Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Q: How are property taxes determined?
A: Property taxes are calculated by multiplying your property's taxable value by the millage rate, then dividing by 1,000. The basic formula is: (Taxable Value x 1,000) × Millage Rate = Annual Property Tax.

Q: Who sets my property value?
A: The Palm Beach County Property Appraiser determines your property's assessed value each year. This is different from market value and may be limited by Save Our Homes caps.

Q: What portion of my property taxes goes to the City of Lake Worth Beach?
A: Only about 26% of your total property tax bill goes to the City of Lake Worth Beach. The majority goes to Palm Beach County School District (32%) and Palm Beach County government (36%).

Q: What is a millage rate?
A: The millage rate is the tax rate per $1,000 of assessed property value. Lake Worth Beach's millage rate is **5.4945**, meaning you pay $5.49 for every $1,000 of assessed value.

Q: Can the City of Lake Worth Beach control my entire property tax bill?
A: No. The City can only control its portion (26% of your bill). We cannot influence rates set by the school district, county, or special districts.

Q: Who benefits from property tax "reform"?
A: Not local residents: Snowbirds and large corporate landowners. The people who lose are the fulltime Floridians who rely on well-funded services and expect a system that benefits them.

Q: What happens if we eliminate property taxes?
A: Eliminating local property taxes won't eliminate costs, it just shifts them. It means higher sales taxes, new fees, or cuts to local services. And it reroutes decision-making from local communities to Tallahassee.

Q: Isn't Florida already a low-tax state?
A: Yes. Florida ranks among the most tax-efficient states in the nation. Our property tax burden is about half that of Texas, thanks to smart spending, local accountability, and the "Florida Formula" that keeps dollars and decisions close to home.

Save Our Homes and Exemptions

Q: What is Save Our Homes?
A: Save Our Homes is a Florida constitutional amendment that caps annual increases in assessed value at 3% for homesteaded properties, protecting longtime residents from dramatic tax increases.

Q: How do I qualify for homestead exemption?
A: You must make the property your permanent residence as of January 1 and apply with the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser by March 1.

Q: Why are my taxes different from the previous owner?
A: When property changes ownership, exemptions are removed and the property is reassessed at current market value. You must reapply for exemptions.

City Services and Budget

Q: What do City property taxes fund?
A: City property taxes funds crucial services, including law enforcement and fire, parks and recreation and road maintenance. These services are tailored to local needs and managed by leaders directly accountable to the people they serve.

Q: How much does the City spend on public safety?
A: In 2025, Lake Worth Beach spent over $16.6 million on police and fire services combined - actually more than our total property tax revenue of $16 million.

Q: Has Lake Worth Beach raised property tax rates recently?
A: Like 71% of Florida cities, Lake Worth Beach has kept millage rates at or below 2020 levels despite rising costs. Lake Worth Beach's millage rate has remained the same since 2016.

Getting Help

Q: How can I appeal my property assessment?
A: Contact the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser's office. They have formal appeal processes and can explain how your assessment was determined.

Q: Where can I get more information about exemptions?
A: Visit the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser website or call their office directly for information about available exemptions and application procedures.

Q: How can I stay informed about City budget decisions?
A: Attend City Council meetings, participate in budget hearings. Find out about meetings and agendas on the City's website.