



Garfield

Charter Township

SERVING THE CITIZENS OF NORTHERN MICHIGAN



some
facts
you should
know . . .

Home Improvements and Property Assessments

Updated February, 2022

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“I would like to fix up my home, but ...”

One of the single greatest fears a homeowner has when he or she considers home improvements is how much the improvements made will directly affect their assessment, and thereby their taxes. Some improvements may mean higher taxes; however, improvements that are replacement of existing parts or maintenance items no longer increase taxes. In 1976, the State Legislature enacted Public Act 293 which protects the homeowner from an increased tax assessment because of repair or replacement of portions of his or her home.

“What kinds of repairs will NOT be added to my assessment?”

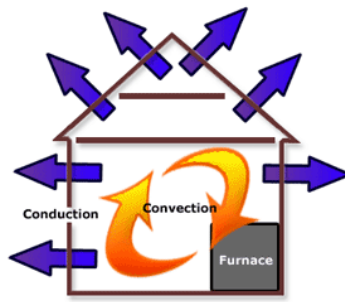
The following normal repair and maintenance expenditures will NOT be included in your assessment until the property is sold:



- Painting
- Repair or replacement of siding (including the installation of vinyl or aluminum siding)
- Repair or replacements of roofs, porches, gutters and downspouts, steps, sidewalks and drives
- Repainting, repair or replacement of existing masonry



- Repair or replacement of foundations
- Installation, repair or replacement of awnings
- Installation, repair or replacement of doors, windows, storms or screens
- Installation or replacement of weather stripping or insulation



- Rewiring
- Repair or replacement of plumbing fixtures, light fixtures, furnaces and hot water heaters
- Repair or replacement of interior decoration, including walls, woodwork, ceilings and floor coverings
- Removal or replacement of partitions
- Repair or replacement of chimneys

“Are there any improvements that **WOULD BE** assessed?”

The following improvements would be assessed since they are **ADDITIONS** to the basic structure of the house:



- Construction of a dormer or addition of a room or rooms to the house
- Construction of a breezeway
- Construction or substantial reconstruction of a garage or other out building
- Finishing previously unfinished spaces
- Construction of an in-ground swimming pool

“What kind of red tape do I have to go through to make these improvements?”

Most major structural repairs require a building permit. You should obtain this permit from the Township’s Building Department. You can call the Building Department with any home improvement questions during normal working hours (Monday thru Thursday, 7:30 am – 6 pm) at (231) 941-1620.

“Is this a guarantee that my taxes won’t go up if I improve my property?”

Please remember that the property taxes you are charged depend on the millage rate assessed by various units of government and the taxable value of your home. Millage rates will vary from year to year and your assessment will be factored up or down to account for the changes in the real estate market. Likewise, your taxable value will increase by the CPI, or 5% whichever is less, as promised by Proposal A of 1994.

THE LAW

P.A. 415 of 1994 amended Section 211.27 of Michigan Compiled Laws:

(2) The assessor shall not consider the increase in true cash value that is a result of expenditures for normal repairs, re- placement, and maintenance in determining the true cash value of property for assessment purposes until the property is sold. For the purpose of implementing this subsection, the assessor shall not increase the construction quality classification or reduce the effective age for depreciation purposes, except if the appraisal of the property was erroneous before non-consideration of the normal repair, replacement, or maintenance, and shall not assign an economic condition factor to the property that differs from the economic condition factor assigned to similar properties as defined by subdivisions (a) to (o) [see below] that is known to the assessor and excluded from true cash value shall be indicated on the assessment roll. This subsection applies only to residential properties.

The following repairs shall be considered normal maintenance if they are not part of a structural addition or completion:

- (a) Outside painting
- (b) Repair or replace: siding, roof, porches, steps, sidewalks, drives
- (c) Repaint, repair or replace existing masonry
- (d) Replace awnings
- (e) Add or replace gutters or downspouts
- (f) Replace storm windows or doors
- (g) Insulation or weather stripping
- (h) Rewiring
- (i) Replace: plumbing fixtures or light fixtures
- (j) Replace furnace
- (k) Interior: repair plaster, inside painting, other decorating
- (l) Replace: ceiling, wall, floor surface
- (m) Remove partitions
- (n) Replace water heater
- (o) Replace dated interior woodwork

The Assessor and staff is available to assist you with your property valuation questions during normal business hours:

7:30AM – 6:00PM
Monday through Thursday
The Township is closed on Fridays.

Please feel free to contact the Assessor's Office during these times if you need assistance or have questions about your property assessment.