

Q & A From the desk of Bill Kendall, Commissioner

CITIZENS MUST APPLY BY APRIL 1, 2010 FOR NEW ADDITIONAL HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

I requested that a referendum question be put on the Nov. 3, 2009 election ballot to allow Towns County voters to approve or reject my request that Towns County homeowners receive a \$10,000 exemption on the property tax they pay on their homes. Citizens voted by an unprecedented 97.2% yes.

In order to get this increased exemption on their tax bill citizens must apply by signing. I am attempting to get this word out through the print media, civic and homeowner associations and by word of mouth. Citizens are signing up in large numbers; still I am concerned that some who are eligible will fail, for various reasons, to apply to get the tax break to which they are entitled. I am asking that you tell your friends and neighbors of the legal requirement to apply by signing in order to receive this tax break. Below are some questions citizens are asking.

Q. If a person has already applied and is receiving the \$2,000 Homestead Exemption; do they have to sign for the additional \$8,000 approved by the voters?

A. Yes – You must apply and sign for the additional \$8,000. I attempted to have the legislation written so that those already receiving the \$2,000 did not have to re-apply, however; due to legal requirements, citizens must apply for the increased homestead exemption.

Q. My spouse, a child and I are on the deed to our home. Do we all have to come in and apply for the additional homestead exemption?

A. No – Only one of the persons on the deed can apply to receive the entire \$10,000 homestead exemption.

Q. When is the deadline to apply for the additional homestead exemption for 2010 tax bill?

A. April 1, 2010.

Q. If a homeowner does not apply by April 1, 2010 can they apply later?

A. Yes – However, they would not receive the exemption until their 2011 tax bill.

Q. Where do we go to sign?

A. The Tax Commissioner's office at the Courthouse Annex across the street from the main Courthouse.