



## Counties' tax profiles as different as they are alike

	Cheyenne	Decatur	Logan	Norton	Rawlins	Sheridan	Sherman	Thomas	Wallace
1990 Levy	32.820	31.747	29.05	48.986	58.36	47.196	35.59	24.05	28.54
2000 Levy	36.291	60.945	51.618	77.981	67.593	74.341	51.85	27.97	53.81
2010 Levy*	50.857	67.214	62.255	74.717	70.128	84.485	69.45	34.538	100.77
Up/down	Up 55%	Up 111.7%	Up 114%	Up 52.5%	Up 20%	Up 79%	Up 95.1%	Up 44%	Up 253.1%
Over Inflation	-3.20%	+28%	+30%	-7.4%	-27%	+14%	+18.3%	-4%	+114.4%
1990 Budget	\$1,978,639	\$2,232,461	\$1,583,383	\$2,728,671	\$2,800,100	\$1,916,634	\$3,185,029	\$2,641,120	\$1,419,573
2000 Budget	\$2,897,019	\$3,205,358	\$3,243,303	\$4,852,071	\$3,632,465	\$2,911,603	\$5,807,917	\$4,628,742	\$1,885,225
2010 Budget	\$4,163,251	\$4,156,877	\$4,642,363	\$5,855,773	\$5,100,097	\$5,834,494	\$8,893,244	\$7,161,877	\$2,994,992
Up/down	Up 110%	Up 86%	Up 193%	Up 114.6%	Up 82%	Up 204%	Up 179%	Up 171%	Up 110.1%
Over Inflation	+27.7%	+13%	+78%	+30.3%	+10%	+84.8%	+69.5%	+4.8%	+28%
Total Tax Burden	\$41,000,077	\$38,319,950	\$44,026,834	\$40,992,624	\$32,495,971	\$36,783,798	\$65,771,132	\$81,079,096	\$25,226,925

\*Estimates; most 2010 actual numbers are unavailable at this time.

# Tax on cars figured on averages

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When people get their vehicle license renewal notice in the mail, many just shake their head at how much it is, then pay the bill. Most never stop to wonder how the numbers are figured.

The bills can be high because you're not just paying to register your car or truck, but the year's personal property taxes on the value of the vehicle as well. Kansas gave up on taxing most personal property years ago; it still taxes trailer, boats, recreational vehicles and some other property, but not household goods.

The state shifted payment of the tax on vehicles to the licensing process because it's easier to get the money that way. Owners

can't get tags unless they pay the tax.

The state sets a registration fee for every vehicle, old or new, said Dolores Jenik, Cheyenne County treasurer. Car owners pay a \$35 fee while pickups are \$45.

Jeannine Koranda, spokeswoman for the Kansas Department of Revenue, said the 2011 levies (which the figures below are taken from) were figured using the 2009 valuations in each county. The state figures an average levy for vehicle valuation, so everyone in the county pays the same on a similar car or truck.

Vehicle values are assessed as a percentage of the average market value of the car or truck. As the vehicle ages, the value drops and the tax is less. The state sets uniform values for all vehicles.

The state's director of property valuation

sets the motor vehicle average tax levy for each county. Decatur and Wallace counties have the highest total tax levies in this area, while Sherman and Cheyenne have the lowest.

In 2011, the Decatur County vehicle tax levy was 138.948; in County Wallace, 138.562; Norton, 124.942; Sheridan, 124.257; Thomas, 122.667; Rawlins, 121.171; Sherman, 103.484; Cheyenne, 81.911; and Logan, 121.258.

Since northwest Kansas is a farming area, we asked the cost of property taxes when purchasing a license for a 2011 Ford XLT pickup that cost \$40,000 new in seven northwest Kansas counties.

It is important to consider, when purchasing a car or truck, knowing what the personal property taxes on it will be, as each year,

you'll pay taxes on it.

If you're thinking about going to Cheyenne County to register your car, Koranda said, don't bother unless you own property in the county – and the vehicle stays there most of the time.

The cost estimates varied quite a bit. Taxes for the Ford pickup are as listed below by the Department of Revenue, rounded off to the nearest dollar:

Decatur County: \$797.  
Wallace County: \$795.  
Norton County: \$717.  
Sheridan County: \$713.  
Thomas County: \$704.  
Rawlins County: \$695.  
Sherman County: \$593.  
Cheyenne County: \$470.  
Logan County: \$695.