

# Property Tax Appraisal

## PROTESTS & APPEALS



One of your most important rights as a taxpayer is your right to protest to the appraisal review board (ARB). You may protest if you disagree with the appraisal district value or any of the appraisal district's actions concerning your property.

### ANNUAL HOME VALUE APPRAISAL

**On January 1**, your home's appraised value for the year is based on its condition and what the property could sell for on January 1. The appraisal district arrives at a figure by calculating the market value of your property. Your home's condition is key as you look at factors that may affect the value. Any damage or improvements after this date, for example, a hail storm damages your roof in April, or you install the addition of solar panels in July, will not affect the taxable value of your home in this year.

### HOME VALUE / APPRAISAL ARRIVES IN MAILBOXES

**Late April-Early May**, a piece of mail arrives from the appraisal district, telling you the value of your home for tax purposes. Look over the numbers carefully. If your property is not described correctly or if the value looks out of whack, you can protest it.

### DEADLINE TO FILE A "NOTICE OF PROTEST"

**May 15** is the deadline for filing a "Notice of Protest" of your appraised value. What's the best way to file? You have a couple of options. You can use the form on the back of the "Notice of Appraised Value" that you received from the appraisal district or you may be able to file your protest online. To file online, visit your Appraisal District website:

**HAYS COUNTY:** [www.hayscad.com](http://www.hayscad.com) | **TRAVIS COUNTY:** [www.traviscad.org](http://www.traviscad.org) | **WILLIAMSON COUNTY:** [www.wcad.org](http://www.wcad.org)

### MEET WITH THE APPRAISAL STAFFER AND THE ARB

**In June**, following the filing of your "Notice of Protest," your Appraisal District will send you a letter with two dates: an informal meeting with an appraisal staffer and your formal hearing date with the ARB, a group of independent residents appointed to hear these challenges. During the informal meeting, the staffer will review the numbers with you. Bring all of your documentation: Information on comparable homes (records are available on the appraisal district's website), perhaps an independent appraisal if you recently refinanced your house, or photos, repair estimates and other records showing damage that may devalue your home. Once you and a staffer have hashed it out, the district may offer to reduce your value by a certain amount. If you're satisfied, you can accept it.

If not, you can keep your date with the ARB, or technically, with a three-member panel of ARB members. Before that hearing, you have a right to see all of the information the district appraisers plan to present, so be sure to contact the appraisal district to request those documents.

If you take your case to the ARB, come prepared and expect a rapid-fire proceeding. The entire hearing will likely take 15 to 30 minutes. In that time you will be placed under oath and given a chance to present any evidence or witnesses supporting your case. You must conclude by stating the figure you believe your property is worth. Someone from the appraisal district will likely question you and provide additional evidence. Then you can question the appraiser or any witnesses presented by the appraisal district. Members of the ARB can ask clarifying questions, too. Finally, each side gets to make a closing statement, so once again you'll want to reiterate what you believe your property is worth and why. The three-member panel will discuss the case and reach a recommended value.

