

## ► RATES INFORMATION

### How your rates are calculated



**Rate:** Different rate levels are charged for urban and rural properties.

### Frequently Asked Rating Questions

#### ■ Why do I have to pay rates?

All property owners have an obligation to contribute to the operations of their Shire through rates. Everyone benefits directly or indirectly through the services provided across the district which contribute significantly to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of a community.

#### ■ How are my rates calculated?

Rates are calculated by multiplying the rate in the dollar by the land valuation, and adding the applicable yearly fees such as your bin service and Emergency Services Levy, on to this amount.

#### ■ What is the rate?

This rate is determined by the level of revenue that is required in any given budget cycle. It is often referred to as the 'rate in the dollar'. This year, the rate for urban and commercial properties is 9.319 cents in the dollar, and for rural and non-commercial properties is 0.69711 cents in the dollar.

#### ■ How is the valuation calculated?

In Western Australia, land is valued every four years by the Valuer General's Office (a State Government agency), and those values are forwarded to each Local Government.

Two types of values are calculated:

1. Gross Rental Value (GRV) for urban land/buildings (valued every four years, last issued 1 July 2014); and
2. Unimproved Value (UV) for rural land (valued annually).

#### ■ What if I think my valuation is too high?

An objection to your property's valuation may be lodged with the Valuer General's Office. Refer to the back of your rates notice for details.

#### ■ Why do I pay more rates than my neighbour/brother etc?

As the rate in the dollar is standard across all properties, any difference in the property valuation as assessed by the Valuer General's office will result in a difference in rates. For example, your neighbour's property may be three bedrooms x one bathroom, whereas yours could be four bedrooms x two bathrooms.

#### ■ What is ESL (Emergency Services Levy)?

The Emergency Services Levy is a State Government charge on your 2016/17 rates notice. The levy is collected by the Shire and forwarded to Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES). For information regarding the levy, please call the DFES hotline on 1300 136 099.

#### ■ Can I pay my rates in instalments throughout the year?

Rates may be paid in advance, in instalments, by any of the methods described on the rate notice.

#### ■ Do I need to pay my first instalment by 16 September 2016 if I am paying in instalments?

Yes. The Local Government Act states that the first instalment must be paid by the due date to use this payment option. The Shire does offer an informal instalment arrangement, but there are additional fees and penalties for this.

#### ■ Can I pay my rates via direct debit?

Yes, you can. Please contact the Shire's Rates Officer on 9771 7777 for the details that you will need to provide to your bank to set up a direct debit payment.

#### ■ I have lost my rate notice, can I get a replacement?

You can get another copy of your rate notice, at no additional cost, by contacting the Shire's Rates Officer on 9771 7777. Your rate notice is an important document and may be required by financial institutions as proof of ownership of the land. Please keep your notice and corresponding receipts in a safe place, to save the inconvenience of requesting an additional copy.

#### ■ I forgot to change my address, do I still have to pay interest for a late payment?

Yes; there is a statutory obligation for owners to ensure that the Shire has the correct address for service of notices. Ratepayers are asked to advise the Shire in writing when their contact details change. We would also appreciate dog owners advising us when they move to another Shire or to a different address within the Shire.

#### ■ Can I get a pension rebate with a health care card?

Subject to the requirements of the Western Australian State Government, the cards eligible for a rebate are:

1. A Pension Concession Card – up to 50% rebate (capped at \$750);
2. A Commonwealth Seniors Health card **plus** a WA Seniors card – up to 50% rebate (capped at \$750);
3. A WA Seniors Card – up to 25% rebate (capped at \$288.70);

The rebate applies only to your primary place of residence which you must occupy as at 1 July of the rating year.