

## **Heads-Up to Homeowners - STAR Exemption Deadline is Thursday**

Some Homeowners Need to Re-Apply Right Away or They'll Lose Out on Thousands

The STAR exemption program deadline is only days away and if some homeowners don't act right away their tax bill might be thousands of dollars more expensive the next time their bill arrives in the mail. The Application for School Tax Relief (STAR) program deadline is March 1st

. The program is designed to save homeowners hundreds if not thousands of dollars every year in tax benefits. Homeowners enrolled in the "Basic STAR" program will not have to re-apply but those signed up under the "Enhanced STAR" program must provide updated information to their local assessor every year. Enhanced STAR applicants receive additional tax credits based on their age and income and will lose out on the additional savings if the proper information is not supplied annually to their local assessor's office before the deadline. "It is imperative for those enrolled in the enhanced STAR program to get the updated information over to the assessor's office right away. March 1st

is a hard deadline and by not taking a few minutes to gather up the proper materials could cost you thousands of dollars in September when the school tax bill arrives," says Graig Zappia, real estate attorney at Tully Rinckey PLLC. Those reapplying must fill out form RP-425, which can be found on the NYS STAR website, and supply a copy of that year's tax return. Senior citizens wishing to continue receiving enhanced STAR in future years without having the hassle to reapply annually can do so by signing up for the STAR Income Verification program. Form RP-425-IVP can help them set that up once and for all. The form allows the assessor to do the work of verifying income eligibility every year. The applicant only needs to send in their tax return in the first year. "We all live busy lives and it easy to forget when this deadline comes due every year. You don't know how important these tax savings are until you're no longer getting the credit and the harsh truth of your new tax bill arrives," said Zappia. If you are unable to stop by the assessor's office with the updated STAR program information, it can be mailed but needs to be postmarked by the deadline date.