Voorhees Township Property Inspection Program

Beginning in 2018, the Voorhees Township Assessment Department will begin inspecting all buildings on a four-year cycle. A four-year inspection cycle is a recommended minimum timeline per guidelines published by the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO.) A four-year inspection cycle is also one of the requirements to obtain an approval for an annual reassessment program in New Jersey.

Why are property inspections necessary?

The purpose of the ongoing inspection program is to keep property details up to date in order to keep assessment levels as uniform and equitable as possible.

Doesn't the town already have this information on file?

In most instances, the answer is “yes;” but, if a property has not been physically inspected within the past four (4) years, the data is considered obsolete and, therefore, unreliable. Factors such as wear and tear as well as upgrades to buildings are reviewed.

The Building Inspector was just at my property; doesn’t that inspection count?

Not for Assessment Department purposes. Inspections by other Township Departments cannot be substituted for inspections by the Assessment Department. Construction Department inspections deal primarily with the Uniform Construction Code; Zoning inspections deal only with Zoning regulations; whereas, Assessment Department inspections deal with a completely different array of factors, including assessment statutes and regulations.

Who will be inspecting my property?

The inspector is a Township employee. However, it is important that you ask to see proper identification before admittance of the inspector into your home. If you have any doubts about the person's identity, refuse entry and call the Police Department for verification. In addition, Township Inspectors are not permitted to enter a property unless the owner, or an adult representative of the owner (18 years of age or older), is present.

How long does an inspection take?

For “reinspection”, the typical visit lasts about 30 minutes or less. If your property is “new” and has not yet been inspected by this office, or has not been inspected in more than 4 years, the visit may be somewhat longer depending on the size of the property and other factors.

Will I be assessed more for decorating and personal property?

NO. Tax assessments are not based on decor or furnishings. Assessments are based only on the value of land and buildings, not on personal property value.

Are “upgrades” and “deferred maintenance” factors?

YES. Houses with “upgrades” are usually worth more than “standard” models. Houses with “deferred maintenance” will be worth less in the marketplace compared to the same or similar houses that are well maintained. Tax assessment appraisals reflect these factors.

Can I refuse entry to my property?

YES. You may refuse entry to your home but it is not a good idea. If an interior inspection is not allowed, the valuation process must still occur. The law stipulates that an uninspected property must be assessed at the “highest reasonable value.”

How does the reinspection process happen?

1. A written request to inspect is sent to the owner of the property. The card will include Assessment Department contact information as well as a direct link to this document on the Voorhees Township website (www.voorheesnj.com.)
2. If the property owner does not respond to the written request, an inspector will visit the property within about two weeks from the mailing date of the request.

**If someone is home:**

* The owner can allow an inspection at that time; or,
* Schedule the inspection for a different time.

**If no one is home:**

* + The inspector will leave a callback card indicating the date and time that he/she was at the property. The owner will be asked to call and schedule an inspection. The card will include Assessment Department contact information as well as a direct link to this document.
	+ Before the inspector leaves, he/she will make as many notes about the property as possible.
	+ The inspector may visit the rear yard and will record as much relevant, appraisal information as is possible from there.
	+ A photograph may be taken.
	+ The inspector will then leave the property.
	+ As much relevant appraisal information as is reasonably available from all other sources will be gathered. This may consist of:
1. Records of previous inspections, if any;
2. Brokerage company multiple listing data sheets as available;
3. Information gleaned from an online search;
4. Property brochures; blueprints; essentially, anything that can be of help in an appraisal.
5. Interior features of the premises will be reasonably estimated.
6. In such cases, assessments will be based on factors that conclude with the “highest reasonable value.”
7. The updated appraisal data will be recorded on the property record card and mailed to the property owner.

I think my assessment is wrong. What should I do?

The first step is to verify that the information on your Property Record Card is up to date and correct. The assessor and members of the assessor’s staff are available for property owners who have questions or concerns about their property assessment and the assessment process. These discussions are informal, non-adversarial and focused on your property’s market value. If you feel there are conditions that diminish the market value of your property, they should be brought to the attention of the Assessment Department.

If, after discussing your case with the assessor, you believe that your property is still over-valued, you can file an assessment appeal with the Camden County Board of Taxation. An appeal can be filed every year <Link to Appeal Form>, <Link to Info Pamphlet>.

**IMPORTANT**: The right of appeal expires each year at the close of business on the deadline date, which is always April 1 unless there has been a “district-wide reassessment or revaluation,” in which case it may be extended to May 1. If the deadline falls on a weekend or legal holiday, it is extended to the close of business on the first workday after the deadline.

Appeals are heard by the County Board of Taxation. Property owners can be represented by an attorney, but that is not necessary. Evidence, usually “comparable sales” to support a competent valuation conclusion should be presented. After reviewing the facts presented, the Board will render a decision as to whether an adjustment is in order.

If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Camden County Board of Taxation, you have the right to file an appeal with the Tax Court of the State of New Jersey. This must be done within 45 days of your County Board Judgment date. <Link to Tax Court Webpage>, <Link to Tax Court Appeal Packet.>

Contact Information

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