



**MOUNT LAUREL TOWNSHIP**

Municipal Center  
100 Mount Laurel Road  
Mount Laurel, NJ 08054

August 2010

Dear Mount Laurel Taxpayer,

Enclosed you will find your 2010 tax bill. This tax bill represents the entirety of your obligations for taxes imposed by law upon your property. Please note that the *total of your bill includes your obligation for all taxing entities*. The Township is funded by the Mount Laurel Local Purpose Tax rate, which makes up approximately 13% of you tax obligation (see chart below for breakdown). Your enclosed tax bill includes obligations for the Local Open Space tax, the Mount Laurel Township School District tax, the Lenape Regional School District tax, the Mount Laurel Fire District tax, and Burlington County property and Burlington County Open Space tax.

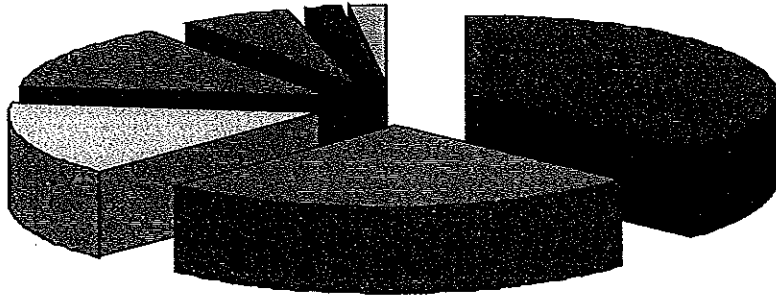
Mount Laurel residents have not been immune to the economic situation that faces our Country and our State. The Township Council and our Manager are working hard to decrease costs to the taxpayers by asking its employees to do more with less. Last year, we began analyzing all township departments and services, looking for ways to reduce costs without eliminating necessary services. This year's budget includes personnel downsizing, combining departments, sharing services with neighboring municipalities, capping professional service fees, and renegotiating contracts.

In March, we were faced with an \$8 million deficit. Through hard work by the Manager, along with concessions from our Police, EMS, and Public Works employees and all of the Township employees affected by the temporary and permanent layoffs, we were able to adopt a budget that was more acceptable to the residents. The adopted budget has an approved 4.1cent tax increase, equating to a dollar increase of approximately \$60 for the YEAR on the average assessed home in Mount Laurel. The initiatives that have begun are just the start of a multi-year plan to make the Township more financially secure for years to come. The Township will continue to monitor all departments and determine the minimum funding requirements to maintain services to its residents.

Even with significant decreases in budgetary items, the Township was still faced with a challenge. The factors that have contributed to this year's difficulties include a decrease in State Aid in the amount of approximately \$726,000 and decreased revenues in excess of \$1.5 million dollars coupled with increases in various expenses, such as insurance, unfunded mandates and utilities. In addition, the Township is facing an unprecedented amount of non-residential tax appeals that is expected to continue throughout future years. In the one year between 2009 and 2010, the Township has experienced a Net Reduction of Asset Value in the amount of \$20 million. The previous 5 years, we experienced a Net Gain of anywhere between \$40 and \$50 million dollars per year. This means that the Township can no longer count on continuous asset growth from new construction. The Township Council and staff will work to offset these challenges by reducing expenses and maintaining services on a more efficient basis.

The *local purpose tax rate accounts for 13.23% of your total tax bill*. Most residents are surprised that only 13.23% of the tax levy pays for all municipal services. The Municipal Open Space Tax accounts for less than an additional 1.88% of your bill. The other taxes described below obviously impact each of us as property owners much more significantly than does the local purpose tax. Specifically the Mount Laurel School District tax is 37.27% of your bill, the Lenape Regional School District tax is 25.29% of your tax bill, Burlington County tax is almost 15%, Mount Laurel Fire District 5.59% and the Burlington County Open Space 1.92%. The following chart illustrates this point.

**2010 Distribution of Taxes**  
**Tax rate 4.255**



■ DISTRICT SCHOOLS TAX	37.27%
■ REGIONAL SCHOOLS TAX	25.29%
□ COUNTY	14.81%
■ MUNICIPAL PURPOSE	13.23%
■ FIRE DISTRICT #1	5.59%
■ COUNTY FARMLAND/OPEN SPACE	1.92%
■ MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE	1.88%

To conclude, I would like to highlight some of our current initiatives:

- Decrease in Salary and Wages by \$1,600,000 without reduction in service. Through layoffs, furloughs, and union concessions
- Reduction and Capping of Professional Services contracts
- Effecting uses of open space properties
- Reduction in various Township contracts, reducing costs for same service by \$300,000
- Participating in shared services
- Implementing revenue generated services, such as allowing the meeting facility to be rented for different occasions.

Should you have any specific questions concerning your tax bill, please do not hesitate to contact any of the following offices with your questions:

Mount Laurel Board of Education	856-235-3387
Lenape Board of Education	609-268-2000
Burlington County Freeholders Office	609-265-5020
Mount Laurel Fire District Office	856-234-6053
Mount Laurel Township	856-234-0001

On behalf of the Mayor and Township Council, thank you for the opportunity to serve our community.

Sincerely,

Jim Keenan, Mayor  
Township of Mount Laurel