



News Release

Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District

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Serving The Treasure Valley Since 1904

UNPAID IRRIGATION TAXES **THREATEN LOSS OF PROPERTY**

For Immediate Release
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Daren Coon - (208) 466-7861

Eleven properties in Ada and Canyon Counties with a total assessed value of \$1.83 million may be sold August 17 for just \$15,695 because their owners have failed to pay irrigation taxes for the past three years, officials with the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District announced today.

The Irrigation District is also cautioning other people who own property inside the District's boundaries to make sure their tax bills are paid to avoid facing similar action.

"We really dislike having to proceed with these tax sales and go to great lengths to avoid these types of tax deed sale situations for our patrons. But state law is very specific about what steps the District must take to recover the tax money owed on the property," said Daren Coon, NMID Secretary Treasurer.

NMID is currently accepting written bids for the 11 properties. The minimum bid is the amount of irrigation taxes owing to the District. In one instance that means a property with an assessed value of \$350,500 could be sold for just \$401.25 in unpaid taxes.

Six of the properties are in Ada County – four in Boise and two in Meridian. The remaining five are in Canyon County – four in Nampa and one in Caldwell. The property owners facing tax deed action on their property are those who have failed to pay District irrigation tax assessments for the years 2007 through 2009.

The six in Ada County have a total assessed value of \$1.54 million according to Ada County Assessor records. The total taxes due on the six is \$2,873. The five Canyon County properties have a total assessed value of \$288,000 while the total amount of taxes owed is \$12,822.

The property owners can avoid their property being sold by paying the taxes due prior to the opening of the bids, according to Coon. Only a couple of properties actually have ended up being sold over the past several years, Coon noted.

A certified letter warning of the pending tax deed action was sent to the property owners in addition to several other written notices. The final warning comes with large advertisements run for three consecutive days in the two local daily newspapers. This year the ads were run on August 2-4.

Although it is not required, NMID officials also typically take the extra step of trying to find and notify the property owners in person.

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Coon says the problem sometimes grows out of a mistaken belief by property owners that they do not need to pay the annual assessment because they do not receive or use irrigation water.

“Our experience is that many newcomers mistakenly believe the District’s tax assessment need only be paid if they actually use irrigation water. But that is just not the case. Idaho law specifies that all property owners in the district are to help pay the costs of maintaining the irrigation system, whether they use water or not. In addition some property owners believe the payment is part of their escrow tax payment being made by the mortgage company” Coon said.

The taxes are used to pay for operation and maintenance of the canals, laterals, drains and dams that make up the District's water delivery system. Levies also are assessed against individual subdivision parcels using pressurized irrigation systems in subdivisions around the valley.

Coon said the tax deed auction represents a miniscule percentage of the more than 37,000 property owners who received annual tax assessment notices. NMID officials stress that individuals who own property inside the District and have questions about their tax assessment payment or the Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District should call the District office at 466-7861.

Residents also can check to see whether their NMID taxes are paid by visiting the District’s web site: www.nmid.org.

NMID delivers irrigation water to 69,000 acres of Treasure Valley land including pressurized irrigation to approximately 15,000 residential and commercial lots including 335 residential subdivisions. For information about the District call 466-7861. Information is also available on its Internet website: www.nmid.org.

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