

A PROPERTY TAX PRIMER: As the due date for property taxes approaches, some residents may wonder why their property tax bills seem to go up each year by more than the 1% maximum increase allowed by state statute. We hope that this primer will answer some of your questions.

First, it is important to know that the 1% increase limit applies to the town's base property tax, i.e. the Town may not increase its total property-tax levy (in dollars) by more than 1% of the prior year's levy. However, if the values of some properties in Town increase more than others, the owners of the properties experiencing greater increases may see their property-tax bills increase by more than the 1% limit (while properties with lesser increases will increase by less than 1%). Property values are set by the King County Department of Assessments.

Second, only 15.2% of the total property-tax bill for an average home in the Beaux Arts is levied by the Town. The remaining 84.8% is levied by other agencies outside of the Town's control. This pie chart shows the relative amounts levied by all agencies.

Breakdown of 2009 Levy Components

