



**Cheryl E. Johnson, R.T.A.**  
**Galveston County Tax Assessor/Collector**

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**Avoid Costly Penalties for 2011 Taxes and Save the Dates to Lower the  
2012 Tax Bill!**

Following the tradition of the last seven years, the Galveston and League City branches of the Galveston County Tax Office (GCTO) will be open from 7 am to 6 pm, Tuesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, the last day to pay 2011 taxes without penalty and interest. The Santa Fe and Texas City Tax Office branches will be open normal operation hours of 8 am to 5 pm.

“It is not unusual for us to have four to five thousand property tax customers each day at the end of January joining the 27,000 vehicle registration renewal customers,” warned County Tax Assessor Collector Cheryl E. Johnson. As in the past, central office administrators and temporary staff support are being dispatched to all offices during the last two weeks of January to assist with the long lines.

Postmarks are critical when mailing property tax payments. To insure a postmark that will prevent tax penalties, obtain a postmark validation from your local Post Office. In addition to mailing your payment, GCTO accepts over-the-counter credit and debit cards along with online payment options ([www.galcotax.com](http://www.galcotax.com)). A \$1 fee is charged for electronic check payment and 2.5% for credit card transactions. These charges are typically absorbed by local merchants but government offices may not pay these fees thus they are charged back to our customers. Those without internet access may remit payment using a credit card by calling Pay Connexion at 1-866-865-1433 (English) or 1-866-865-1435 (Spanish). Placing a payment in one of the Tax Office drop boxes located outside each building is also a good option. All payments left in the box January 31<sup>st</sup> will be posted as timely payments February 1<sup>st</sup>.

“If your taxes are too high, it is likely because you missed the opportunity to protest your value last year and, unless there is an error on your account, it is too late to change that now,” stated Johnson. We do have a solution for 2012, however. Classes will be taught by Johnson throughout the County beginning in April on how to “Effectively Protest Your Appraised Value.” Techniques – not tricks – are the key along with a thorough understanding of the process. Classes are free, begin at 6 pm and generally run just under two hours.

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Location</u>   |
|-------------|---|
| 4/9/12      | Galveston County Courthouse, 722 Moody (21st St.), Commissioners Courtroom        |
| 4/18/12     | Tiki Island Public Safety Bldg. (room over Fire Station), Tiki Drive, Tiki Island |
| 4/23/12     | Village on the Park, FM 528 near FM 518, Friendswood                              |
| 4/30/12     | Community Room, North County Annex, 174 Calder, League City                       |
| 5/9/12      | Jimmy Walker Community Center, 800 Harris Avenue, Kemah                           |
| 5/14/12     | Railroad Museum, 218 FM 517 W, Dickinson  |
| 5/16/12     | Mid-County Annex, EF Lowry Expressway, Texas City                                 |