



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2015 Wisconsin Act 322
[2015 Assembly Bill 576]

**Special Supervision of
Property Tax Assessments**

BACKGROUND

In general, the valuation of real property is conducted at the local level by a taxation district¹ assessor. Also, the statutes generally require that the assessed value of each major class of property of a taxation district be established within 10% of the full value of the “same major class of property” at least once every five years. **Prior law** defined a “major class of property” to mean any class of property (e.g., residential, commercial, personal, agricultural forest, etc., but excluding manufacturing) that includes more than 5% of the full value of the taxation district.

Current law specifies when the Department of Revenue (DOR) is required to order “special supervision” over the assessment of a local taxation district if the district has not assessed the value of each major class of property in its district within 10% of the full value of the same major class of property. Very generally, the process of “special supervision” of a taxation district’s property assessment involves DOR either designating one or more DOR employees or appointing one or more other qualified persons to assist the local assessor in making an assessment.

Prior law required DOR to order that a “special supervision” occur after seven consecutive years of the assessed value of each major class of property in a taxation district not being established within 10% of the full value of the same major class of property. As such, “special supervision” of assessments occurred in the **eighth year**. Before “special supervision” could occur in the eighth year, prior law required the taxation district assessment staff to

¹ For purposes of this Memo, a “taxation district” means a town, village, or city in which general property taxes are levied and collected. [s. 70.045, Stats.]

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature’s Web site at: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov>.

participate in an educational program implemented by DOR in the year following the five-year period (i.e., in the sixth year) that the assessed value of each major class of property was not established as required by state law. In the year following participation in the educational program (i.e., in the seventh year), if the assessed value of each major class of property was still not established as required by state law, DOR issued an order for a “special assessment” to occur in the eighth year.

2015 WISCONSIN ACT 322

2015 Wisconsin Act 322 (the Act) eliminates the requirement that a taxation district’s assessment staff participate in an educational program before DOR must order “special supervision” of the taxation district’s property assessment. By eliminating participation in an educational program, the Act shortens the process in which “special supervision” of a local taxation district’s property assessment occurs by one year. As such, “special supervision” will now occur in the **seventh year**.

The Act also amends what constitutes a “major class of property.” Under the Act, a “major class of property” means any class of property that includes more than 10% of the full value of the taxation district.

Effective date: This Act took effect on April 1, 2016.

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