

STEVENS COUNTY TREASURER'S CITIZENS REPORT

2017



Leslie Valz
Stevens County Treasurer



From the County Treasurer

To the Citizens of Stevens County:

It is my pleasure to present our annual report for 2017. I hope this report will help you understand what we do and allow you to review our performance for the year.

I am committed to provide efficient and economical ways to meet the highest level of public treasury services. I want to thank and acknowledge my excellent staff, Sue, Tonyafay, Desi, Shawn and Alyssa.

We had another exciting and busy year in 2017. The County did an excellent job in the past few years adhering to the budget. This allowed the County Commissioners to discontinue the furloughs in 2013.

The County Commissioners are diligent on keeping a close watch on all departments' budgets and abiding by the resolution they adopted. The Commissioners have established an 8.33% (one month of operating expenses) reserved fund balance by resolution for cash flow purposes. After the fires of the three summers ago, they have continued to add funds for disaster and to meet best practices as established by Governmental Finance Office Association (GFOA).

We began using "enotice" for our online statements and payments in 2015. We currently have 500+ taxpayers subscribing to receive their tax statements electronically.

We have the ability to accept credit card payments in our office as of 2015, and also through our website.

The law regarding tax collections "RCW 84.56.020", changed with a July 2013 implementation date. This change allowed me to accept payment plans on delinquent taxes if the current year tax is paid on time. I opted to allow our taxpayers the opportunity to utilize this program at no additional cost to catch up with delinquent taxes.

As always, I am committed to providing timely, accurate, and essential financial information to the public and county officials. You will find my 2017 goals, accomplishments, and facts in the body of this report. I welcome any suggestions you might have to improve it. I am available to speak to you and/or interested groups about the operations of our office.

Finally, I would like to note that I feel privileged to work for the citizens of Stevens County and with a highly skilled, deeply committed team who make up the County Treasurer's Office. This county continues to have offices work together for the betterment of the County.

I hope you find this report useful.

Sincerely,

Leslie Valz

Leslie Valz
Stevens County Treasurer



Stevens County Treasurer's Office

General Taxpayer Information

Tax Due Dates:

February 23rd	Statements Mailed
April 30 th	1 st Half taxes due
May	1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st half not paid
June	1% interest added on full year taxes and 3% penalty if 1 st half not paid
July	1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st half not paid
August	1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st half not paid
September	1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st half not paid
October 31 st	2 nd half taxes due 1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st half not paid
November	1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st or 2 nd half taxes are not paid
December	8% penalty added 1% interest on full year taxes if 1 st OR 2 ND half not paid

If the above mentioned dates fall on a weekend, taxes are due the following Monday. Payments can be made directly by the taxpayer or by the taxpayer's mortgage company.

Modes of Payment:

- Mail payment with stub(U.S. postmarked by due date)
- Insert payment and coupon in drive through 24 hour drop box behind the courthouse.
- Insert payment and coupon in lockbox located outside the Treasurer's office.
- Pay at the Treasurer's office in person.
- Credit Card and E Check payments accepted online at:

<http://propertysearch.trueautomation.com/PropertyAccess/?cid=0>

Or by calling 1-888-272-9829 with jurisdiction code 5605

- Debit, Credit Card, and E Check payments and paperless billing at Enotice online at:

<https://enoticesonline.com>.

Delinquent Interest and Penalties:

Payments received after the due date will accrue interest at the rate of 1% per month with no fractional proration. In addition, a penalty of 3% on the full years' tax will be assessed on June 1st and an additional penalty of 8% will be assessed on December 1st in the first year of delinquency pursuant to RCW 84.56.020.

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

Taxpayer Name and Address Changes:

The property owner is responsible for notifying the Treasurer's office of taxpayer name and address changes. Written notification is preferred by the Treasurer's office. The address/name change request is on the back of the tax coupon. You can also request a name or address change via email below when necessary.

Note: Verification may be required for changes in taxpayer and/or owner.

Email: Taxinfo@stevenscountywa.gov

Requesting Tax Refunds:

Taxpayers who have paid in error or overpaid due to a tax adjustment may need to make a written request for a refund. Interest on refunds accrues from the date taxes were overpaid and is included in the refund. RCW 84.69.020 states that no refund will be made to a third party payee.

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect, manage, and safely invest taxpayers' dollars on behalf of Stevens County Government and Special Purpose Taxing districts in a fiscally accountable and effective manner.

VISION THRU POLICY

The vision for the Treasurer's office is to provide fiduciary services to our stakeholders and always value our customers. We pledge to serve professionally with respect, understanding, and courtesy. We also pledge to fairly and consistently apply all laws, policies, and procedures.

VALUES THRU EXPECTATIONS

IN FULFILLING OUR MISSION AND VISION, we commit to the following core values:

Honesty
Cooperation
Responsiveness

Professionalism
Accountability
Positive Attitude

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

Goals

Prudent and Responsible Investment of Public Funds

Efficient and Effective Cash Management

Save Taxpayers Time

Provide Accurate and Timely Information

Provide Positive Customer Relations

Objectives

Provide Superior Customer Service.

Streamline Procedures and Operations.

Develop Efficient Workflow and Management Information Systems.

Work closely with Assessor's office to create cohesive working relationship for our customers.

Apply statutes, procedures, and policies fairly and consistently.

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

Budget History

Benefits Increase for Staff	2017	\$497,149
Eight hour days implemented/increased salary cost	2016	\$465,700
\$20,000 Bank fees shown as expenditure/change in accounting	2015	\$446,800
Software purchase	2014	\$414,100
Furlough removed/Colas	2013	\$403,700
	2012	\$348,000
Software purchase	2011	\$336,100
Furloughs implemented	2010	\$319,235
	2009	\$330,500
Software purchase	2008	\$417,000

Staffing: Five Employees

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Treasurer provides essential services in connection with financial operation of local government. The Treasurer is custodian of all funds which includes the County and special purpose taxing districts. (15 School Districts, six cities, 13 fire districts, one library district, one weed assessment, three milfoil assessments, sewer districts and one water district.)

Primary Responsibilities Include:

- Billing, collecting and distributing property taxes, (including foreclosure and distraint actions on delinquent accounts, special assessments, excise taxes, and miscellaneous receipts;
- Accounting for all Funds and deposits of revenue for the state, county, special purpose taxing districts, e.g., school, fire, and water districts, etc.;
- Administering short and long term debt financing.
- Cash management and investment of money for the County and special purpose taxing districts;
- Managing the provision of banking services for the County and special purpose taxing districts.
- Custodian of public money.
- Investing monies for County and Special Purpose Taxing Districts

Accomplishments for 2017

- ✓ Continued to utilize automated online payments to upload into our system
- ✓ Reduced our banking fees by issuing all departments paperless statements.
- ✓ Continued to grow the participation in the payment plan for delinquent taxes.
- ✓ Ensured all foreclosure property owners were aware of payment plan options.
- ✓ Exceeded goals of collecting delinquent taxes.
- ✓ Drastically reduced number of parcels in foreclosure.

- ✓ Continued to work closely with the Assessor.

- ✓ Continue the process of scanning our own excise affidavits for ease of retrieval.
- ✓ Excise is scanned for electronic retrieval from current back to 1966.
- ✓ Aggressively seeking investments in line with the competitive rates available in 2017. Overnight investment account more than doubled interest earnings in 2017.
- ✓ The county began its third full year utilizing purchase cards. This will reduce the number of warrants issued and the time and cost associated with warrants. P-Cards also allow for increased flexibility, security, and a large rebate due to the purchase totals reaching the designated amount.

Goals for Future

- ✓ Offer ACH direct payments within the Treasurer's office
- ✓ Staff training
- ✓ Gather email addresses and phone numbers to send reminders about tax due dates and other information dissemination
- ✓ Continue to review taxpayers request and concerns
- ✓ Accumulate and report electronically all county owned property
- ✓ Continue the scanning of all excise affidavits
- ✓ Look at plans to increase tax payment collections sites in the southern part of the county

Facts

- In July 2013, RCW 84.56.020 allowed the County Treasurer to accept payment plans on delinquent taxes if current year is paid.
- Bankruptcies are being filed electronically which reduces the amount of staff time to process.
- School reports are automated which allows timely and accurate reporting to the ESD.
- Our bank allows us to take advantage of electronic banking and remote deposits for improved cash management and saving staff time.
- The office has continued to be productive with five employees versus the seven employees in 2002.
- The Assessor's office converted to the same program as the Treasurer's office reducing problems and allowing taxes to be billed on time. This eliminated cash flow problems the county encountered in February through April in prior years.

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION

Tax Administration

- Excise Tax Processing & Reporting
- Property Tax Billing, Collections, Cancellations and Supplements
- Property Tax Name/Address Changes
- Property Tax Refunds
- Personal Property Distraint Collections
- Bankruptcy Tax Collections
- Foreclosure preparation, collections, and sales
- Special Assessment Billing & administration
- Segregation/Tax Redistribution
- Web Site Management

Financial Services

- Accounting
- Debt Service Administration
- Cash Management
- Investing
- Warrant & Bank Reconciliation
- Manage Banking Services
- Cash Receipts
- Cash Disbursements
- Internal Controls
- Securities Custody/Safekeeping

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

The measures reported on this page were included for you. What would you like to see reported on this page?

Please let us know by contacting Leslie Valz at phone 684-2593 or email treasurer@stevenscountywa.gov

2017

OFFICE INDICATORS/ WORK UNITS

Administration and Tax Management

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2016-2017 Percent of Change	
Taxable Real & Personal Property Parcels	41,444	41,428	41,082	41,154	41,316	41,406	0.22%	
Senior/Disabilities Exemptions	1,735	1,848	1,848	1,791	1,808	1,768	-2.26%	
Investment transactions	4,003	3,728	4,772	4,023	3,841	4,658	17.54%	
Tax Parcels in Foreclosure Sale	11	19	15	7	4	11	63.64%	* Note 2
Customer Service Phone Calls	27,600	25,080	35,112	33,235	35,592	35,826	0.65%	* Note 3
Tax Refund Petitions	401	341	333	224	247	221	-11.76%	* Note 3
New Bankruptcy Cases Filed	58	63	66	87	78	65	-20.00%	
Real Estate Excise Tax Affidavits Processed	2,029	2,167	2,228	2,291	2,442	2,590	5.71%	
* Note 2 - In 2011 we added the mineral rights into the foreclosure process. See Letter from the Treasurer.								
* Note 3 - Increased number of BOE cases in 2012 directly affects incoming phone calls and walk ins and Refund Petitions. This amount decreased slightly in 2013. In 2015 we combined multiple years for one taxpayer to a single petition								

Stevens County Treasurer's Office

2017

OFFICE INDICATORS/ WORK UNITS

Cash Management

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Percent of Change	
Tax Remittance Receipts Processed	30,099	30,629	29,964	30,749	27,227	28,710	5.17%	* Note 1
Property Tax Collections	\$36,813,042	\$36,497,753	\$36,781,840	\$37,134,332	\$37,593,159	\$38,024,494	1.13%	
Total Excise Collections	\$1,647,971	\$2,124,997	\$2,404,671	\$2,913,524	\$2,969,892	\$3,335,459	10.96%	
Investment Interest	\$95,842	\$112,113	\$105,755	\$107,376	\$134,960	\$185,088	27.08%	* Note 3
Investment Fee Revenue	\$3,772	\$2,727	\$1,807	\$2,473	\$5,452	\$10,359	47.37%	
Tax Title Sales	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	
Total Receipts (Including Tax transactions)	\$169,699,605	\$154,310,083	\$155,936,736	\$157,088,679	\$168,267,291	\$158,591,535	-6.10%	
Affidavits Scanned	9,612	11,311	7,877	20,146	20,935	8,222	-154.62%	* Note 2
* Note 1 - Tax remittance machine that allows us to mass receipt and send deposits electronically to the bank.								
* Note 2 - Special project, all affidavits copied and retrievable electronically. Current and scanned back to 1965.								
* Note 3 - Current Expense.								

Comparison of Average Levy Rates by Year Due in 2009-2016

County	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Adams	\$12.22	\$12.04	\$12.51	\$12.96	\$12.85	\$12.64	\$12.68	\$12.46
Asotin	12.52	12.19	12.44	12.67	12.76	12.05	11.81	11.43
Benton	11.54	11.59	11.67	11.53	11.58	11.70	11.75	11.60
Chelan	9.53	9.22	9.45	10.13	10.64	11.02	11.09	10.80
Clallam	8.28	8.75	9.46	10.32	11.12	11.18	10.83	10.22
Clark	10.06	11.60	13.17	13.66	14.51	13.77	12.88	12.27
Columbia	10.86	11.07	12.07	11.31	11.62	11.12	11.29	10.55
Cowlitz	10.31	10.68	11.29	11.83	12.42	12.41	12.33	11.55
Douglas	9.50	9.55	10.70	11.24	12.09	11.53	11.43	10.93
Ferry	8.91	9.14	9.21	9.18	9.43	9.48	9.68	9.68
Franklin	13.35	12.74	12.83	12.89	12.99	12.94	12.65	12.43
Garfield	11.22	10.89	11.55	10.31	11.29	9.26	9.94	9.50
Grant	12.20	11.93	12.12	12.70	13.70	13.28	12.95	12.30
Grays Harbor	10.75	10.55	10.73	11.64	12.16	12.69	13.08	13.58
Island	6.86	7.28	7.94	8.37	8.70	9.51	9.34	9.25
Jefferson	7.92	7.91	8.56	9.20	9.66	10.18	10.07	10.08
King	8.81	10.10	10.81	11.37	11.93	11.63	10.62	10.56
Kitsap	9.02	10.13	10.70	11.71	12.23	12.44	12.04	12.26
Kittitas	7.25	7.13	7.76	8.02	9.18	9.80	9.86	9.95
Klickitat	8.43	8.51	9.04	9.04	9.04	9.55	9.76	9.57
Lewis	9.00	9.64	9.88	10.42	10.87	11.12	11.26	11.31
Lincoln	11.49	11.76	11.97	12.63	12.48	11.74	11.94	11.65
Mason	9.00	8.79	8.84	9.53	10.54	11.47	11.52	11.62
Okanogan	9.41	9.58	9.58	10.17	10.59	10.41	10.64	10.79
Pacific	11.35	10.69	11.06	12.45	12.56	13.17	13.81	13.55
Pend Oreille	8.60	8.34	8.25	8.83	9.03	8.96	9.10	9.05
Pierce	10.86	11.42	12.94	13.87	15.43	15.23	15.16	14.73
San Juan	5.04	4.88	5.35	5.60	6.76	6.85	6.94	6.82
Skagit	9.04	9.77	10.52	11.29	12.27	12.11	12.26	11.90
Skamania	7.87	8.23	8.80	9.02	10.55	10.34	10.66	9.95
Snohomish	9.11	9.92	11.25	12.41	13.01	12.37	12.05	11.33
Spokane	11.33	11.86	12.94	13.29	14.32	13.77	13.83	13.60
Stevens	9.39	9.40	9.82	9.80	9.95	9.79	9.72	9.59
Thurston	9.89	10.46	11.65	12.67	13.69	13.08	13.01	12.77
Wahkiakum	7.89	7.84	8.43	8.99	9.60	9.43	9.78	8.90
Walla Walla	11.42	12.67	12.60	12.69	13.36	13.30	13.19	13.19
Whatcom	9.38	9.36	10.28	10.58	11.24	11.58	11.44	11.29
Whitman	12.68	12.86	13.03	13.27	13.75	14.21	14.21	14.39
Yakima	11.17	11.64	11.64	12.34	12.50	12.64	12.24	12.20
STATEWIDE	\$9.41	\$10.28	\$11.14	\$11.78	\$12.48	\$12.25	\$11.70	\$11.47

¹Per \$1,000 of assessed value.

CONTACT US:

Treasurer's Office Telephone Numbers:

Toll Free	(866)513-2741, ext. 593
TTY Number	(800)833-6388
Outside Local Line	(509)684-2593
Foreclosure	All Extensions
Real Property Tax	All Extensions
Bankruptcy	All Extensions
Personal Property Tax Ext.	#3223 or 2593
Segregation/Mobile Home	Ext. #3223 or 2593
Revenue/Financial	Ext. #7591
Real Estate Excise Tax	Ext. #3218 or 3222
Senior Exemption	Ext. #2593
County Treasurer	Ext. #7592

Our e-mail address is treasurer@stevenscountywa.gov
taxinfo@stevenscountywa.gov

Our web site is www.stevenscountywa.gov/treasurer

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