

Zapata Co Appraisal District

2011 Annual Report

The Property Tax Assistance Division of the Texas Comptroller's requires appraisal districts to publish an annual report. This report provides property owners, taxing units, and other interested parties information about total market and taxable values, average market and taxable values of a residence, and exemptions at the time of certification of values to the taxing entities.

Article 8 of the Texas Constitution defines five basic rules for property taxes:

- Property taxes must be equal and uniform
- Generally, property must be taxed at market value which is defined as "the price at which a property would transfer for cash or its equivalent under prevailing market conditions". There are limited exceptions to this rule, such as productivity value for agricultural land.
- Each property must have a single appraised value.
- Property owners have the right to reasonable notice of increases in the appraised value of their property.

The Zapata County Appraisal District was formed by the Texas Legislature in 1979. Senate Bill 621 required that an appraisal district be established in each county for the purpose of appraising property for ad valorem tax purposes. Appraisal districts are local government political subdivision of the state responsible for appraising property within county boundaries. Prior to the creation of central appraisal districts, each taxing unit followed their own appraisal standards and practices. Values were inaccurate and inequitable. Property owners were required to visit multiple taxing units to resolve any disputes concerning property value. Appraisal districts are independent of the taxing units but are governed by a board which is elected by the taxing entities elected officials.

By law, an appraisal district is to be managed by a professional staff with training and education prescribed by the State of Texas. Appraisers are registered with the Texas Department of Licensing and Registration and must complete courses and exams to become a Registered Professional Appraiser.

Appraisal practices are governed by the Texas Property Tax Code and follow rules established by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Appraisal Districts are audited by the Texas

Comptroller of Public Account Property Tax Assistance Division in alternating years conducting a property value study and a Methods and Assistance Program (MAPS) review. Results of both reviews are available on the Comptroller's website.

Zapata County Appraisal District has four taxing entities within the District's boundaries. Currently these taxing entities are as follows:

1. Zapata County
2. Zapata I.S.D
3. Zapata Water Control and Improvement District
4. Siesta Shores Water Control and Improvement District

There are no school districts that overlap into Zapata County Appraisal District. Current state law requires that overlapping jurisdictions match values in the overlapping areas, none are necessary.

The Chief Appraiser is the chief administrative and executive officer of the appraisal district. The Chief Appraiser employs and directs the district's staff, oversees all aspects of the appraisal districts operations and performs either directly or through the district staff a variety of operations.

The Chief Appraiser's responsibilities are as follows:

1. Discover, list and appraise.
2. Determine exemption and special use requests
3. Organize periodic reappraisals
4. Notify taxpayers, taxing units and the public about matters that affect property values.

Zapata County Appraisal District is an office consisting of the Chief Appraiser, three (3) appraisers, and 2 clerks. The appraiser has the responsibility to value the properties assigned and performs most fieldwork on the appraisal of real property and commercial personal property.

The Appraisal District employs the services of Wardlaw Appraisal Group, an appraisal firm to appraise all minerals, industrial plants, pipelines, industrial personal property and utilities within the boundaries of the appraisal district. The District uses the services of Trueautomation for its data processing of all appraisal records.

OVERVIEW OF TYPE OF PROPERTIES APPRAISED

There are four major categories of property appraised by the Zapata County Appraisal District. These categories are:

1. Real Properties: Residential, Multi-Family, Commercial, Vacant lots, Farm/Ranch Land and Farm/Ranch Improvements.
2. Personal Properties: Business personal properties and industrial personal properties.
3. Utilities: Telephone companies, television cable, gas companies etc.
4. Minerals: Oil and gas production.

The Property Tax Division of the state comptroller's office requires properties to be identified by type by using a standard identification code. The codes currently used by the Zapata County Appraisal District are as follows:

<u>Code</u>	<u>Type of Property</u>
1. A1	Residential (land with improvements)
2. A2	Residential(land with mobile home)
3. B1	Multi-Family Residence
4. C1	Vacant Land (lots)
5. C1C	Vacant Land (commercial)
6. D	Acreage
7. E	Ranch improvements
8. F1	Commercial Building and land
9. F2	Industrial Commercial Building
10. G1	Oil, Gas and Mineral Reserves
11. L1	Personal Property
12. L2	Industrial Personal Property
13. J3	Electric Companies
14. J4	Telephone Companies
15. J6	Pipelines
16. M1	Mobile Homes

2011 Certified Value Information

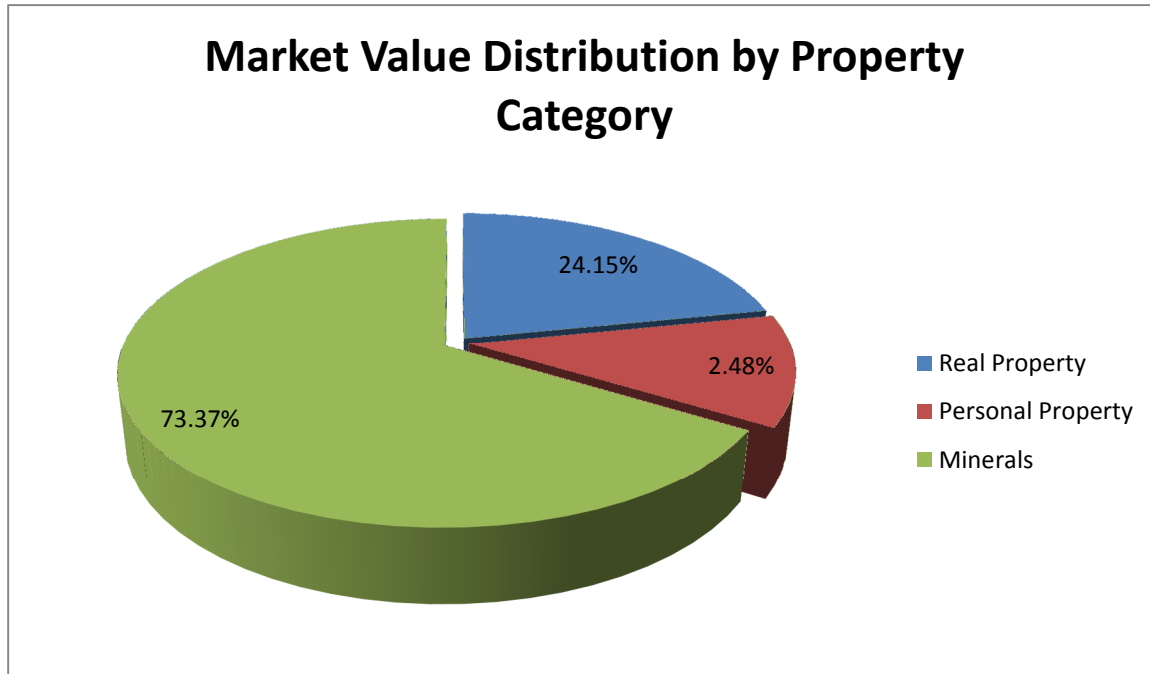
The 2011 certified appraisal roll for Zapata County indicates a total of 52,002 parcels. The breakdown of some of these parcels is as follows:

1. Residential	5265
2. Multifamily residence	31
3. Mobile Homes	85
4. Vacant lots & acres	6433
5. Commercial & Industrial	387
6. Mineral	32102
7. Utilities	182
8. Personal Property	870

Information on the 2011 certified appraisal roll, new taxable value, new exemptions, total exemption loss and average homestead value:

Total Taxable Value:	\$2,059,076,674
Real before exemptions	497,313,178
Personal Property	267,148,594
Mineral Property	1,510,804,024
Exemptions & Cap Loss	- 216,161,032
Protest	-28,090

This chart shows the total Market Value Distribution by Property Category



New Taxable Value	11,739,504
New Exemptions	1,136,981
Total exemptions value loss	1,489,396
Average Homestead Value	56,697

Protest and Notice Summary

Total Real Property protest filed	45
Total Mineral protests filed	725
Total Protests filed	770
Number of No shows	83
Settlements & Waivers	25
Affidavits	6
Withdrawals	656

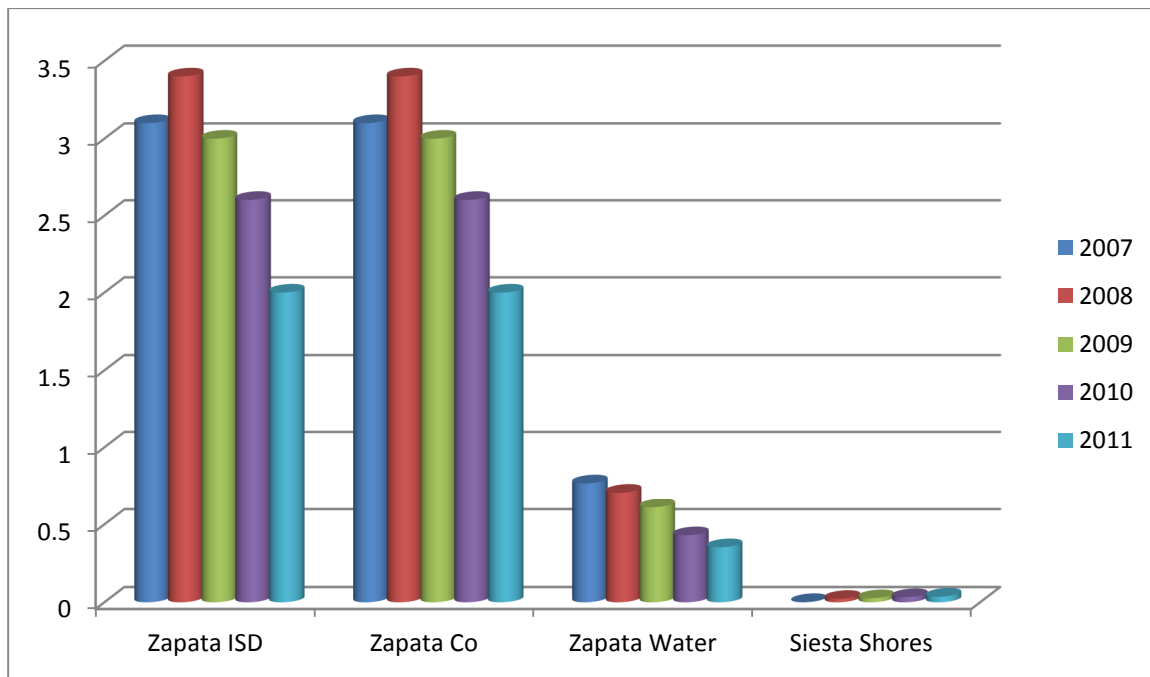
Historical Data

The following is historical information on total certified taxable value, new value, exemption value loss and average homestead value.

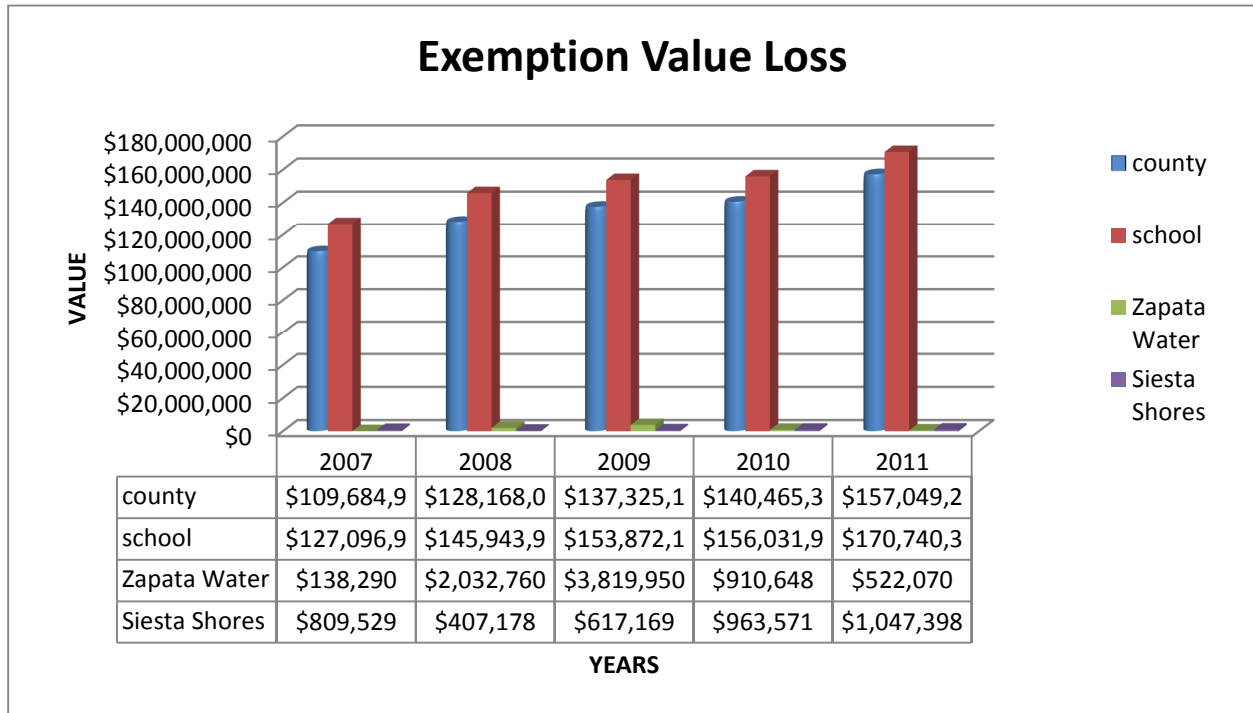
Five year history of certified taxable value for all taxing entities.

Certified Taxable Value

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Zapata ISD	\$3,130,470,727	\$3,408,798,372	\$3,050,336,136	\$2,671,450,225	\$2,051,486,091
Zapata Co	\$3,162,857,002	\$3,434,467,707	\$3,075,055,752	\$2,697,851,879	\$2,078,371,755
Zapata Water	\$770,574,967	712,644,074	\$615,507,626	439,964,759	353,503,017
Siesta Shores	\$18,025,559	\$22,957,639	\$26,473,121	\$33,517,225	\$36,338,478



This graph illustrates a five year history of value loss due to homestead, disability, veterans and total exempt property.



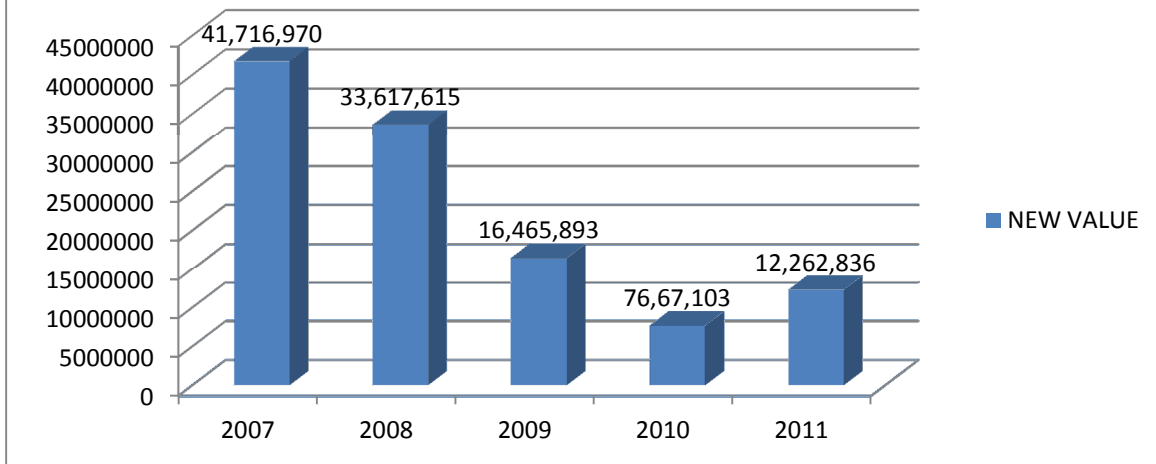
New Construction Effort: August 1, 2011-January 1, 2012

Zapata County has just put into place an ordinance to issue building permits. The process is still work in progress, therefore the identification of new construction was performed by utilizing the following resources:

- Field appraiser drive-outs
- Property Owners

This graph illustrates a five year history of new value which includes residential, personal property and minerals.

NEW VALUE FIVE YEAR HISTORY



If you have questions about information contained in this report, contact Amada Gonzalez-Chief Appraiser. Email amdagonzalez1@msn.com , phone: (956) 765-9988

Legislative Changes for 2011 - 82nd Session of Texas Legislature:

TEXAS PROPERTY TAX LAW

Chapter 1. General Provisions

Section 1.085

HB3216 amends subsection (a) to add CAD's and ARB's to entities that may agree to communicate electronically specifies any combination of the named entities may communicate electronically.

Section 1.111

HB1887 amends subsection (j) to require ARB's and CAD's to send notices regarding a property subject to a protest to a person who is exempt from registration as a property tax consultant and is filing a protest on behalf of a property owner if that exempt person is not supervised, directed, or compensated by a person required to register as a property tax consultant.

HB 3216 amends subsection (b) to require each CAD in a county with a population of 500,000 or more to implement a system that allows the designation of a property tax agent to be signed and filed electronically.

Chapter 5. State Administration

HB 1887 amends subsection © and (e-3) to prohibit chief appraisers, CAD staff, CAD board of directors, and members of ARB's from providing ARB training.

Chapter 6. Local Administration

Section 6.05

HB2387 amends subsection (d) to prohibit a chief appraiser from employing a general counsel for the CAD and add subsection (j) to permit the board of directors to employ a general counsel. The general counsel serves at the will of the board, provides counsel directly to the board, performs other duties assigned by the board, and is compensated through the budget adopted by the board.

Section 6.12

HB361 amends subsection (b) to remove the requirements that one member of an agricultural advisory board be a representative of the county agricultural stabilization and conservation service and amends subsection (d) to require the board to meet at least once a year; rather than three times a year, at the call of the chief appraiser.

Section 6.411

HB 1887 amends subsection (a) to make a communication between an ARB member and a member of the CAD board of directors in violation of Section 41.66 (f) a Class A misdemeanor. The bill also amends subsection (b) to prohibit communication with an ARB member with the intent to influence an ARB decision by the following persons: chief appraiser, employee of the CAD, CAD board of directors, and a property tax consultant. The bill amends subsection (c-1) to permit communications involving chief appraiser, CAD employee or a member of the CAD board of directors with ARB members (1) during a hearing on a protest, (2) social conversation, (3) about certain administrative and procedural matters related to ARB operations.

Section 6.412

HB 1887 amends subsection (a) to include individuals related to a member of the CAD's board of directors within third degree by consanguinity or within second degree by affinity in the list of individuals who are ineligible to serve on an ARB.

Section 6.43

HB 1887 amends subsection (a) to repeal the provision allowing the ARB to use the staff of the appraisal office for clerical assistance and adds subsection (f) to authorize the appraisal office to provide clerical assistance to the ARB, including scheduling and arranging hearings. Also amends subsection (b) to prohibit an attorney from serving as legal counsel for the ARB if, within the prior year, the attorney or any member of the attorney's law firm represented the CAD, a property owner in the CAD, or a taxing unit. It also adds subsection (c) to provide that the county attorney may provide legal services to the ARB. The bill adds subsection (e) to permit a CAD to specify in its budget whether the ARB is required to use the county attorney or may employ legal counsel.

Chapter 11. Taxable Property and Exemptions

Section 11.131

SB 516 adds subsection © to provide a property tax exemption of the total appraised value to the surviving spouse of a 100% percent or totally disabled veteran for the same property to which the disabled veteran applied. The surviving spouse is entitled to the same exemption if he or she has not remarried. Subsection (d) is added to provide that, if a surviving spouse qualifies for the exemption and then subsequently qualifies a different property as a residence homestead, the surviving spouse is entitled to an exemption in an amount equal to the dollar amount of the exemption of the former homestead in the last year in which the surviving spouse received an exemption; however, to receive the exemption the surviving spouse cannot have remarried.

Section 11.42

SB 201 add subsection (e) to allow a person who qualifies for the 100 percent or totally disabled veteran exemption under Section 11.131 after January 1 of a tax year to receive the exemption for the applicable portion of that tax year immediately on qualification for the exemption.

Section 11.43

HB 252 amends subsection (j) to require that an applicant state that he or she does not claim an exemption on another residence homestead in or outside of Texas. A residence homestead exemption application must include a copy of a driver's license or state identification card and must include a vehicle registration receipt. If the applicant does own a vehicle he or she must provide an affidavit to that effect and a copy of a utility bill for the property in the applicant's name. The application must be signed by the applicant.

Subsection (n) is added to prohibit a chief appraiser from allowing a homestead exemption unless the addresses on the required forms of identification match also match the addresses for which the exemption is claimed.

Subsection (o) is added to require that residence homestead application who are age 65 or older or disabled and who are not specifically identified on a deed or other recorded instrument must provide an affidavit or other compelling evidence of ownership.

Section 11.431

SB 516 amends subsection (a) to require the chief appraiser to approve or deny an application or an exemption under Section 11.131 for the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran after the deadline for filing has passed, if the application for the exemption is filed not later than one year after the delinquency date for the taxes on the homestead.

HB 252 amends subsection (a) to add a payment receipt and a sworn affidavit to the types of documentation required to verify ownership of a manufactured home for the purposes of obtaining a homestead exemption. The sworn affidavit is required to state that the applicant is the owner of the manufactured home; the seller of the manufactured home did not provide the applicant with a purchase contract; and the applicant could not locate the seller after making a good-faith effort. The bill also allows the CAD to rely on the computer records of TDHCA to verify an applicant's ownership of a manufactured home and that, if the CAD makes this verification, an applicant for residence homestead is not required to submit the sworn affidavit. The bill also amends this section that an owner of land qualified as a residence homestead is entitled to obtain the homestead exemption and any other benefit granted, regardless of whether the applicant has elected to treat the manufactured home as real or personal property. The manufactured home may also be listed as real or personal property or shown on the tax rolls with the real property to which it is attached.

Chapter 22. Renditions and other Reports

Section 22.01

HB 533 adds subsection (m) to provide that a person is not required to render personal property that is appraised under Section 23.24.

Section 22.28

HB 533 amend this section to require the chief appraiser to send a written notice by first-class mail informing a property owner when a penalty is imposed for failure to file a rendition timely; this notice may be delivered with a notice of appraised value. This bill requires the chief appraiser to certify to the assessor for each taxing unit that a penalty imposed under this chapter has become final.

Chapter 23. Appraisal Methods and Procedures

Section 23.51

SB 449 amends subdivision (2) to provide that the term “agricultural use” includes water stewardship for the purpose of open-space land appraisal. At the time the water stewardship began, that the land was appraised as qualified open-space or as qualified timber land in at least three of nine specified activities to promote and sustain water quality and conservation of water resources.

SB 1 (1st CS) amends subdivision (2) to provide that the term “agricultural use” includes the use of land to raise or keep bees for pollination or for the production of human food or other tangible products having a commercial value, provided that the land used in not less than five or more than 20 acres.

Section 23.56

SB 449 amends the subsection (a) to provide that the land located inside the corporate limits of an incorporated city or town is eligible for the open-space appraisal if it is used for water stewardship and has been devoted principally to agricultural use or timber production continuously for the preceding five years.

Chapter 25. Local Appraisal

Section 25.08

HB 252 adds a new subsection (g) to require the chief appraiser to apportion a residence homestead exemption on a property consisting of separately listed land and manufactured home on a pro rata basis, based on the appraised value of the land and the manufactured home.

Section 25.25

HB 1887 and HB 1441 amend subsection (c) to permit ownership correction to the appraisal roll.

HB 1887 and HB 2220 amend subsection (c) to require a property owner who files a motion to correct an appraisal roll to comply with the payment requirements of Section 25.26 or forfeit the right to a final determination of the motion.

HB 1887 and SB 1404 amend subsection (g) to increase the period of time that a property owner or the chief appraiser may file lawsuits from 45 to 60 days after receiving notice of determination by the ARB.

HB 1887 and HB 2220 amend subsection (g) to allow a property owner or chief appraiser to file lawsuits concerning compliance with Section 25.26.

SB 1341 amends subsection (g) to prohibit a taxing unit from being made a party to a lawsuit filed by a property owner or chief appraiser under this subsection.