



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Owen H. Johnson

March 1st Deadline to Apply for New York State's School Tax Relief (STAR)

OWEN H. JOHNSON January 26, 2010

| ISSUE: **PROPERTY TAX**

Senator Owen H. Johnson (4th Senatorial District) wants to remind you that the deadline for New York State's School Tax Relief Program (STAR) is March 1st. STAR is a tax relief program that lowers property taxes for owner-occupied primary residences. There are two levels of STAR benefits; Basic STAR and Enhanced STAR.

Basic STAR is available to all resident owners of 1-,2-, and 3-family houses, condominiums, and cooperative apartments. There is no income or age limit. Owners of 4-,5-,and 6-family homes, where the owner resides in the building, may also be eligible for Basic STAR.

However, the exemption only applies to the portion of the building occupied by the owner. Once you are approved for Basic Star, you need not reapply each year unless you move to a new primary residence.

You may already have the Basic STAR exemption, but if you turn 65 any time in the year 2010, you may be eligible for the Enhanced STAR exemption. In addition to being 65 or older, you must own property that you use as your primary residence, and the total annual income of all the owners of the property must be \$74,700 or less, based on 2008 Income Tax Returns. If you meet these qualifications, you must complete a separate application for Enhanced

STAR. It will offer you an even bigger break on your property tax bill.

If you file an annual state income tax return, you may also be eligible to enroll in the STAR Income Verification Program, in which you can authorize the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance to verify your income eligibility each year. Please ask your assessor about this program. If you qualify for the enhanced benefit but choose not to enroll in the STAR Income Verification Program, you must reapply each year for the Enhanced STAR Program.

The STAR Program is locally administered by your town assessor's office where you may acquire and file your application between January 1st and March 1st. The amount of your STAR benefit is set every year by the State and is based on the type of property you own. The benefit on your tax bill, therefore, may vary each year.

To request an application in the Town of Babylon, contact:

The Department of Assessment

200 East Sunrise Highway

Lindenhurst, NY 11757

(631) 957-3014

Online applications available at townofbabylon.com

To request an application in the Town of Islip, contact:

The Office of Robert F. Devine, Jr., Assessor (631) 224-5058

40 Nassau Avenue

Islip, NY 11751

Online applications available at www.orps.state.ny.us

Senator Johnson said, "In these difficult economic times, I want to make sure that those who are eligible to receive property tax reductions through the STAR Program meet the March 1st

application deadline.“