

427C.12 Application — inspection — continuation of exemption — recapture of tax.

It shall be the duty of the assessor to secure the facts relative to fruit-tree and forest reservations by taking the sworn statement, or affirmation, of the owner or owners making application under [this chapter](#); and to make special report to the county auditor of all reservations made in the county under the provisions of [this chapter](#).

The board of supervisors shall designate the county conservation board or the assessor who shall inspect the area for which an application is filed for a fruit-tree or forest reservation tax exemption before the application is accepted. Use of aerial photographs may be substituted for on-site inspection when appropriate. The application can only be accepted if it meets the criteria established by the natural resource commission to be a fruit-tree or forest reservation. Once the application has been accepted, the area shall continue to receive the tax exemption during each year in which the area is maintained as a fruit-tree or forest reservation without the owner having to refile. If the property is sold or transferred, the seller shall notify the buyer that all, or part of, the property is in fruit-tree or forest reservation and subject to the recapture tax provisions of [this section](#). The tax exemption shall continue to be granted for the remainder of the eight-year period for fruit-tree reservation and for the following years for forest reservation or until the property no longer qualifies as a fruit-tree or forest reservation. The area may be inspected each year by the county conservation board or the assessor to determine if the area is maintained as a fruit-tree or forest reservation. If the area is not maintained or is used for economic gain other than as a fruit-tree reservation during any year of the eight-year exemption period and any year of the following five years or as a forest reservation during any year for which the exemption is granted and any of the five years following those exemption years, the assessor shall assess the property for taxation at its fair market value as of January 1 of that year and in addition the area shall be subject to a recapture tax. However, the area shall not be subject to the recapture tax if the owner, including one possessing under a contract of sale, and the owner's direct antecedents or descendants have owned the area for more than ten years. The tax shall be computed by multiplying the consolidated levy for each of those years, if any, of the five preceding years for which the area received the exemption for fruit-tree or forest reservation times the assessed value of the area that would have been taxed but for the tax exemption. This tax shall be entered against the property on the tax list for the current year and shall constitute a lien against the property in the same manner as a lien for property taxes. The tax when collected shall be apportioned in the manner provided for the apportionment of the property taxes for the applicable tax year.

[S13, §1400-n; C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §2616; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §161.12]

[84 Acts, ch 1222, §4](#); [85 Acts, ch 75, §1](#)

[C93, §427C.12](#)

[95 Acts, ch 156, §1](#)