

Understanding your Property Taxes – Part 2 Taxing Entities and Rates

Continuing the series of understanding your property tax bill, let's look at the tax entities that make up your bill and their respective rates.

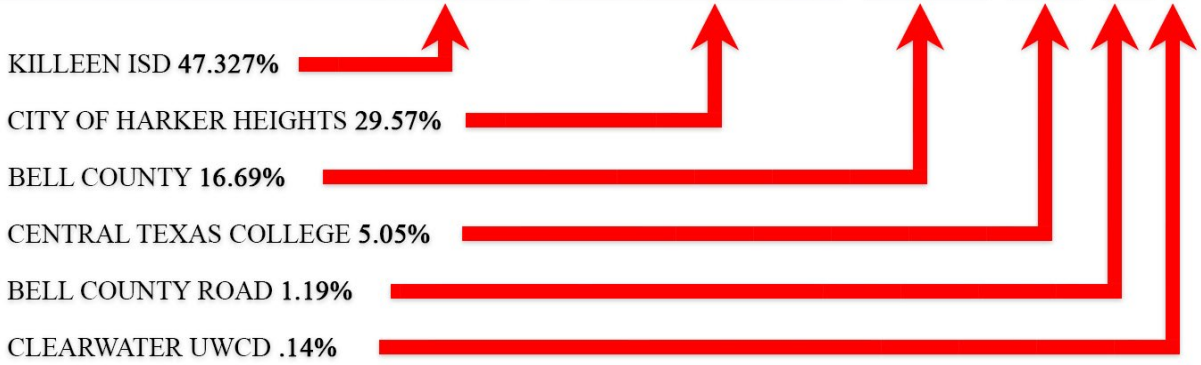
Harker Heights' residents pay taxes to five distinct entities (note Bell County has two taxes they impose but fall under one entity): Bell County, Central Texas College, Bell County Road, Killeen ISD, City of Harker Heights, and Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District (U.W.C.D). The respective rates for each of these entities for 2021/2022 are as follows:

Entity	Tax Rate
Bell County	.368
Central Texas College	.1116
Bell County Road	.0263
Killeen ISD	1.0431
City of Harker Heights	.6519
Clearwater UWCD	.0031

Texas does not have a state property tax. Property taxes are only collected by cities, counties, and school districts, not by the state itself. The revenue property taxes produce are used for local services.

Let's use a home in Harker Heights valued at \$200,000 by the Bell County Appraisal District as an example. Using the rates above, for each entity, the property taxes for a \$200,000 home in Harker Heights can be computed as follows. Take the amount your home is appraised at and divide it by 100. So, in our example we take \$200,000 and divide by 100 to arrive at \$2000. From there we apply the tax rates for the various entities (for example Bell County's tax rate is .368 so .368 multiplied times \$2,000 results in a tax amount of \$736.00). Here are the respective calculations by entity:

Entity	Tax Rate	Tax Amount	Percentage of Taxes Owed
Bell County	.368	\$ 736.00	16.69%
Central Texas College	.1116	\$ 223.20	5.05%
Bell County Road	.0263	\$ 52.60	1.19%
Killeen ISD	1.0432	\$ 2,086.40	47.327%
City of Harker Heights	.6519	\$ 1,303.80	29.57%
Clearwater UWCD	.0031	\$ 6.20	.14%
Total Taxes Owed		\$ 4,408.20	



It is important to note that each of the taxing entities have a respective body that sets and approves their tax rate. As examples, the City of Harker Heights is set by the Harker Heights City Council, Bell County is set by the Bell County Commissioners, and for Killeen ISD it is set by the Killeen ISD School Board. More information on each of the entities on your appraisal letter can be found at the following links:

Entity	Link
Bell County	www.bellcountytexas.com
Central Texas College	www.ctcd.edu
Bell County Road	www.bellcountytexas.com
Killeen ISD	www.killeenisd.org
City of Harker Heights	www.harkerheights.gov
Clearwater UWCD	www.cuwcd.org

One of the complexities of understanding your property tax bill is the interplay between reappraisal increases/decreases and the tax rates set by the entities found on your tax bill. To understand how tax rates, impact your taxes owed, let's assume that your property appraisal is the same as the prior year. In this case your property taxes owed will increase or decrease over the prior year based on the tax rates approved by the entities on your bill. If all the entities' rates remain the same and your appraisal remains the same, then you would owe the same amount as the prior year. This is not the norm as appraisals often change from year to year and tax rates will vary from year to year as the respective bodies for each entity set their tax rate.

In Part 3 of this series we will look at the City services that your property taxes provide.