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**CROW WING COUNTY**  
BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

# NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Gary Griffin

218/824-1016

## County-Wide Property Value Assessment Decreases by \$815 Million

Crow Wing County's total assessed property value decreased by \$815 million from 2009 to 2010, according to figures released by the County Land Services Department. Total assessed value of all properties in the County declined from \$12.08 billion as of January 2, 2009, to \$11.26 billion on January 2, 2010, according to the County's 2010 assessment.

The County currently is sending out valuation and classification notices to all landowners identifying the assessed value of the property as of January 2, 2010, based on sales of comparable properties during the period September 2008 through October 2009.

Gary Griffin, Land Services Supervisor for property valuation and classification, noted that the decrease in overall value is significant, but not necessarily indicative of current market value, due to the method by which the State of Minnesota requires assessed values to be determined. "Because these valuations are based on property sales that occurred as much as 18 months ago, changes in the market since then are not reflected in the assessed value," he noted.

Griffin also explained that an overall decline in value does not mean all properties have declined in value. "Each property value is established based on actual sales that occurred in the marketplace. If comparable properties in a neighborhood during the study period sold for more, valuations will be higher; if comparable nearby properties sold for less, valuations go down," he noted.

He added that State Department of Revenue rules determine the process Counties must follow to determine assessed values. "State rules don't allow us to consider foreclosure sales, sales between relatives, government sales, or other sales that are not considered arms length transactions. This really limits the number of sales we can use for comparables in today's market," he stated. In addition, State rules require assessed values to fall within a statistical range which is between 90% and 105% of what comparable properties actually sold for. If the assessed value is outside that range, the State requires all property values to be raised or lowered accordingly.

Griffin also pointed out that lower assessed values do not necessarily mean lower taxes, unless government spending decreases. "Government spending, not assessed value drives what taxes are due and payable on property," he stated. Assessed values are determined by sales of similar properties in the marketplace without regard to tax rates. The tax rate is determined based upon the level of spending

approved by local elected officials at the County, City, Township and School District levels. Local units of government determine how much they need to run their operation – values are only used to determine how big a share of that pie each property represents.

Along with changes in valuation, some properties in Crow Wing County will also see changes related to classification changes enacted by the State legislature, Griffin pointed out. For example, all improved properties over 20 acres that have not been platted and previously were classified seasonal or residential now must receive two classifications. The ten acre portion of such properties that contain structures now are classified according to how that portion of the property is used, while the remaining acres now are classified as “rural vacant land.”

Griffin noted that taxpayers are welcome to contact his office with any questions they may have about valuation and classification notices. “We are committed to providing excellent customer service and responding to all inquiries in an efficient, courteous and professional manner,” he said. The office is located in Brainerd on the third floor of the Historic Courthouse, 326 Laurel Street. The main phone number is 218/824-1010 and the email address is [assessor@co.crow-wing.mn.us](mailto:assessor@co.crow-wing.mn.us). Or, visit the website at [www.co.crow-wing.mn.us](http://www.co.crow-wing.mn.us).

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