SECOND INSTALLMENT TAX BILLS DELAYED

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Cook County's second installment tax bills—which are supposed to be mailed by July 1 and due by August 1—will be late this year. Current estimates are that second installment bills will be about two months late, leading to a likely due date around October 1.

Last year, problems with a new county computer system resulted in a December 15 due date for second installment tax bills. Although the new computer system appears to be working better now, last year's delayed bills are a major reason for this year's delays.

For many taxpayers, the arrival of second installment bills marks the first time they realize there are problems with their assessments. Taxpayers often address such problems by filing appeals. But because last year's late tax bills were so late, many could not file appeals because their townships had already closed for appeals by the time the bills arrived.

In response, county officials reopened appeal periods for the closed townships last December. Reopening the appeal periods, however, delayed the final resolution of this year's appeals. As a result, this year's tax bills are again late.

Fortunately, this year's late bills are not expected to be nearly as late as last year's. This means that there is a good chance that next year's tax bills will be issued on time.

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