

## **FIRST INSTALLMENT TAX BILLS ARE DUE MARCH 1, 2012**

As many of you are probably aware your First Installment Tax Bills have arrived or will arrive shortly. Property Taxes are paid in two installments. The first installment is fifty-five percent (55%) of the total property tax bill for the previous year, and will be due on March 1, 2012.

Taxpayers should note that the first installment tax bills will not reflect homeowner, senior citizen or other exemptions, nor will they reflect successful assessment appeals that were filed in calendar year 2011. The first installment is just an estimate based on what was paid last year. When the second installment bill is mailed, it will reflect all exemptions for which the property is eligible as well as any savings due to successful 2011 tax appeals.

If money for property taxes is paid into an escrow account with a taxpayer's mortgage company, the financial institution should receive the tax bill electronically, even if the taxpayer also receives a copy of the bill. I would advise taxpayers with property tax escrows held by their mortgage companies not to pay property taxes on their own. If they do, an overpayment of property taxes may result.

Property owners, who do not have mortgage companies paying their taxes, can make tax payments in person, by mail, or on-line at the Cook County Treasurer's website [www.cookcountytreasurer.com](http://www.cookcountytreasurer.com). In-person payments are accepted at the Cook County Treasurer's downtown office at 118 N. Clark Street and at any Chase Bank in the Chicago area.

Although March 1<sup>st</sup> has long been the due date for the first installment bills, it is worth noting that last year's due date for first installment taxes was April 1<sup>st</sup>. But the April 1<sup>st</sup> due date was in effect for one year only. Prior to the first installment bill last year, a tax bill had been due on December 12, 2010, the latest due date ever for property taxes in Cook County. Because the prior bill was unusually late, the state legislature delayed the due date for the next bill by one month. Circumstances are different this year, and as a result the normal due date of March 1<sup>st</sup> has returned.

**Grace A. Bardusk**  
**Bremen Township Assessor**