

Purpose/General Information

What is a county tax sale?

A Tax Sale is a public auction of tax deeds used to recover delinquent real property taxes.

Why does a County sell tax-defaulted property?

The primary purpose is to collect delinquent taxes. The back taxes, penalties and interest and costs due are recouped by: (1) forcing payment of property taxes by a current property owner via threat of sale, or (2) via a public auction of delinquent property. The proceeds in excess of the taxes, interest, penalties and costs may be claimed by the former owner.

What is an Internet tax sale?

An Internet tax sale is an online public auction of tax deeds or tax certificates used to collect delinquent real property taxes due to a County or other taxing authority. Bids are placed using a computer and a Web browser.

Who can participate in a Bid4Assets county tax sale?

Anyone who wishes to bid at the online public auction must register with Bid4Assets and qualify as a bidder.

What is a Tax Deed?

A written document used to convey title to real property after property is sold at public auction by a local governmental authority for nonpayment of taxes.

What is a Tax Deed Sale?

A public auction, mandated by state statute, of tax-defaulted real property. Tax deeds are sold to the highest bidder. Typically, bidding begins at the amount of delinquent taxes, interest charges and related fees due to a County. [Click here to view a list of states that conduct tax deed sales on Bid4Assets.](#)

What laws govern tax sales?

Tax sales are conducted pursuant to legislation passed by the Washington State Legislature and codified in Chapter 84 of the Revised Code of Washington. As a bidder, you are responsible for becoming familiar with the laws pertaining to a tax auction you are participating in.

What is a Standard Data List?

A list of tax-defaulted parcels available for purchase for a tax sale. It is published by a taxing jurisdiction and may include the following information: parcel number, owner's name, delinquent taxes owed, and legal description. The amount of information provided on each parcel is at the discretion of a jurisdiction conducting an auction. Long legal descriptions are generally included ONLY if parcel numbers or other parcel identifiers are not available. Lists are usually delivered within 12 business hours of receipt of order. They are e-mailed to your desktop in either Microsoft Excel or ASCII format.

What is an Enhanced Data List?

An Enhanced Data List expands on a Standard Data List to include the following Assessor information on each parcel: situs address (if assigned), assessed value for land and improvements, property type, and owner's mailing address. Other information is available at www.co.thurston.wa.us/assessor/. Select A+ parcel search.

How much does it cost to participate?

There are no fees to participate in a county tax sale auction.

How are properties available for so cheap?

The primary purpose of the County Tax Sale auction is the collection of delinquent taxes. The starting price (minimum bid) is set equal to the recorded back taxes and interest only and is irrespective of the property's assessed value.

What is the redemption period for the properties being auctioned?

The answer depends on the statutes for that jurisdiction/County.

What does it mean if a property is withdrawn?

A property can be withdrawn from the auction at any given point for various reasons, including the owner paying all past due amounts. Past due amounts can be paid until 5 PM PT the last business day before the sale.

How do I know which properties have been removed from the sale?

When a property is withdrawn from a Bid4Assets County Tax Sale auction the word "withdrawn" is added to the auction listing title alerting bidders that the property is no longer available.

Will I be responsible for back taxes owed to the county for property that I purchase?

Who is responsible for any mortgages, liens, back taxes, association fees, or other encumbrances attached to the property?

Tax Sale properties may have other, non-county liens against them. Many of these liens will be extinguished by the sale. It is the responsibility of the bidder to determine the liabilities that may exist on a property before bidding.

What happens to property that is not sold?

The County determines what they want to do with properties that do not sell during the auction. Often Counties will re-offer the unsold properties during their next scheduled County Tax Sale.

Before the Auction

How do I register to participate?

Registering on Bid4Assets is free, easy and only takes a couple of minutes. Click [here](#) to register now.

What information do I need to know in order to place a bid?

Interested bidders are urged to examine the title, location and desirability of the available

properties to their own satisfaction **prior** to the sale. When you find an item you are interested in bidding on, make sure you read the entire listing description and any additional information included within the auction listing.

After reviewing the information, if you have additional questions you are encouraged to contact the Treasurer's Office of the County in which the property you are interested in is located. This information can be found in the center of the County specific storefronts.

How do I research the property I am interested in bidding on?

The amount of information provided to the public varies from county to county, from detailed descriptions to only the parcel number. Regardless of the amount of data provided, buyers are encouraged to do their own due diligence on the property.

What is due diligence? What due diligence information does the county provide for the properties being auctioned?

Due diligence is the process of gathering information about the condition and legal status of an asset being sold. The Due Diligence information included in property listing varies from County to County.

How do I obtain additional information about the property, such as photographs or maps?

Depending on jurisdiction, the Assessor's Office or planning office can help you. In most cases, the Assessor's Office will be able to provide this information. Again, you will need a property identification number to research this information. Contact information for each County is found on the front page of the County's storefront; [click here](#) for a list of active County storefronts.

How do I determine the value of a property?

You may refer to assessed value of a property as determined by the Assessor for a taxing jurisdiction as a guide. It is important to talk to the Assessor's Office to learn how a value is derived - i.e. based on full market value assessment or a specific formula. Then, determine how assessed value relates to actual market value. This is done by looking for comparable properties that have sold recently. You can check "comps" through a number of Web sites: www.domania.com, www.realtor.com, <http://realestate.yahoo.com/re/homevalues>, or other resources you may find.

How can I determine what use I can make of a tax sale property before I purchase it?

County Auditor's records may be examined for any recorded easements on a property. Keep in mind, no expressed or implied warranty is given with respect to parcels, and they are sold on an "as is basis". Bidders are responsible for knowing what they are purchasing. County offices may provide zoning, General Plan designation, water source and other information, but it is up to you to do your requisite homework before purchasing any properties at tax sale.

Does purchase of a tax deed at tax sale guarantee ownership to the property?

In most cases, yes, purchasing a deed at tax sale means the winning bidder has purchased the property. Washington State law has a few limited exceptions such as a redemption right of a juvenile. It is very important that interested bidders carefully read a County's terms and conditions of sale before participating. The terms of sale will always indicate a County's requirements and a bidder's rights before, during and after an auction.

Does a tax-defaulted property have other outstanding taxes or liens on it other than property tax?

The bidder/buyer must review title search or other public documents to determine if there are liens or other restrictions on the property.

During the Auction

How do I place a bid?

Before placing your first bid, thoroughly review the auction description and any additional information included in the listing. Remember, it is incumbent upon the bidder to verify all information provided and conduct additional research before placing a bid.

- When you are ready to place a bid - choose a bid type, enter your **bid amount** in the Bid Amount box and click on the **Bid on this item** button. You will be prompted to login (or register, if you haven't already.)
- Verify your bid amount. Also included on the conformation page is a check box confirming that "I have reviewed and researched asset details to my satisfaction and Bid4Assets Terms of Service". You cannot proceed without acknowledging you have reviewed and researched asset details and the Bid4Assets Terms of Service. Enter your password and click on the **Bid Now** button. Confirming your bid also activates the credit card authorization process.

[Click here](#) for a more comprehensive, step-by-step How to Bid guide.

How do I know if my bid has been accepted?

Once you've submitted your bid, we will send you a bid confirmation notice via e-mail and send a similar notice to your My Messages in-box located within [My B4A](#).

How do I know if I have been out bid?

You will be sent an outbid notification by e-mail and in your My Messages in-box located within [My B4A](#).

What is an Auto Bid? **Auto Bid** is a maximum bid which is held in confidence by the system.

Bid4Assets will use only as much of the maximum bid as is necessary to maintain the bidder's high bid position.

I placed a bid by mistake, how do I cancel my bid?

A bid amount cannot be removed or cancelled from an auction once it is placed. A bid is a binding contract between buyer and seller; an irrevocable offer to purchase an item from the seller at the stated bid price.

Buyers are required to conduct any research or due diligence of an asset prior to placing a bid. If you have made a typographical error in your Auto Bid amount (i.e. intended to place an Auto Bid of \$100 but accidentally typed \$1000), you must contact Support Services at service@Bid4Assets.com or call 877-427-7387 IMMEDIATELY to report the error. Bid4Assets will review each situation separately and use its discretion as to honoring the request.

I am unable to place a bid. What do I do?

You must be registered prior to placing a bid.

How can I find out if a property I am interested in has been withdrawn from an online Bid4Assets sale?

Check the Bid4Assets.com Web site often for updates.

After the Auction**What happens when I win an auction?**

-If you are the winning bidder of a County Tax Sale auction, you will receive an e-mail (and message in your [My Messages](#) in-box) from Bid4Assets with settlement and deed transfer instructions. As a reminder your bid is a binding contract. If you don't perform on the auction, the County will take legal action against you.

How do I know what properties I won?

-If you are the winning bidder of a County Tax Sale auction, you will receive an e-mail (and message in your [My Messages](#) in-box) from Bid4Assets with settlement and deed transfer instructions. You must wire complete funds to the County Treasurer by the date specified. As a reminder your bid is a binding contract. If you don't perform on the auction, the County will take legal action against you.

What happens if the auction ends in a tie?

There are no ties in County Tax Deed Sales. Similar to when an auctioneer continues to take bids until the last bidder bids; Bid4Assets Overtime Bidding keeps an auction open for bidding until there are no further bids for 5 consecutive minutes.

When will I receive my deed?

Deed transfer processing times vary from County to County.

What happens if I do not complete the settlement terms of the auction?

Failure to consummate a sale within the specified time shall result in legal action by the county to obtain funds which are legally due as a result of the sale. It's important to remember that **Bids are binding contracts**; if you are the winning bidder, you are legally obligated to purchase the item. Make sure you have done all necessary research before moving forward with your bid. ALL SALES ARE FINAL AND THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY NO REFUNDS.

The property I won is not as described. Who do I contact?

You will need to contact the County directly if you think the property you won was not described accurately.