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Property tax bills shock Colorado homeowners as temporary relief expires

Story by Spencer Soicher 2026-2-7

Property tax bills landed in Colorado mailboxes this month, leaving many homeowners stunned by double-digit increases as temporary state relief measures expired and new assessment formulas took effect.]

At the center of the increase is the expiration of a \$55,000 property value exemption that had been in place for the past two years under Senate Bill 233.

"The \$55,000 adjustment to actual value, which has been in existence for two years, '23 and '24, was removed for 2025," Douglas County Assessor Toby Damisch said.

The elimination of that exemption had an unusual effect even on properties where market values didn't change during the 2025 reappraisal cycle.

"If your value remained flat for the '25 reappraisal, meaning the assessor didn't change it, in a way it automatically increased for property tax purposes by \$55,000 because that value got put back on for this year," Damisch said.

The changes accumulated after the end of the temporary relief. In 2022, lawmakers passed a short-term relief bill that lowered property tax assessment rates and reduced residential home valuations by \$15,000, multiplied by a 6.95% assessment rate. Senate Bill 233 in 2024 expanded that relief to \$55,000, using a 6.7% assessment rate.

Both measures were designed as temporary fixes, but their expiration has left homeowners who had grown accustomed to lower bills facing sharp increases.

Adding to the complexity, Colorado implemented a split assessment rate system in 2025. Homeowners now pay one rate of 7.05% for school district funding and another rate of 6.25% for all other local government services.

"It's a tough story," Damisch said. "We haven't known how to communicate it."

"Now instead of paying one assessment rate for homeowners, we're paying one for education and another for everything else," Damisch said.

Local ballot measures have also affected bills. Voter-approved levy increases at school districts, fire districts and metropolitan districts have caused increased tax rates in some areas, while other neighborhoods have seen decreases as metro district bonds were paid off early.

Note

"There are property bills that you're probably not hearing about that are going the other direction," Damisch said, citing the Stonegate neighborhood in Douglas County, where he said bond payoff has reduced tax bills by hundreds of dollars.

The City and County of Denver held its mill levy flat for 2026, with no change from 2025. Denver officials attributed increases to Colorado House Bill 24 B-1001, which established higher assessment rates for school districts starting in 2025.

"The higher assessment rate per HB24B-1001 has a significant impact on taxpayers since two-thirds of property tax is for Denver Public Schools," the city stated.

Denver and Arapahoe County have also adjusted their notification methods to save costs. Denver says it is saving nearly 500,000 pieces of paper and \$100,000 in mailing costs annually by posting statements online. Arapahoe County now sends postcards instead of full statements, which are available on the county website.