

PAULDING COUNTY TAX SALES¹

A property owner's obligation to pay property taxes is backed by the real estate itself. Upon a failure to pay property taxes, the Tax Commissioner can sell the real estate to raise the amount due in back taxes, plus the related statutory fees, costs, and expenses.

On January 1 (which is the start of each tax year), the Tax Commissioner acquires a tax lien on every piece of taxable real estate in the county. If taxes are not then paid by November 15 (the property tax due date), procedures begin that may culminate in a public auction of the real estate, referred to as a "tax sale."

Tax sales occur on the first Tuesday of the month in front of the Paulding County Courthouse, beginning at approximately 11:00 a.m. The property is auctioned off to the highest bidder for cash or certified funds made payable to the Paulding County Tax Commissioner. In exchange for payment, the property is conveyed to the winning bidder by a document known as a tax deed.

Once the property has been auctioned off, the original owner that owed the taxes may re-acquire the property through a process called "redemption." In order for a property to be redeemed and for ownership of the property to revert back to the original owner, the tax sale purchaser (the winning bidder) must be repaid the full auction price, plus twenty percent (20%) for the first year or part thereof following the date of the auction, plus ten percent (10%) for each subsequent year or part thereof, in addition to any other authorized statutory fees. The property may be redeemed as a matter of right during the twelve (12) month period following the tax sale, and the opportunity to redeem remains available until the tax sale purchaser eliminates that right through a statutory "barment" notice (*see* O.C.G.A. § 48-4-40, *et seq.*).

¹ This information was adopted in part from the May 13, 2010, "Consumer Alerts" section of the Fulton County Daily Report. In no way should this information be construed or relied upon as the giving of legal advice.