



COUNTY OF NEVADA

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www.nevadacountyca.gov/348/Treasurer-Tax-Collector

TOP TEN WAYS TO AVOID PROPERTY TAX PENALTIES

Nevada County property tax bills are mailed each October and are due in two installments. The first installment is always due November 1, and delinquent after December 10, while the second installment is always due February 1, and delinquent after April 10. Here are the top ten ways to avoid costly penalties on your property tax bill.

1. Online-bill-pay is becoming more and more popular. What most do not know is that the financial institution is still issuing a paper check to the payee and **DO NOT USE POSTMARKS**. If you send payment of taxes via bill pay, you must send it at least 10 days in advance to avoid costly penalties. We see so payment envelopes come in that are postmarked after December 10th, and April 10th, and by State law, they are delinquent if not postmarked by the 10th (unless the 10th falls on a weekend).
2. If you purchase a home during certain times of the year (July-Oct) you will most likely not be receiving a tax bill. It often takes 3-6 months for a property to completely go through the process of a new ownership change. If you are a new homeowner, it is very important to call the Tax Collector's office to check that property taxes have been paid through escrow. This simple phone call will save you money in costly penalties as State law does not allow penalties to be waived because a bill was not received. A proactive approach will serve you well.
3. Make sure that when paying your taxes, you double check that the legal amount matches the amount on the stub. So many payments are returned to taxpayers because the legal amount on the check is not written correctly. This is the amount that the financial institutions will debit your account. We cannot accept payments that are incorrect. These payments will be returned to the taxpayer and a 10-day extension letter will be issued. The letters are returned to the address on the check, so it is just as important to make sure that the address on the check is up to date. Because anyone can pay anyone's taxes, it is often not the owner of record that we are returning checks to, and this office cannot make assumptions on who should receive the returned check.
4. Postmarks are the determining factor as to whether a payment is accepted as timely or not. In this day and age, technology has advanced, and postmarks are becoming a thing of the past. Until State law is changed to accommodate, it is important for taxpayers to understand how they work. Taxpayers who send their payments by mail are cautioned that the USPS only postmarks certain mail depending on the type of postage used. Mail that is postmarked is that which has a standard postage stamp. Metered mail, stamps sold through a private vendor such as stamps.com, pre-sorted mail and automated postal center stamps are not postmarked. Keep in mind, that the USPS office in your hometown may send out mail to another town for postmarks. This can be a day or two later, depending on your location. If you wait until the delinquent date to mail your tax bill, you will be best served to get a hand-canceled postmark from the USPS clerk.



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5. If you are wary of postmarks and want to assure that you have proof of mailing, you can purchase and complete a CERTIFICATE OF MAILING from the USPS, which is a receipt that provides evidence of the date that your mail was presented to the USPS for mailing. It can only be purchased at the time of mailing through the USPS. The USPS charges a fee for this service.
6. Make sure you keep your address up to date with the Assessor's Office. Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the owner from liability of taxes nor shall it prevent the imposition of penalties. Forwarding service through the USPS only lasts a certain period. Unless a change of address is officially filed with the Assessor's office, the tax bill will continue to go to the address originally requested on the grant deed. Tax bill information can be found on our website at <https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/348/Treasurer-Tax-Collector>, should you not receive a tax bill.
7. If you receive a bill with a message on top that states "This copy is not a bill, the original bill has been sent to your financial institution for payment" then we have been notified that you have a lender and that they have requested this bill. If this strikes you as odd, please contact your mortgage lender to confirm that an impound account exists. Sometimes, there are properties that are tagged by mortgage companies by mistake and this message is deceiving. Do not just assume that your taxes are being paid by your lender. Ultimately, taxes are the responsibility of the homeowner. If you have a mortgage on your home and have an impound account, you can check to confirm that your tax payment has been received through our website. This site is updated daily with payment information.
8. Know your payment options. If you have no choice than to make payment close to the due date, come make your payment in person at the office, or use the drop box located in the front of the Rood Center. There are also ways to pay via our website, either by credit card, debit card or by e-check. These systems stay up until 11:59P.M. on the 10th of December and April. Payments made up until 11:59 P.M. will be considered timely.
9. Know your dates. There is no grace period after December 10th, and April 10th. The grace period is the time between the Nov 1 and Feb 1 due dates and the delinquent dates of Dec 10th, and April 10th. Do not wait until the last day to pay your taxes. There are so many things that could go wrong and unless these circumstances fall within certain parameters set forth by State law, penalties will be applied.
10. When in doubt, give us a call at (530) 265-1285, or visit our website at: <https://www.nevadacountyca.gov/348/Treasurer-Tax-Collector>