

441.21 Actual, assessed, and taxable value.

1. a. All property subject to taxation shall be valued at its actual value which shall be entered opposite each item, and, except as otherwise provided in this section, shall be assessed at one hundred percent of its actual value, and the value so assessed shall be taken and considered as the assessed value and taxable value of the property upon which the levy shall be made.

b. (1) The actual value of all property subject to assessment and taxation shall be the fair and reasonable market value of such property except as otherwise provided in this section. “Market value” is defined as the fair and reasonable exchange in the year in which the property is listed and valued between a willing buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or sell and each being familiar with all the facts relating to the particular property. Sale prices of the property or comparable property in normal transactions reflecting market value, and the probable availability or unavailability of persons interested in purchasing the property, shall be taken into consideration in arriving at its market value. In arriving at market value, sale prices of property in abnormal transactions not reflecting market value shall not be taken into account, or shall be adjusted to eliminate the effect of factors which distort market value, including but not limited to sales to immediate family of the seller, foreclosure or other forced sales, contract sales, discounted purchase transactions or purchase of adjoining land or other land to be operated as a unit.

(2) The actual value of special purpose tooling, which is subject to assessment and taxation as real property under section 427A.1, subsection 1, paragraph “e”, but which can be used only to manufacture property which is protected by one or more United States or foreign patents, shall not exceed the fair and reasonable exchange value between a willing buyer and a willing seller, assuming that the willing buyer is purchasing only the special purpose tooling and not the patent covering the property which the special purpose tooling is designed to manufacture nor the rights to manufacture the patented property. For purposes of this subparagraph, special purpose tooling includes dies, jigs, fixtures, molds, patterns, and similar property. The assessor shall not take into consideration the special value or use value to the present owner of the special purpose tooling which is designed and intended solely for the manufacture of property protected by a patent in arriving at the actual value of the special purpose tooling.

c. In assessing and determining the actual value of special purpose industrial property having an actual value of five million dollars or more, the assessor shall equalize the values of such property with the actual values of other comparable special purpose industrial property in other counties of the state. Such special purpose industrial property includes, but is not limited to chemical plants. If a variation of ten percent or more exists between the actual values of comparable industrial property having an actual value of five million dollars or more located in separate counties, the assessors of the counties shall consult with each other and with the department of revenue to determine if adequate reasons exist for the variation. If no adequate reasons exist, the assessors shall make adjustments in the actual values to provide for a variation of ten percent or less. For the purposes of this paragraph, special purpose industrial property includes structures which are designed and erected for operation of a unique and special use, are not rentable in existing condition, and are incapable of conversion to ordinary commercial or industrial use except at a substantial cost.

d. Actual value of property in one assessing jurisdiction shall be equalized as compared with actual value of property in an adjoining assessing jurisdiction. If a variation of five percent or more exists between the actual values of similar, closely adjacent property in adjoining assessing jurisdictions in Iowa, the assessors thereof shall determine whether adequate reasons exist for such variation. If no such reasons exist, the assessors shall make adjustments in such actual values to reduce the variation to five percent or less.

e. The actual value of agricultural property shall be determined on the basis of productivity and net earning capacity of the property determined on the basis of its use for agricultural purposes capitalized at a rate of seven percent and applied uniformly among counties and among classes of property. Any formula or method employed to determine productivity and net earning capacity of property shall be adopted in full by rule.

f. In counties or townships in which field work on a modern soil survey has been completed

since January 1, 1949, the assessor shall place emphasis upon the results of the survey in spreading the valuation among individual parcels of such agricultural property.

g. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the actual value of any property shall not exceed its fair and reasonable market value, except agricultural property which shall be valued exclusively as provided in paragraph “e” of this subsection.

h. The assessor shall determine the value of real property in accordance with rules adopted by the department of revenue and in accordance with forms and guidelines contained in the real property appraisal manual prepared by the department as updated from time to time. Such rules, forms, and guidelines shall not be inconsistent with or change the means, as provided in this section, of determining the actual, market, taxable, and assessed values.

i. (1) If the department finds that a city or county assessor is not in compliance with the rules of the department relating to valuation of property or has disregarded the forms and guidelines contained in the real property appraisal manual, the department shall notify the assessor and each member of the conference board for the appropriate assessing jurisdiction. The notice shall be mailed by restricted certified mail. The notice shall specify the areas of noncompliance and the steps necessary to achieve compliance. The notice shall also inform the assessor and conference board that if compliance is not achieved, a penalty may be imposed.

(2) The conference board shall respond to the department within thirty days of receipt of the notice of noncompliance. The conference board may respond to the notice by asserting that the assessor is in compliance with the rules, guidelines, and forms of the department or by informing the department that the conference board intends to submit a plan of action to achieve compliance. If the conference board responds to the notification by asserting that the assessor is in compliance, a hearing before the director of revenue shall be scheduled on the matter.

(3) A plan of action shall be submitted within sixty days of receipt of the notice of noncompliance. The plan shall contain a time frame under which compliance shall be achieved which shall be no later than January 1 of the following assessment year. The plan of action shall contain the signature of the assessor and of the chairperson of the conference board. The department shall review the plan to determine whether the plan is sufficient to achieve compliance. Within thirty days of receipt of the plan, the department shall notify the assessor and the chairperson of the conference board that it has accepted the plan or that it is necessary to submit an amended plan of action.

(4) By January 1 of the assessment year following the calendar year in which the plan was submitted to the department, the conference board shall submit a report to the department indicating that the plan of action was followed and compliance has been achieved. The department may conduct a field inspection to ensure that the assessor is in compliance. By January 31, the department shall notify the assessor and the conference board, by restricted certified mail, either that compliance has been achieved or that the assessor remains in noncompliance. If the department determines that the assessor remains in noncompliance, the department shall take steps to withhold up to five percent of the reimbursement payment authorized in section 425.1 until the director of revenue determines that the assessor is in compliance.

(5) If the conference board disputes the determination of the department, the chairperson of the conference board may appeal the determination to the state board of tax review.

(6) The department shall adopt rules relating to the administration of this paragraph “i”.

2. In the event market value of the property being assessed cannot be readily established in the foregoing manner, then the assessor may determine the value of the property using the other uniform and recognized appraisal methods including its productive and earning capacity, if any, industrial conditions, its cost, physical and functional depreciation and obsolescence and replacement cost, and all other factors which would assist in determining the fair and reasonable market value of the property but the actual value shall not be determined by use of only one such factor. The following shall not be taken into consideration: Special value or use value of the property to its present owner, and the goodwill or value of a business which uses the property as distinguished from the value of the property as property. However, in assessing property that is rented or leased to low-income

individuals and families as authorized by section 42 of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, and which section limits the amount that the individual or family pays for the rental or lease of units in the property, the assessor shall use the productive and earning capacity from the actual rents received as a method of appraisal and shall take into account the extent to which that use and limitation reduces the market value of the property. The assessor shall not consider any tax credit equity or other subsidized financing as income provided to the property in determining the assessed value. The property owner shall notify the assessor when property is withdrawn from section 42 eligibility under the Internal Revenue Code. The property shall not be subject to section 42 assessment procedures for the assessment year for which section 42 eligibility is withdrawn. This notification must be provided to the assessor no later than March 1 of the assessment year or the owner will be subject to a penalty of five hundred dollars for that assessment year. The penalty shall be collected at the same time and in the same manner as regular property taxes. Upon adoption of uniform rules by the department of revenue or succeeding authority covering assessments and valuations of such properties, the valuation on such properties shall be determined in accordance with such rules and in accordance with forms and guidelines contained in the real property appraisal manual prepared by the department as updated from time to time for assessment purposes to assure uniformity, but such rules, forms, and guidelines shall not be inconsistent with or change the foregoing means of determining the actual, market, taxable and assessed values.

3. “Actual value”, “taxable value”, or “assessed value” as used in other sections of the Code in relation to assessment of property for taxation shall mean the valuations as determined by this section; however, other provisions of the Code providing special methods or formulas for assessing or valuing specified property shall remain in effect, but this section shall be applicable to the extent consistent with such provisions. The assessor and department of revenue shall disclose at the written request of the taxpayer all information in any formula or method used to determine the actual value of the taxpayer’s property.

The burden of proof shall be upon any complainant attacking such valuation as excessive, inadequate, inequitable, or capricious; however, in protest or appeal proceedings when the complainant offers competent evidence by at least two disinterested witnesses that the market value of the property is less than the market value determined by the assessor, the burden of proof thereafter shall be upon the officials or persons seeking to uphold such valuation to be assessed.

4. For valuations established as of January 1, 1979, the percentage of actual value at which agricultural and residential property shall be assessed shall be the quotient of the dividend and divisor as defined in this section. The dividend for each class of property shall be the dividend as determined for each class of property for valuations established as of January 1, 1978, adjusted by the product obtained by multiplying the percentage determined for that year by the amount of any additions or deletions to actual value, excluding those resulting from the revaluation of existing properties, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1978, plus six percent of the amount so determined. However, if the difference between the dividend so determined for either class of property and the dividend for that class of property for valuations established as of January 1, 1978, adjusted by the product obtained by multiplying the percentage determined for that year by the amount of any additions or deletions to actual value, excluding those resulting from the revaluation of existing properties, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1978, is less than six percent, the 1979 dividend for the other class of property shall be the dividend as determined for that class of property for valuations established as of January 1, 1978, adjusted by the product obtained by multiplying the percentage determined for that year by the amount of any additions or deletions to actual value, excluding those resulting from the revaluation of existing properties, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1978, plus a percentage of the amount so determined which is equal to the percentage by which the dividend as determined for the other class of property for valuations established as of January 1, 1978, adjusted by the product obtained by multiplying the percentage determined for that year by the amount of any additions or deletions to actual value, excluding those resulting from the revaluation of existing properties, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1978, is increased in arriving at the 1979

dividend for the other class of property. The divisor for each class of property shall be the total actual value of all such property in the state in the preceding year, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment submitted for 1978, plus the amount of value added to said total actual value by the revaluation of existing properties in 1979 as equalized by the director of revenue pursuant to section 441.49. The director shall utilize information reported on abstracts of assessment submitted pursuant to section 441.45 in determining such percentage. For valuations established as of January 1, 1980, and each year thereafter, the percentage of actual value as equalized by the director of revenue as provided in section 441.49 at which agricultural and residential property shall be assessed shall be calculated in accordance with the methods provided herein including the limitation of increases in agricultural and residential assessed values to the percentage increase of the other class of property if the other class increases less than the allowable limit adjusted to include the applicable and current values as equalized by the director of revenue, except that any references to six percent in this subsection shall be four percent.

5. For valuations established as of January 1, 1979, commercial property and industrial property, excluding properties referred to in section 427A.1, subsection 8, shall be assessed as a percentage of the actual value of each class of property. The percentage shall be determined for each class of property by the director of revenue for the state in accordance with the provisions of this section. For valuations established as of January 1, 1979, the percentage shall be the quotient of the dividend and divisor as defined in this section. The dividend for each class of property shall be the total actual valuation for each class of property established for 1978, plus six percent of the amount so determined. The divisor for each class of property shall be the valuation for each class of property established for 1978, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1978, plus the amount of value added to the total actual value by the revaluation of existing properties in 1979 as equalized by the director of revenue pursuant to section 441.49. For valuations established as of January 1, 1979, property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438 shall be considered as one class of property and shall be assessed as a percentage of its actual value. The percentage shall be determined by the director of revenue in accordance with the provisions of this section. For valuations established as of January 1, 1979, the percentage shall be the quotient of the dividend and divisor as defined in this section. The dividend shall be the total actual valuation established for 1978 by the department of revenue, plus ten percent of the amount so determined. The divisor for property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438 shall be the valuation established for 1978, plus the amount of value added to the total actual value by the revaluation of the property by the department of revenue as of January 1, 1979. For valuations established as of January 1, 1980, commercial property and industrial property, excluding properties referred to in section 427A.1, subsection 8, shall be assessed at a percentage of the actual value of each class of property. The percentage shall be determined for each class of property by the director of revenue for the state in accordance with the provisions of this section. For valuations established as of January 1, 1980, the percentage shall be the quotient of the dividend and divisor as defined in this section. The dividend for each class of property shall be the dividend as determined for each class of property for valuations established as of January 1, 1979, adjusted by the product obtained by multiplying the percentage determined for that year by the amount of any additions or deletions to actual value, excluding those resulting from the revaluation of existing properties, as reported by the assessors on the abstracts of assessment for 1979, plus four percent of the amount so determined. The divisor for each class of property shall be the total actual value of all such property in 1979, as equalized by the director of revenue pursuant to section 441.49, plus the amount of value added to the total actual value by the revaluation of existing properties in 1980. The director shall utilize information reported on the abstracts of assessment submitted pursuant to section 441.45 in determining such percentage. For valuations established as of January 1, 1980, property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438 shall be assessed at a percentage of its actual value. The percentage shall be determined by the director of revenue in accordance with the provisions of this section. For valuations established as of January 1, 1980, the percentage shall be the quotient of the dividend and

divisor as defined in this section. The dividend shall be the total actual valuation established for 1979 by the department of revenue, plus eight percent of the amount so determined. The divisor for property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438 shall be the valuation established for 1979, plus the amount of value added to the total actual value by the revaluation of the property by the department of revenue as of January 1, 1980. For valuations established as of January 1, 1981, and each year thereafter, the percentage of actual value as equalized by the director of revenue as provided in section 441.49 at which commercial property and industrial property, excluding properties referred to in section 427A.1, subsection 8, shall be assessed shall be calculated in accordance with the methods provided herein, except that any references to six percent in this subsection shall be four percent. For valuations established as of January 1, 1981, and each year thereafter, the percentage of actual value at which property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438 shall be assessed shall be calculated in accordance with the methods provided herein, except that any references to ten percent in this subsection shall be eight percent. Beginning with valuations established as of January 1, 1979, and each year thereafter, property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapter 434 shall also be assessed at a percentage of its actual value which percentage shall be equal to the percentage determined by the director of revenue for commercial property, industrial property, or property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 437, and 438, whichever is lowest.

6. Beginning with valuations established as of January 1, 1978, the assessors shall report the aggregate taxable values and the number of dwellings located on agricultural land and the aggregate taxable value of all other structures on agricultural land. Beginning with valuations established as of January 1, 1981, the agricultural dwellings located on agricultural land shall be valued at their market value as defined in this section and agricultural dwellings shall be valued as rural residential property and shall be assessed at the same percentage of actual value as is all other residential property.

7. For the purpose of computing the debt limitations for municipalities, political subdivisions and school districts, the term “*actual value*” means the “*actual value*” as determined by subsections 1 to 3 of this section without application of any percentage reduction and entered opposite each item, and as listed on the tax list as provided in section 443.2 as “*actual value*”.

Whenever any board of review or other tribunal changes the assessed value of property, all applicable records of assessment shall be adjusted to reflect such change in both assessed value and actual value of such property.

8. a. Any normal and necessary repairs to a building, not amounting to structural replacements or modification, shall not increase the taxable value of the building. This paragraph applies only to repairs of two thousand five hundred dollars or less per building per year.

b. Notwithstanding paragraph “a”, any construction or installation of a solar energy system on property classified as agricultural, residential, commercial, or industrial property shall not increase the actual, assessed and taxable values of the property for five full assessment years.

c. As used in this subsection, “*solar energy system*” means either of the following:

(1) A system of equipment capable of collecting and converting incident solar radiation or wind energy into thermal, mechanical or electrical energy and transforming these forms of energy by a separate apparatus to storage or to a point of use which is constructed or installed after January 1, 1978.

(2) A system that uses the basic design of the building to maximize solar heat gain during the cold season and to minimize solar heat gain in the hot season and that uses natural means to collect, store, and distribute solar energy which is constructed or installed after January 1, 1981.

d. In assessing and valuing the property for tax purposes, the assessor shall disregard any market value added by a solar energy system to a building. The director of revenue shall adopt rules, after consultation with the economic development authority, specifying the types

of equipment and structural components to be included under the guidelines provided in this subsection.

9. Not later than November 1, 1979, and November 1 of each subsequent year, the director shall certify to the county auditor of each county the percentages of actual value at which residential property, agricultural property, commercial property, industrial property, and property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 434, 437, and 438 in each assessing jurisdiction in the county shall be assessed for taxation. The county auditor shall proceed to determine the assessed values of agricultural property, residential property, commercial property, industrial property, and property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 434, 437, and 438 by applying such percentages to the current actual value of such property, as reported to the county auditor by the assessor, and the assessed values so determined shall be the taxable values of such properties upon which the levy shall be made.

10. The percentage of actual value computed by the director for agricultural property, residential property, commercial property, industrial property and property valued by the department of revenue pursuant to chapters 428, 433, 434, 437, and 438 and used to determine assessed values of those classes of property does not constitute a rule as defined in section 17A.2, subsection 11.

11. Beginning with valuations established on or after January 1, 1995, as used in this section, “*residential property*” includes all land and buildings of multiple housing cooperatives organized under chapter 499A and includes land and buildings used primarily for human habitation which land and buildings are owned and operated by organizations that have received tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and rental income from the property is not taxed as unrelated business income under section 422.33, subsection 1A.

12. Beginning with valuations established on or after January 1, 2002, as used in this section, “*agricultural property*” includes the real estate of a vineyard and buildings used in connection with the vineyard, including any building used for processing wine if such building is located on the same parcel as the vineyard.

[C97, §1305; S13, §1305; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §7109; C46, §441.4; C50, 54, 58, §441.13; C62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §441.21; 81 Acts, ch 144, §1; 82 Acts, ch 1100, §22, ch 1159, §1 – 3, ch 1186, §4, 5]

83 Acts, ch 202, §22, 23; 84 Acts, ch 1223, §1; 88 Acts, ch 1116, §1; 89 Acts, ch 176, §1; 89 Acts, ch 296, §63; 95 Acts, ch 83, §28; 95 Acts, ch 157, §1; 96 Acts, ch 1034, §40; 97 Acts, ch 23, §51; 99 Acts, ch 114, §28; 2001 Acts, ch 119, §1; 2002 Acts, ch 1150, §13; 2002 Acts, ch 1153, §1, 2; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §286; 2004 Acts, ch 1073, §29; 2005 Acts, ch 150, §124, 125; 2009 Acts, ch 108, §16, 41; 2011 Acts, ch 25, §97, 143; 2011 Acts, ch 118, §50, 89

[T] Code editor directives applied

[T] Subsection 1, paragraph b amended