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## Tennessee audit calls out city employees for not paying taxes

By [Chris Butler](#) / August 18, 2015 / News / [2 Comments](#)



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“Several” Dyersburg city employees are more than six months late paying their property taxes, according to an audit Tennessee Comptroller Justin Wilson released last week (<http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/repository/MA/Financial/1665-2014-C-dyersburg-rpt-cpa545-8-09-15-rev1.pdf>).

It emphasized the need for workers to set a better example.

Certain city officials, including City Recorder Bob Jones, who collects property taxes, and Mayor John Holden, said they were unfamiliar with the findings — even though the city received the audit three months ago.

“I don’t recall having any conversations about that part of the audit,” Holden said.

During last week’s interview, Holden had to call the city’s treasurer to acquaint himself with the situation.

Quoting the treasurer, Holden said only one city employee was late paying property taxes, and it was a matter of \$75 over a property adjacent to his or her house.

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(<http://watchdog.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2015/08/Dyersburg-City-Hall.png>)

Photo courtesy of Flickr.

BLAME CITY HALL: A new audit says several employees at Dyersburg City Hall were late paying property taxes, but other people say “several” is an exaggeration.

(<http://watchdog.org/195135/property-taxes-3/>)

“I don’t know who these employees are referenced in the audit,” Holden said.

“We make efforts to collect all of our taxes. City employees get no special treatment.”

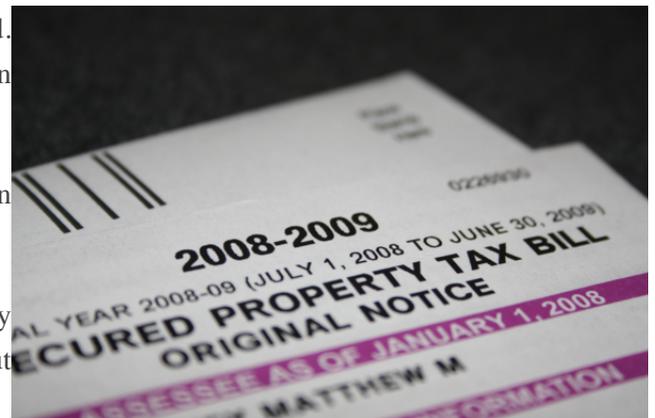
Kevin Howell of the Dyersburg-based firm of Alexander Thompson, Arnold CPAs, which performed the audit, said it was actually three city employees, not one, and all of them have paid up, plus penalties.

“Maybe ‘several’ was too strong a word to put in the audit,” Howell said.

“I don’t have permission to state the dollar amounts of what they owed. But I will say the total property tax assessments amounted to \$6.9 million in revenue, and this was a really, really insignificant part of all that.”

Howell wouldn’t say where the three city employees ranked in the chain of command.

Property tax clerk Gwyn Edmonds said people in Dyersburg generally have about two years to pay their property taxes before city officials put their land up for a tax sale.



Auditors called out city officials in their report, saying they don't routinely send delinquent tax notices.

<http://watchdog.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2015/08/Property-Tax-Bill.png>

Photo courtesy of Flickr.

"It is imperative that financial responsibility begins at home," auditors wrote.

I'M THE TAX MAN: Dyersburg officials don't sent out delinquent property tax notices often enough, according to auditors.

Contact Christopher Butler at [chris@tennesseewatchdog.org](mailto:chris@tennesseewatchdog.org) (<mailto:chris@tennesseewatchdog.org>)

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Chris Butler

Chris formerly served as staff reporter for Watchdog.org.

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