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Atkinson tax rate increases 30 cents

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ATKINSON — While the town's portion of the tax rate is staying the same for 2007, residents will pay 30 cents more per \$1,000 of valuation.

The new rate, which was confirmed earlier this week by the state Department of Revenue Administration, is \$14.10 per \$1,000 of valuation. Last year's rate was \$13.80. That means the owner of a \$300,000 home would see a tax bill of \$4,230 — a \$90 increase from the 2006 bill.

The town component of the 2008 tax rate will remain at \$1.94 per \$1,000 of valuation, and the county rate also will remain the same at 86 cents per \$1,000 of valuation.

While the state education com-

ponent of the bill decreased 4 cents, from \$2.32 to \$2.28, the local school component increased 34 cents, from \$8.68 to \$9.02. Town Administrator Russell McAllister said the state rate has been going down for years, gradually causing the local school rate to increase. That's why it is the highest component by such a large margin, he said.

"As the state rate goes down and slowly goes away, then you have to add it to the local," he said. "That's what people are fearing."

Town assessments are now at 98 percent, versus five years ago when houses were assessed at only 64.7 percent of their actual market value. The truer valuations allow for a lower tax rate. Five years ago, the tax rate was \$23.36 per \$1,000 of valuation, McAllister said.