

# SUMTER COUNTY, GEORGIA

SPRING 2016

## Tag & Tax News You Can Use

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### ON THE WEB

sumtercountygatax.com



## The Tax Commissioner

A Publication of the Sumter County Tax Commissioner's Office

Wilkie Smith, Tax Commissioner

500 West Lamar Street • P.O. Box 1044 • Americus GA 31709

(229) 928-4530

## Remember **TAVT** with all vehicle purchases

Wow, time flies!

It has been three years since the new Title Tax law took effect. Motor vehicles purchased on or after March 1, 2013, and titled in Georgia, are exempt from sales and use tax and annual ad-valorem, also known as the "birthday tax".

These taxes are replaced by a one-time tax on the fair market value of the vehicle, whether you buy a vehicle from a dealership or an individual. TAVT is the acronym for Title Ad Valorem Tax.

The fair market value (FMV) is the taxable base of the motor vehicle. The manner in which fair market value is determined depends on several factors as determined by the State of Georgia.

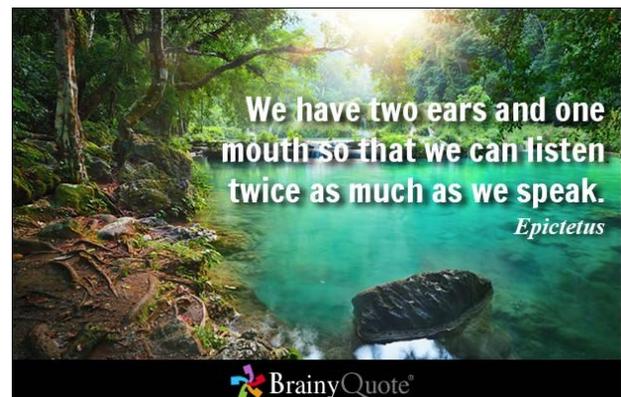
The TAVT is calculated by multiplying the FMV by the rate in effect on the date of purchase. The current TAVT rate is 7%.

A reduction is made for the trade-in when the sale was made by a dealer, but not when the sale was made by a private individual. The application for title and TAVT payment must be submitted within 30 days to the county where the purchaser resides.

The TAVT must be paid at the time of registration. The dealership must deliver the title and TAVT payment on your behalf to the county tag agent where the vehicle will be registered.

For all person-to-person transactions, also known as "casual" sales, the new owner is responsible for TAVT.

All vehicles 1986 or newer must have a title to process.



## Privacy of Motor Vehicle Information

Your Motor Vehicle registration information is a private record. The Driver's Privacy Protection Act states motor vehicle records are exempt from open records request. The disclosure of personal information, such as ID numbers, name, address, & telephone information is prohibited. Tags, lien information, previous owners, and such should not be disclosed.

When you visit the Tag Office, that is the reason that you are asked to show your driver's license. We must be able to identify you as the vehicle's registered owner or connect you to the owner in some way.

If you are sending someone to conduct tag business on your behalf, it is suggested you call ahead to the Tag/Tax Office.

## Mobile Homes

A personal property mobile home is a mobile home that is taxed alone without the property. These tax bills were mailed in January and were due on or before **April 1, 2016**.

A 10% penalty is assessed on the first day the bill is past due. A 1% interest charge accrues each month thereafter on unpaid taxes.

If you have any questions about your mobile home bill, please contact us immediately.

## Assessment Notices

### Watch for your Current “Notice of Assessment”

Your *Notice of Current Assessment* for real property will state the Board of Assessor’s value for your property. If you disagree with the value, you may submit an appeal to the Sumter County Board of Assessor’s within forty-five (45) days of the date of the notice.

This is not a tax bill, but the notice also contains an “Estimate of Taxes” for your property for the current tax year. It will estimate county, school, and city taxes (if applicable) based on the 2015 millage rate. Contact the County Tax Assessor’s Office at (229) 928-4513 if you should have any questions.

Notices are usually mailed during the month of May.

### REMINDER !

**ASSESSMENT  
NOTICES ARE  
COMING  
  
MAY 2016**

## Real & Personal Property Tax Bills “Intent to FIFA” Notices to be mailed soon

The 2015 property tax bills for real and personal property were due December 15, 2015. 1% interest accrues for each month the bill remains past due. However, if the taxes remained unpaid after 90 days, a 10% penalty was assessed. Additionally, a lien (FIFA) will be recorded against the property.

An “Intent to FIFA” notice will

be mailed to the address on record indicating that the lien will be placed on the property 30 (thirty) days following the date of the letter.

If you did not receive your property tax bill, please contact the Tax Commissioner’s Office.

Not receiving tax bills or notices does not relieve a taxpayer’s responsibility for payment

of the taxes.

By law, the owner of record on January 1, 2015 receives the property tax bill in the mail.

If you should have any questions, please call the Sumter County Tax Commissioner

We will be happy to try and help you.

Judy Reeves (Trivia Answer)

Who served as the Sumter County Probate Judge from 1993— 2016, retiring at the end of this year?

Answer on page 2

### TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE DAY



**TAG/TAX OFFICE  
NOW ACCEPTING  
CREDIT CARDS  
IN PERSON**

Credit Card Fees apply

## Renew Your Tag Online

Your vehicle tag may be renewed online. Go to the Sumter County Tax Commissioner website ([www.sumtercountygatax.com](http://www.sumtercountygatax.com)). In the Quick Links section, click on *Online Tag Renewal*, which takes you the DOR website. There is a convenience fee of 2.35%, charged by the DOR to your credit or debit card.

Tags renewed online will be processed by the Tag Office and mailed to the owner’s address of record the following business day. If the address on the renewal notice is not correct, then please **DO NOT RENEW ONLINE**.

If you experience any issues in renewing your tag online, please give us a call at the Tag Office.

Sumter County does not accept E-Checks.

Credit cards accepted online are:



# Pay Your Property Taxes Online

Sumter County Property taxes may be paid on-line. Go to: [www.sumtercountygatax.com](http://www.sumtercountygatax.com)

Click on *Search & Pay Taxes*, read and *Accept* the Disclaimer, and begin searching.

Credit Cards accepted on-line are VISA®, MasterCard®, Discover®, and American Express®.

Transaction fees apply (2.2% & 30¢ per transaction); are indicated prior to finalizing your payment.

Partial payments are not accepted on-line. You do NOT have to set up a PayPal account to pay.

Please call our office if you should have any questions. Other features now on this website are:

- ✓ Overview and Pay
- ✓ View & Print Receipt
- ✓ View & Print Bill
- ✓ Send us an Address Change

## Replica State of Georgia donated to TC Office by Employees

What a Surprise!

Recently, the Tag & Tax Clerks in the TC Office surprised Tax Commissioner Wilkie Smith with a beautiful gift of the State of Georgia. The nearly 4-foot high board is made from old Georgia tags mounted on plywood in the shape of our great State.

“This was a true shock to me,” stated the Tax Commissioner. “We had been talking about this project for a while, but did not have any idea of how we were going to get it done. I go on a vacation and when I return, it’s done!”

What a Staff of Clerks!

*Pictured at right:* Major Coleman Williams of the Sumter County Sheriff’s Office constructed the State of Georgia for the Tax Commissioner’s Office. Thanks to Major Williams for a beautiful job!  
Note: All time & materials were donated by Major Williams. →



## Renew your tag before it expires Birthday or Business Name



A vehicle registered in an individual’s name has a birthday expiration. A vehicle registered in a business name has an expiration date at the end of the month designated by the first letter on the registration. A penalty will be assessed the next day unless your expiration date falls on a weekend or the tag office is closed for a holiday.

Not receiving a renewal notice does not relieve the registered owner from the obligation to renew the vehicle’s registration by the due date. If the owner does not receive a renewal notice, it is still the owner’s responsibility to renew by their expiration date. Penalties will not be waived because the owner did not receive a renewal notice.

Additionally, law enforcement “frowns” on persons who drive on an expired tag. With new technology and “tag readers”, don’t risk being caught driving on an expired tag.

Call the Tag office if you do not get your renewal notice. We can tell you the amount of the renewal. Bring your driver’s license or tag number to renew.

**Sumter County  
Office of the Tax Commissioner**

Sumter County Courthouse  
P. O. Box 1044  
500 West Lamar Street  
Americus, GA 31709

(229) 928-4530  
www.sumtercountygatax.com

**Wilkie Smith**, *Tax Commissioner*  
**Christy Spivey**, *Deputy Commissioner*



The Tax Commissioner is an elected Constitutional Officer responsible for the collection of property taxes, including preparation of the county tax digest, billing of taxes, and the accounting and distribution of those taxes.

Property taxes include those assessed on real estate, inventory and equipment, public utilities, heavy-duty equipment, timber sales and *ad valorem* taxes on motor vehicles and mobile homes. These collections are disbursed to state, county, school, and city governing authorities.

The Tax Commissioner also acts as an agent of the State of Georgia for the titling and registration of motor vehicles, and is responsible for the operation of the tag office in the Sumter County Courthouse.

It is my pleasure to serve the citizens of Sumter County.

Wilkie Smith  
Tax Commissioner

Email: [wsmith@sumtercountyga.us](mailto:wsmith@sumtercountyga.us)

## Tag Registration/Renewal Stats

	SUMTER COUNTY – GEORGIA	ALL COUNTIES -- GEORGIA
PASSENGER VEHICLES	15,889	5,842,909
TRUCKS	7,745	1,869,914
TRAILERS	5,019	1,115,519
MOTORCYCLES	427	196,276
BUSES	145	41,626
OTHER	3	221
<b>TOTAL REGISTERED VEHICLES</b>	<b>29,228</b>	<b>9,066,465</b>

**Passenger Vehicles:**

Ambulance, Convertible, Coupe, Hearse, Jeep, Limousine, Mixer, Motor Home, Multi-Purpose Vehicle, Roadster, Station Wagon, Touring Car, Van, 2 Door, 3 Door, 4 Door

**Trucks:**

Truck Tractor, Truck, Wrecker

**Trailers:**

Boat Trailer, Camper, Cattle/Horse Trailer, Trailer, Travel Trailer, Utility Trailer

**Others:**

Special Mobile Equipment, Vehicle Body Style recorded incorrectly or Vehicle Body Style registered in error.