



New Franklin County real estate tax bill to increase efficiency

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05/13/2008

In its upcoming May 16 collections, the Franklin County Treasurer's Office will debut a new version of its real estate tax bill.

Franklin County Treasurer Ed Leonard said the bill was re-designed to be more functional for both taxpayers and his office.

"I believe we have succeeded in making the real estate tax bill more user-friendly, easier for the taxpayer to read and understand, easier for the taxpayer to handle and easier for my staff to process on the back end," said Leonard.

Structurally, the new bill format will come with a window envelope and only one perforated section to detach.

Once mailed, the bills will go directly to US Bank's lockbox facilities in Cincinnati. According to Leonard, by having the bills sent directly to the lockbox facility, the payments can be processed faster and more efficiently than in the past.

"After a lot of testing, the use of the lockbox during the first half collection allowed the office to speed the tax bill processing safely and securely and get the money in the bank faster," said Leonard.

The new bill increases transparency by including a section that describes how the taxes are calculated and another area that tells the taxpayers where their tax dollars are going.

"Because many taxpayers want to know exactly how their taxes are calculated and exactly where their tax dollars are going, the old codes are gone and are replaced with descriptors that are in plain English," said Leonard.

The new format is expected to cut down on the number of phone calls from taxpayers asking questions about how to fill out the form, which in turn will allow the staff to focus on other taxpayer questions, he added.

"We can spend more time helping people and less time handling paperwork," said Leonard.

Leonard's office anticipates that the new bill's increased efficiency will add up to about \$30,000 in annual savings.