

**Property Tax 101 - Week 4: I cannot pay my taxes before the tax sale. Does this mean I am going to lose my property?**

Answer: Not right away. It is a lengthy process that takes a minimum of two and a half years, and could take three to five years to be completed. You will be able to “redeem” your taxes at any time after the tax sale by going to the County Clerk’s office to pay your back taxes, and secure your ownership of the property. Please allow the County Clerk’s Office one week after the tax sale before calling to check amounts due (your penalty will not change in that week). It doesn’t take long, however, for the interest and penalties to increase after the tax sale, so do not delay to redeem your taxes. Be sure to have your Property Index Number (PIN) with you to help identify your property in the County Clerk’s office.

Once you have caught up on your back taxes, it might be a good idea to consider taking advantage of the prepayment plan offered in the County Treasurer’s office. You can see more information about our prepayment plan by visiting the Jefferson County website at <http://www.jeffersoncountyllinois.com>, or call our office at 618-244-8010 for more information.

***“If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact our office at 618-244-8010. We are here to help you in any way we can.”***

**Next week: Homestead Exemptions**

