



Office of the Mayor
520 Market Street
Camden, New Jersey 08101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
DATE: August 2, 2011

CONTACT: Robert Corrales
PHONE: 856-757-7200

**MAYOR'S OFFICE CONTINUES OFFERING CAMDEN CITY SENIORS
ASSISTANCE IN FILING CITY & STATE TAX REIMBURSEMENT APPLICATIONS**

Overall Tax Rate For Camden City Decreases To 2.482%

CAMDEN – Camden Mayor Dana L. Redd today reminded residents that her office will continue to assist Camden City seniors fill out property tax deduction applications such as the City's senior, veteran, and disabled tax deductions and the State's Senior Freeze program. The Mayor also announced that the overall tax rate for Camden City dropped just over two percentage points to 2.482%. The previous tax rate was 4.593%.

“During the budget process, my Administration informed Council members and the public that a decrease in the tax rate would occur due in part of the mandated revaluation that was being conducted and the slight increase to the City tax levy,” Mayor Redd said. “My Administration is doing everything possible to lessen the burden on our taxpayers while still ensuring that essential services they expect are provided. I urge Camden seniors and veterans take advantage of available tax deduction programs available to them. If they need help filing their applications, my office is here to assist them through the process.”

In March of this year, Mayor Redd had staff members from her office and the City's community centers take part in a training session administered by the New Jersey Department of Treasury to assist seniors file their State “Senior Freeze” applications. Eligible applicants must file their application on or before October 31, 2011. Seniors applying for the 2010 reimbursement must have total income for both 2009 and 2010 that is \$80,000 or less. These limits apply regardless of marital/civil union status. To qualify for the 2010 New Jersey Property Tax Reimbursement program, an applicant must meet all of the following requirements:

- You are age 65 or older or receiving Federal Social Security disability benefits; and
- You have lived in New Jersey continuously for at least the last ten (10) years, as either a homeowner or a renter; and
- You have owned and lived in your home (or have leased a site in a mobile home park on which you have placed a manufactured or mobile home that you own) for at least the last three (3) years; and

(more)

- You have paid the full amount of property taxes (or site fees if you are a mobile home owner) that were due on your home for the base year and for each succeeding year, up to and including the year for which you are claiming the reimbursement; and
- You meet the income limits for the base year and for each succeeding year, up to and including the year for which you are claiming the reimbursement.

The Mayor's staff is also prepared to assist Camden City seniors, veterans, and disabled file their City tax deduction applications. There are no income requirements for veterans to be eligible for the City veteran's tax deductions. For the veteran deduction, all they need to provide is proof of their veteran status (must have served in time of war). Seniors, Disabled and Widow of Seniors or Disabled must reasonably anticipate that income received during the tax year, including income of the claimant's spouse, will not exceed \$10,000.

Camden seniors, veterans, and the disabled can seek assistance from the Mayor's Office or from our community centers immediately. Eligible applicants are encouraged to contact the Mayor's Office at 856-757-7200 or the Camden City Bureau of Neighborhood Services (to find nearest Community Center) at 856-757-7605. For additional information regarding the State Senior Freeze program, please visit the New Jersey Department of Treasury website at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/propfrez.shtml. Any personal information discussed with our trained staff will be strictly confidential.

Prior to the 2011 revaluation, the average tax bill for FY2010 was \$1,260. The average assessed value of property (residential and commercial) was \$26,900 and tax ratables were \$825,000,000. After the revaluation was concluded, the average current tax bill is now \$1,365; an increase of just over \$100 per year. The average assessed value of property (residential and commercial) is \$55,000 and current tax ratables are \$1,750,000,000. If the Mayor's proposed tax levy was approved, the average taxpayer would have paid an additional \$60 per year and been able to sustain additional public safety and public works personnel positions.

The tax rate is derived by dividing the total tax levy by the net valuation taxable. The tax levy is the amount of taxes assessed to support the municipal budget. Once a tax levy is in place, a municipality cannot collect more than the amount assessed.

“Even though City Council voted against my proposed budget that would have allowed us to rehire more police officers to patrol our neighborhoods, firefighters to battle fires, and public works to continue keeping our City clean, City Council eventually proposed and approved their budget with a tax levy increase which failed to bring back any public safety personnel position,” Mayor Redd said. “Despite this setback, my Administration kept on seeking solutions and was able to eventually bring back almost half of the laid off police and fire personnel. I will continue to advocate and fight on behalf of our residents to improve public safety in our City. ”

With public safety as top priority, Mayor Redd was able to rehire 74 police officers and 31 firefighters who were laid-off on January 18, 2011 by working with federal and state officials. If the police and fire unions would have made modest concessions, close to all of the public safety personnel positions could have been restored. The Administration is also in the process of applying for additional federal SAFER and COPS grants to bring back more police officers and nearly all of the remaining fire personnel.

###