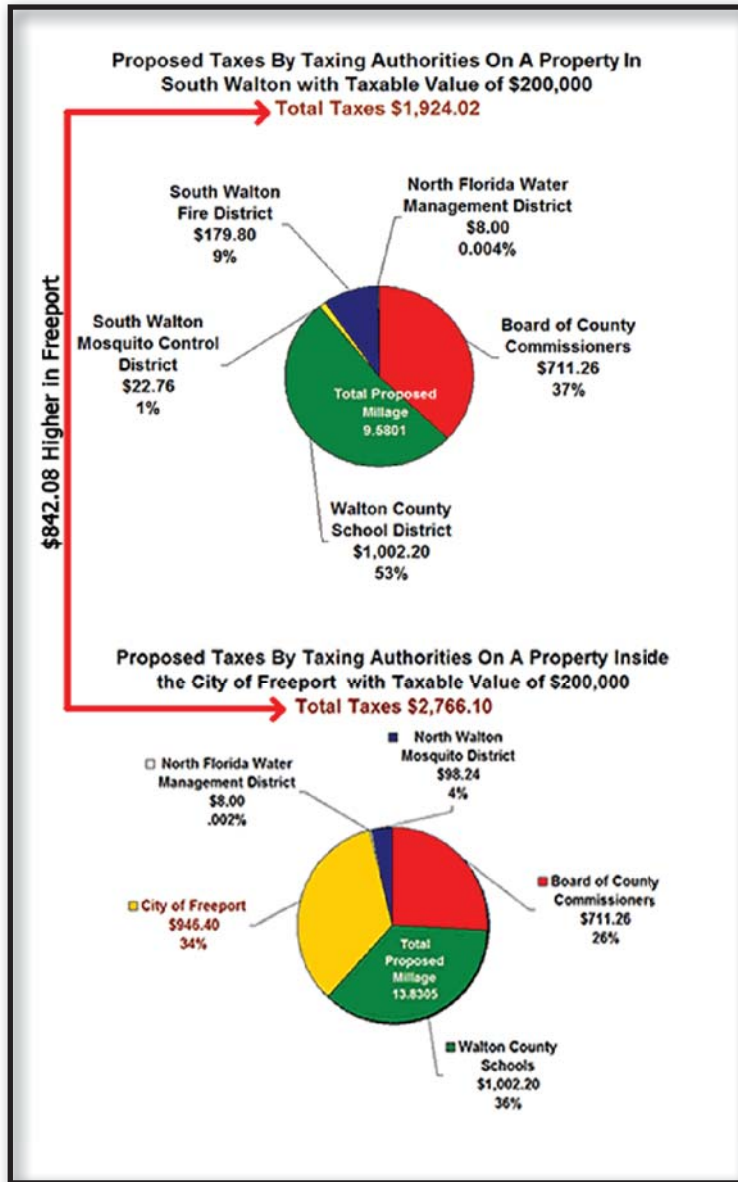
City Hall  
Freeport

### City Of DeFuniak Springs

**Sept. 15th**  
5:30 PM

City Hall  
Defuniak Springs

# Where You Live Impacts Your Property Taxes



The charts above show what an impact where you live in Walton County can have on your property tax bill. There are three incorporated municipalities in Walton County. The City of Freeport, the City of DeFuniak Springs and the City of Paxton. Each of those municipalities impose property taxes on property within their boundaries. As you can see the impact on your tax bill can be significant.

Residents of south Walton County live in an unincorporated area of Walton County.

When individuals mention incorporation of south Walton, we ask why in light of the potential increase in costs to taxpayers through duplication of services.

# Property Sales Are UP !

In their Newsletter, the Walton County Economic Development Alliance says, continuing the recovery from last year's real estate slump, sales across the Emerald Coast increased dramatically June according to sales statistics released by the Emerald Coast Association of Realtors (ECAR). Total residential sales were up 40 percent over last year's sales in June.

WCEDA Acting Director, Scarlett Phaneuf, says nearly every major area saw an increase in residential sales in June: Crestview, 52 percent; Destin, 73 percent; Fort Walton Beach, five percent; Niceville, two percent; the North Walton County area, 60 percent; and south Walton County, 75 percent. The only decrease occurred in Navarre which was down 13 percent over last year.



They also report Jean Floyd, ECAR President says condo sales continue to improve dramatically along the coast. Along the Emerald Coast, condo sales were up nearly 90 percent when compared to last year's sales. Destin's condo sales increased an astounding 220 percent in June, while Fort Walton Beach's condo sales jumped 150 percent. Condo sales in South Walton County were up 85 percent over last year.

While not as dramatic as condos, residential sales also saw its share of good news in June. Total residential sales increased by 30 percent last month. Crestview saw an increase of 49 percent, while South Walton residential sales jumped 70 percent over last year. Destin enjoyed an increase of 38 percent, and Niceville was up 15 percent.

# Taxable Values Are Down !

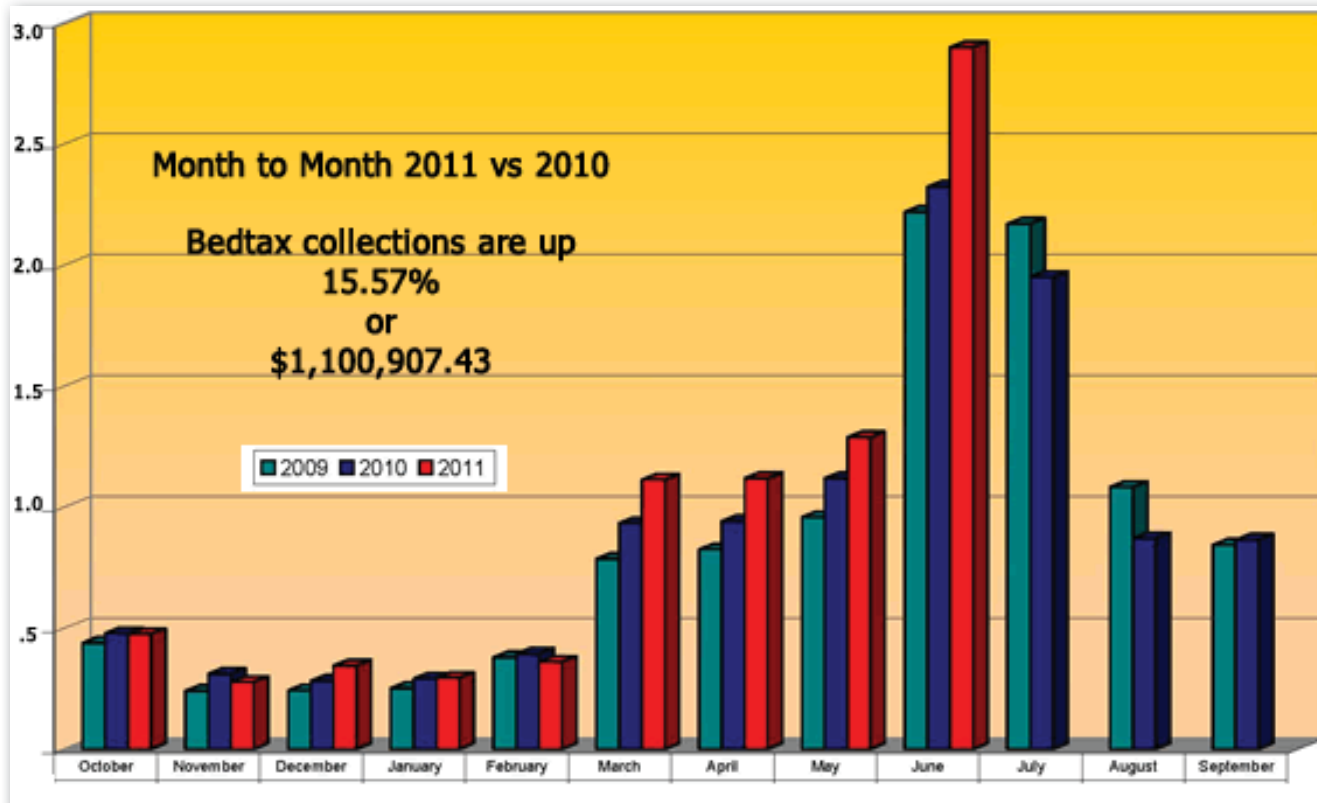
**Note: 81.6 % of the taxable value and property taxes collected in Walton County is in the south Walton geographic area**

| Area                     | 2011 Taxable Value | 2012 Taxable Value | % Change |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Walton County            | 11.4 Billion       | 10.9 Billion       | -5.15%   |
| South Walton             | 9.8 Billion        | 9.3 Billion        | -5.17 %  |
| City Of Freeport         | 197.4 Million      | 163.9 Million      | -16.92%  |
| City of Defuniak Springs | 207.8 Million      | 206.9 Million      | -.005%   |

# Bedtax Collections Are Up 15.57%

The June TDC Bed tax report is out and shows that our tourists have returned to the area after the oil spill disaster last year. June receipts were up over last years June numbers by over 25% and when you compare the year-to-date totals to the same period last year receipts have increased by over 1 million dollars.

This trend bode well for our local economy as those increases in bed tax numbers should translate into comparable increases in sales tax revenues and gasoline tax revenues. Sales tax and gasoline tax revenues are a direct source for county operations and should help reduce the pressure on increases in the millage rates next year.



## Member Support for WCTA

Please accept our thanks for the support you provide. Your contributions to our organization not only sustain us financially but also validate our work.

We believe strongly that we must continue our mission for more accountability in government spending, decreasing the role of government in our daily lives, and pressing for lower taxes. We must stay involved to get more value for our tax dollars.

A basic annual contribution of \$10 goes toward the costs of our quarterly newsletter. Our newsletter is intended to keep you informed on how local government is spending your money and what you are getting in return. Your Membership allows us to continue to be The Eyes and Ears for Walton County Taxpayers.

**Mail Your Membership Contribution To:**

**WCTA  
PO BOX 1085  
Santa Rosa BCH, FL 32459**

**Please mail your necessary support Today !**

**Please consider a "Plus" contribution of \$40.00**

Note: If you are a resident/owner of a Grand Dunes 1, Grand Dunes 2, Turtle Beach or Edgewater Beach Condominium your dues are paid through your Condo Association.