



PROPERTY TAXATION ON RESERVE YES OR NO?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS #2

This information is intended to provide OKIB members with a different perspective. This is what a FAQ to **non-Band member** taxpayers on OKIB reserves might look like, if and when OKIB becomes a property taxation authority.

I just heard that OKIB now administers property tax on reserve. Is this true?

Yes. OKIB is now a property taxation authority and will be collecting property tax from **non-Band members**. Prior to this, the Province of BC and municipalities were authorized to collect and spend property tax revenue collected from OKIB Reserves.

Will I be paying more to OKIB than I did to the Province and municipalities?

Unlikely, however, much will depend on which services will be provided and how much Chief and Council wish to spend each year on these services. What OKIB can say is that OKIB's property tax system will use compatible assessment practices and classifications as those used by other property taxing governments in BC.

How do I find out where my tax dollars are being spent?

Property Taxation Expenditure Laws which are approved and signed by the First Nations Tax Commission (FNTC) which was established under Canada's *First Nations Fiscal Management Act* (FMA) govern how tax dollars are spent. To view OKIB's Expenditure law go to the First Nation Gazette website: fng.ca

Why do I pay tax on land I don't own?

In 1988, amendments to federal legislation [i.e. the Indian Act and later, in 2005, the First Nations Fiscal Management Act] enable Indian Act Bands to collect the property taxes from any holder or occupier of registered and non-registered (i.e. Buckshee) leased land.

Did Band members pay provincial property tax?

No, s.87 of the Indian Act exempts Indians (i.e. Band members) from paying provincial property taxes.

Do OKIB Band members pay OKIB's property tax?

No. OKIB is willing to pay for their own band member's local services, but not for non-band members.

Where can I find a copy of OKIB's property tax laws?

OKIB's property taxation laws are published and can be reviewed on the First Nations Gazette: website: fng.ca

I can't vote in a Band election, isn't this taxation without representation?

It is true that under the Indian Act only Band members may vote in Band elections. But consider that BC and municipalities made you pay property tax but provided little to no services on reserve in return. At the same time on reserve property tax payers are allowed to vote in municipal elections – a case of representation and taxation but no services. Not fair.

The Indian Act and the First Nations Fiscal Management Act authorize Bands to enact a law setting out how taxpayer interests can be represented to Chief and Council. In this way, taxpayer concerns are heard and problems resolved collectively. Said another way you are being taxed, obtaining services and your interests are being represented. This is fair.

PROPERTY TAXATION ON RESERVE

YES OR NO?

How will Assessments be calculated?

Assessment values are calculated by the BC Assessment Authority and are based on both land and improvements to ensure fairness when taxes are charged.

Will I receive an Assessment Notice?

Yes. The BC Assessment Authority will issue Assessment Notices on or before December 31 of each year.

Can I appeal my assessment?

Yes. You will find details on how to appeal your assessment on the back of your assessment notice. Appeals must be received At BC Assessment Authority within 60 days from date of issuance (on or before December 31). Contact information for BC Assessment:

1-866-valueBC (825-8322), fax 1-855-995-6209

or mail to:

BC Assessment Authority
805 Renfrew Ave, Kamloops, BC V2B 3X3

Who sets the tax rate?

OKIB sets the tax rate each year. Rates are based on budget needs and are outlined in the Annual OKIB Rates & Expenditure Laws. Rates and expenditures are first approved by Chief and Council then forwarded to the FNTC and once endorsed the Annual Rates and Expenditure Law comes into force.

When are my property taxes due?

The final payment deadline is July 2 of each calendar year. If the payment deadline falls on a weekend, the payment deadline is extended to the next business day.

Where do I pay my property taxes?

Property tax payments can be mailed or submitted in person to the Accounts Receivable office in the Finance Department located at:

12420 Westside Road, Vernon, BC, V1H 2A4

What are the payment options?

Payments can be made by cash, cheque, and debit, online banking, or pre-authorized payments. For any inquiries, please contact the, in the Finance Department office at 250-542-4328.

What happens if my property tax payment is late?

A 10% penalty will be applied on outstanding tax accounts at the closing of business day on the final payment deadline of July 2 of each calendar year. On August 2 of each calendar year, interest begins to accrue at a rate equivalent to the average lending rate of the Bank of Canada plus 2%.

What if I don't receive a Tax Notice?

New property owners are responsible for payment of their annual property taxes by the due date to avoid the penalty, whether or not they receive a Property Tax Notice.

Property owners who have not yet received their tax notice within the first week of June, or if you have any property tax questions, please contact the Finance Department at 250-542-4328, fax at 250-542-4990, or mail:

OKIB Department of Finance
12420 Westside Road, Vernon, BC, V1H 2A4

For more information please contact
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