

# Assessed Roll Not So High

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When County Assessor Bob Petersen makes a mistake, it's a multi-million dollar whopper.

Today, Petersen announced that in coming up with this year's tax roll his office plugged in more than \$56 million worth of property that didn't exist.

It drops the previously announced growth rate of 22 percent for the roll to 16 percent.

Discovery of the error dashed county and other government agencies' hopes that things will be a little easier this year when it comes to local financing government and its program.

However, according to County Auditor Art Merrill, the shortfall of expected funds will be compensated to a large degree by a windfall that came to the county last week when the California Supreme Court ruled that unsecured taxes taken in 1978-79 could legally be kept by local governments.

The court decision made this county \$1,737,000 in impounded money that can now be allocated to local government agencies, including the county which will get about \$400,000.

On Aug. 5, Petersen announced the assessment roll had come in at a record high since Proposition 13 held untransferred property at its 1975 value, while allowing a 2 percent increase each year.

In his news release today, Petersen explained that staff members used the "market value" of three large properties, rather than the "assessed value." Since the market value is four-times the assessed value, a total of \$55,915,590 in non-existent property value was put into the estimate of county worth.

Petersen's announced \$210 million in new property worth has now been trimmed to \$154 million.

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