

Are you letting your money get away from you?



Each spring, the City of Bath Assessor's Office asks you to fill out a declaration of the personal property used in your business. When you don't provide a detailed declaration, *it can cost your business money!*

Here's how you could be losing money by failing to declare your business equipment:

- Without a detailed list, the Assessor's office will estimate the value of the equipment used in your business.
- State law (36 MRSA §706) says failure to provide a declaration limits your rights to appeal the City's valuation or ask for an abatement of taxes.

Most importantly...

You are missing out on the Maine Tax Reimbursement and Tax Exemption programs for eligible business equipment!

Maine Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR)

Without a detailed declaration, your business is ineligible to apply for the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR) program. The BETR application allows businesses to be reimbursed for property taxes paid on eligible business equipment, such as contractor's equipment, office equipment, computers, etc. Most business equipment is eligible for reimbursement, as long as it was first "placed in service" in Maine on or after April 1, 1995. For most businesses, the only items not eligible for reimbursement of taxes are office furniture or light fixtures placed in service on or after April 1, 1996.

Maine Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE)

Your business appears as if it would be eligible for the **NEW** business equipment tax exemption program, which exempts items placed in service after April 1, 2007 from property taxes, for certain qualified businesses. But without a detailed declaration and BETE application (due each year before May 1, although an extension can be provided), you lose the exemption and your new equipment remains taxable.

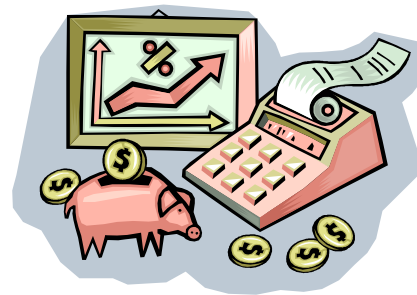
Every penny counts... get yours back!

~more info on reverse~



Here's how...

you can reduce the amount you pay in business personal property taxes:



Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement (BETR)

Here's what you need to know to get reimbursed for personal property taxes paid to the City of Bath.

- Each year in early August, pick up the Maine Revenue Services BETR application to apply for reimbursement of the prior year's taxes (the current application will reimburse businesses for taxes paid during the prior calendar year). It's available at City Hall and on line: <http://www.maine.gov/revenue/forms/betr/index.htm>
- You have until the end of December to complete the application.
- The City of Bath's Assessor's office can generate the form needed to document your business personal property expenses (Form 801). This reduces your paperwork!
- Except for office furniture and lighting, most business equipment placed in service on or after April 1, 1995 is eligible for reimbursement of personal property taxes.

Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE)

The good news: Eligible businesses, where the primary business location is not considered a "retail sales facility," don't even need to pay taxes on eligible equipment placed in service after April 1, 2007. But here's what you need to know to take advantage of the exemption:

- Except for office furniture and lighting, most business equipment placed in service after April 1, 2007 is eligible for exemption from personal property taxes.
- The exemption is *not automatic*. Each year, you must apply and provide a detailed list of items you believe are eligible for the exemption. This is because the city is reimbursed by the state for a percentage of the property tax revenue lost from the exemption.
- The application is due each year by May 1. If needed, an extension can be requested from our office.

Keep in mind:

- You must file a detailed declaration to be eligible for the BETR and BETE programs.
- As you replace equipment in years to come, more and more of your business personal property will be exempt from property taxes. In the meantime, the business personal property tax you pay for most items continues to be eligible for reimbursement.
- Although providing a detailed declaration may seem as if it will cost money up front in taxes, in the long run, you will save money because much of your tax payment can be reimbursed and newer items may become exempt.



Questions? Contact **Brenda Cummings, Assistant Assessor**
55 Front Street, Bath, ME 04530
(207) 443-8336 ♦ bcummings@cityofbath.com
Website: www.cityofbath.com