

## Is This Fair?



**\$60,000**

Imagine two houses. These two homes were built the same year right next door to one another. Over the years, they got just about the same kind of upkeep and improvements. They're about as identical as two houses can be.

The house on the left was assessed at \$60,000 the last time assessments

were done in that neighborhood.

But the house on the right -- *the identical house* -- was last assessed at **\$85,000!**

Why? Because the house on the right just sold, so the actual sale price (\$85,000) was used to set the assessed value. After all, the assessed value is

**\$85,000**

nothing more than the fair market value. . .or, what a willing buyer would pay a willing seller.

Once we equalize, this kind of unfairness will be a thing of the past. The days of big jumps in assessments will be over.

**And that's much more fair.**

## Thinking about Selling Your House?



If you're like most homeowners, it's important to you to know the value of your property: how much it's worth, how home improvements have increased its value, and what a fair price might be if you decide to sell.

The Jefferson County PVA's computer-assisted assessments will be so accurate that you can pretty much use the value to figure the range for your asking price if you're planning to sell.

## See Us First!



The Jefferson County PVA wants to be helpful. If you have a question about any assessment, please give us a call at the special **24-hour Information Line** we've set up. Call 625-6224 and we'll do our best to answer your question.

If you call us and we're still not able to satisfy you, you have the right to appeal. To get the process started, just write the county clerk between May 4 and May 16, 1992. The mailing address for appeals is P.O. Box 33033, Louisville, KY 40232-3033. Simply give your address and state that you wish to appeal the assessment.



504 Fiscal Court Building  
Louisville, Kentucky 40202  
502/625-6380

March 1992

Dear Homeowner:

Of the thousands of calls we get each year from homeowners, the one we hear the most is also the toughest one to answer:

**"Is every home in the county assessed at fair market value?"**

Until this year, unfortunately, we've had to say "No. Things aren't equal." That's because we've never been able to do a countywide equalization all in one year. Instead, we've done the best anybody could do by reviewing and assessing the county by neighborhoods.

Once we equalize, however, things *will* be different. For the first time, we're able to study and fairly assess every residential property in Jefferson County — all in one year. That means:

- o Assessed values will decrease as well as increase.
- o Doubled or tripled increases in assessed values will be almost unheard of.
- o Everybody will know what to expect and how to budget accurately.
- o Increases will be related to growth in the community.

An advanced computer system lets us use reliable, totally up-to-date sales data in figuring your home's assessed value. That's not to say we're perfect. I urge you to call me today and let me know if you have any questions or concerns about any assessment. And, if you're not satisfied, I urge you to appeal.

I'm doing everything in my power to see that you're treated *fairly and equally*. That's the reason I want you to let me know what you think. And that's the reason we've equalized residential property assessments in Jefferson County.

It's the only fair thing to do.

Sincerely,

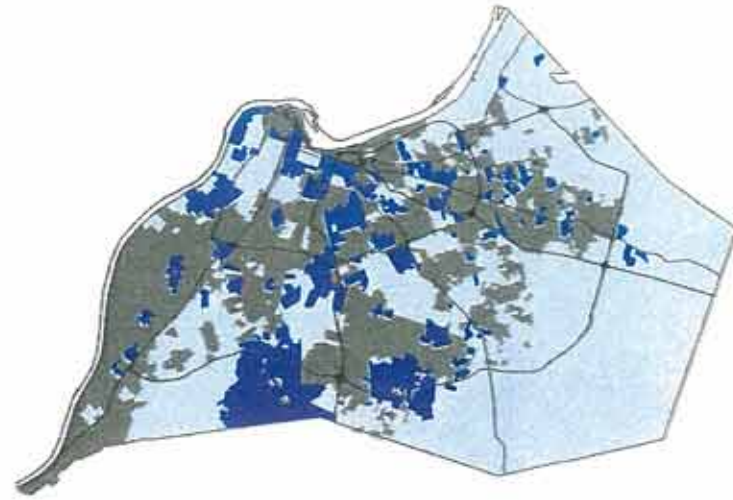
*Denise Harper-Angel*

Denise Harper-Angel  
Property Valuation Administrator

PS: We've installed a 24-hour Information Line especially for your questions about the countywide equalization. It's 625-6224. Let us know how we can be helpful.

## Before Equalization

Jefferson County was assessed by neighborhoods before 1992. A neighborhood is formed by grouping similar homes. Before 1992, there were over 350 neighborhoods. Limited resources made it impossible to review every home in the county at the same time and set a fair, equalized assessed value.



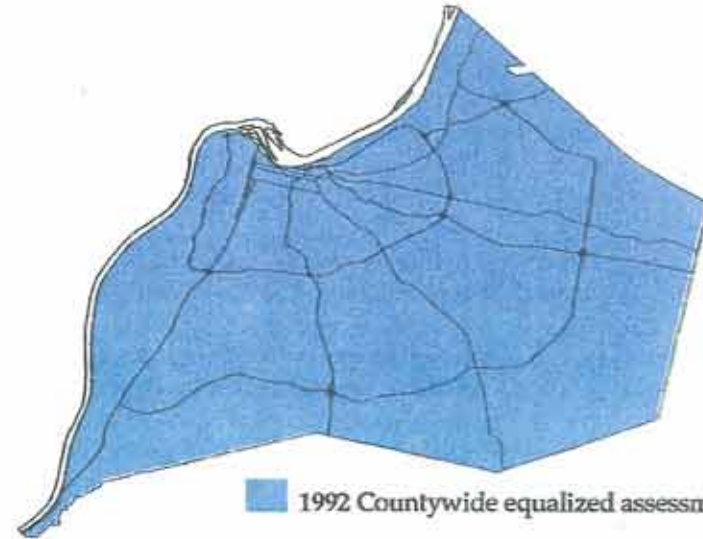
Assessment by Neighborhoods: ■ 1987 ■ 1988 ■ 1990

## After Equalization

In 1992, all 189,000 homes will have been reviewed for fair market value.

By using an advanced computer-assisted system, the PVA can use the most reliable, up-to-date sales information in setting the fair market value of your home.

Any increases in the future will be smaller and more predictable. The days of doubled and tripled increases in assessments will be almost unheard of.



■ 1992 Countywide equalized assessments

## Jefferson County Assessment Overview

Jefferson County currently has over 189,000 pieces of residential property that need to be physically examined at least once every four years, according to a recent state law. In the past, however, Jefferson County was assessed by neighborhoods in three separate years. Out of those reviewed:

- 21,000 homes were reassessed in Jefferson County in 1987
- 88,000 were reassessed in 1988
- 45,000 were reassessed in 1990

While some of these homes were only reassessed once in eight years, others were reassessed *every time they sold*. (See *Is This Fair?*) That means that any house that sold recently will most likely be assessed higher -- maybe much higher -- than a virtually identical house that sold a long time ago.

On the flip side, generally speaking, the longer it's been since your house was reassessed, the larger the increase you're likely to see on your notice. Unequal assessments mean some property owners pay more than their fair share of taxes ... and some, obviously, pay less.

**Unequal assessments hurt everybody.**

## Homestead Exemptions



The PVA can help you file for an exemption from a portion of your assessed value if you're eligible. Call 625-6380 if you're 65 or older or have been declared totally disabled by an agency of the federal government. If you qualify, you can get \$20,300 subtracted from your assessed value ... and that will lower the amount you'll have to pay in taxes.

For your convenience, you may apply downtown or at one of our three new satellite offices at the regional government centers.

## Equalization Advantages

The countywide equalization of assessments will mean a big improvement for all homeowners. By using an advanced computer, the Jefferson County PVA can figure every residential property value in one year. This means only the most up-to-date information from the sale of homes similar to yours will be used to determine your assessment.

That's a lot more fair:

- *Once assessments are all done on an equal, countywide basis doubling or tripling of values will be almost unheard of. Some assessments will decrease.*
- *You can get a pretty good idea of what your home should be assessed for by looking at any similar home in your neighborhood that sold recently.*

Any increases in the future will be tied strictly to growth in the community. No more big jumps in your assessed value. You pay **only your fair share**.

## Important Facts and Figures

- Every county in Kentucky has a Property Valuation Administrator. It is the PVA's job to figure the fair market value for all kinds of real estate. Jefferson County also has an Equalization Board of licensed Realtors who review the computerized results.
- Recent state law says PVAs must physically examine all real estate at least once every four years.
- The property values go into the taxing authorities' formula for deciding the amount of taxes collected each year.
- The four largest taxing authorities in Jefferson County are: Jefferson County Public Schools; the City of Louisville; the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and Jefferson County.
- In Jefferson County, state law assigns the job of collecting taxes to the sheriff.
- State law caps total revenue increases by most taxing authorities at no higher than 4 percent more than the year before.
- When the 4 percent cap kicks in, the tax rates get rolled back and homeowners get a break.