

CURRENT USE ASSESSMENTS

Certain agricultural, timber and open space lands are valued at their current use rather than market value. For taxes due in 2003, this difference in valuation resulted in an estimated \$12.2 million in tax losses and \$91.3 million in shifts to other taxpayers.

To receive reduced assessment, farm and agricultural land and timber land must meet acreage and/or gross income requirements. There are no income or acreage requirements for open space lands. Local five-person advisory boards assist assessors in determining current use value. They take into consideration lease contracts or productive capacity. Each year assessors estimate a true and fair value separate from the current use value. In the event land is voluntarily removed from current use status, the property owner is liable for a maximum of seven years of compensating taxes based on the difference between current use and fair market value estimates, plus interest and penalties.

To qualify for current use, farm and agricultural land must be:

- 20 or more acres in agricultural use,
- five or more acres, but less than 20, with annual income from agricultural uses of \$200 or more per acre for three out of five years, or
- less than five acres with annual income from agricultural use of \$1,500 or more for three out of five years.

To be eligible for current use classification, timber land must be five or more acres (land only) devoted primarily to the growth and harvest of forest crops. Open space land must be areas set aside to protect, preserve, enhance, promote, and retain such lands. Of the acreage reported for 2002 in the current use program, 98.6 percent is in the farm and agricultural land category as opposed to timber or open space.

CURRENT USE VALUE REDUCTIONS 1985-2003 Collection Years

Year Due	Acres	Highest & Best Use Value (\$ Million)	Current Use Value (\$ Million)	Value Reduction (\$ Million)	Percent Value Reduction
2003	12,172,766	11,157.4	\$3,200.2	7,957.2	71.3%
2002	11,753,080	10,792.6	3,203.8	7,588.8	70.3
2001	11,755,825	10,305.9	3,153.9	7,152.0	69.4
2000	12,069,061	9,740.0	2,989.1	6,750.9	69.3
1999	11,667,542	9,359.8	2,937.6	6,422.2	68.6
1998	11,445,541	8,716.5	2,926.5	5,790.1	66.4
1997	11,574,810	8,366.2	2,729.4	5,636.8	67.4
1996	11,485,934	8,007.7	2,633.9	5,373.8	67.1
1995	11,203,257	7,829.3	2,699.0	5,130.4	65.6
1994	11,458,638	7,372.3	2,392.9	4,979.4	67.5
1993	11,517,719	7,017.0	2,333.2	4,683.8	66.7
1992	11,490,320	6,641.1	2,266.1	4,375.0	65.9
1991	11,526,944	6,401.0	2,218.1	4,182.9	65.3
1990	11,507,709	6,269.9	2,225.9	4,044.0	64.5
1989	11,458,790	6,508.5	2,217.0	4,291.5	65.9
1988	11,086,308	6,677.2	2,100.4	4,576.8	68.5
1987	10,745,412	7,415.7	2,220.1	5,195.6	70.1
1986	10,451,932	7,405.2	2,144.2	5,261.0	71.0
1985	10,200,390	7,053.6	2,082.6	4,971.0	70.5