ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX SALE AUCTION

Each year on July 1st, the Treasurer-Tax Collector has the "power to sell" properties that have been in default (delinquent) on the property taxes for three years (nonresidential) or five years (residential) and have not been redeemed (paid in full) or enrolled in a Five-Year Payment Plan.

Tax-defaulted property is scheduled for sale at a public auction to the highest bidder at the time and place fixed for the sale.

You may obtain a list of properties to be offered at the next tax sale by emailing helpinghand@ventura.org and request to be put on the Tax Sale Mailing List.

Q: CAN I MAIL IN A BID FOR A PROPERTY?

A: No, not at a public auction. The public auction requires your presence, or that of your representative, to verbally bid on the properties. Anyone wishing to bid on tax sale properties being offered the day of sale must be registered prior to bidding.

Q: CAN I OBTAIN A PROPERTY AT THE PUBLIC AUCTION TAX SALE BY PAYING THE DELINQUENT TAXES PRIOR TO THE TAX SALE DATE?

A: No. Legal title to a tax-defaulted property subject to the Tax Collector's power to sell can be acquired only through the Treasurer-Tax Collector by being the successful bidder at the tax sale, and by paying the full purchase amount, including the Documentary Transfer Tax.

Q: HOW DO I FIND OR "SEE" A PROPERTY I WOULD LIKE TO BID ON AT THE TAX SALE?

A: Vacant (unimproved) land has no address and therefore its approximate geographic location may be determined through the use of County Assessor maps. Exact boundary lines of a property may be determined by a survey of the property. The County does not have possession or control of the property and cannot grant access. "Improved" properties may have a street address.

Q: HOW DO I PAY FOR A PROPERTY AT THE TAX SALE?

A: Payment must be made in cash or cashier's check. No other forms of payment are accepted. Personal checks and credit cards are not accepted.

Q: CAN I GO TO MY BANK TO GET THE CASH OR CERTIFIED FUNDS AFTER I AM THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER?

A: No. You must have the required cash or certified funds with you before you bid on any property at the Tax Sale.

Q: WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF PAYMENT FOR PROPERTY AT THE TAX SALE?

A: Immediately after the bid is declared successful, the purchaser is escorted to a cashier station to make payment. All payments must be in one of the accepted forms of payment. No other forms of payments will be accepted. All successful bids must be paid in full or, if eligible, a deposit paid for a deferred-payment agreement or "Credit Sale."

A successful bidder who does not have sufficient funds to pay for his or her purchase cannot complete the transaction and will be disallowed from participating in all other bids that day. The property will be re-offered for sale at the end of the auction.

Q: HOW CAN I DETERMINE WHAT USE I CAN MAKE OF A TAX SALE PROPERTY BEFORE I PURCHASE IT?

A: You may consult the Zoning Department of any city within which a property lies regarding use of the parcel. For property in unincorporated areas of the County, you may refer to the Zoning Section of the Ventura County Department of Planning and Land Use. The County Recorder's Office should be consulted for any recorded easements on a property. In addition, there may be other agencies to consult with based on the current, future, potential, or intended use of the property.

Q: HOW SOON CAN I TAKE POSSESSION OF THE PROPERTY AFTER MY PURCHASE AT THE TAX SALE?

A: The successful bidder may take possession of a property after making payment in full and after the Tax Deed to Purchaser has been recorded. Tax Deeds are generally recorded within four weeks of the sale or upon completion (payment in full) of a credit sale agreement.

Q: HOW IS THE MINIMUM BID ON A TAX SALE PROPERTY DETERMINED?

A: State law requires that the minimum bid on a tax-defaulted parcel offered at a public auction for the first time be no less than the total amount necessary to pay the back taxes on the parcel (redeem the parcel), plus costs of sale. The minimum bid on a parcel previously offered at sale can be set at the Tax Collector's discretion in order to stimulate bidding. Minimum bids will be as stated per parcel and each raise will be in increments of at least $100 until sold.

Q: WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO PAY BACK TAXES TO PREVENT A TAX DEFAULTED PROPERTY FROM BEING OFFERED AT AUCTION?

A: The deadline is 5:00 PM on the last business day prior to the scheduled Property Tax Sale Auction.

Q: HOW ARE THE LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS DETERMINED?

A: The descriptions provided are based on the official records of the Ventura County Assessors' Office and are presumed to be correct.

Q: WHAT PROPERTY IS EXCLUDED FROM THE SALE?

A: Any personal property, such as a mobile home or equipment located on the property, is not a part of the sale.

Q: WHAT ARE THE RULES REGARDING THE I.R.S.?

A: The I.R.S. has the option of redeeming, up until 120 days after the sale, any property on which there is an I.R.S. lien recorded.

Q: ARE THERE ANY DISCLOUSURES THAT WILL BE ANOUNCED AT THE SALE?

A: Yes, a notice of contaminated / possible contaminated properties. When we become aware of properties on our sales list that are known or suspected to be contaminated, we will identify these properties and the Lead Agency's name and address where all available information may be reviewed

Q: HOW OFTEN WILL THE AUCTION INFORMATION BE UPDATED?

A: The tax sale information will be updated daily and will not be finalized until 5:00 PM the day before the sale.

Q: HOW WILL TITLE BE VESTED?

A: Prior to payment, successful bidders will be required to submit their deed information indicating how they want their new property to be conveyed. The deed will be mailed to the purchaser after recording, usually within eight to twelve weeks. This deed conveys all right, title, and interest to the property in accordance with the provisions of Revenue and Taxation Code section 3712.

Q: DO ALL PROPERTIES WITH AN ADDRESS HAVE A HOME ON THEM?

A: No! An address does not mean there is or was a structure on the property. It does not guarantee that the address shown in the tax sale list is correct or that the structure is part of the sale.

Q: IS A TAX SALE PUBLICLY ADVERTISED?

A: Yes. State law dictates that the event of a tax sale must be published three (3) times in successive seven (7) day intervals before the tax sale date in a newspaper of general circulation within Ventura County. All parcels in the tax sale will be advertised with the first publication date being not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the date of the sale.

Q: WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PROPERTIES THAT DO NOT SELL AT THE AUCTION? CAN TAX SALE PROPERTIES BE PURCHASED DIRECTLY FROM THE COUNTY?

A: If no acceptable bids are received for a property, it will be offered again at intervals of no more than six years until the property is sold, pursuant to Section 3692 of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. Legal title to tax-defaulted property subject to power of sale can be obtained through the Treasurer and Tax Collector only by being the successful bidder at the tax sale. Additionally, pursuant to Section 3698.5(c) of said code, the Tax Collector may re-offer the property at any time for a minimum bid that is set at the discretion of the Tax Collector and approved by the County Board of Supervisors.