

**NEWS RELEASE** from the Smith County Appraisal District 245 SSE Loop 323, Tyler, TX 75702. 903/510-8600 Michael Barnett, Chief Appraiser.

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For **IMMEDIATE** Release

### **PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS REDUCE DISABLED VETERANS' TAXES**

"Veterans with a service-connected disability may reduce their property taxes in 2011 by filing a simple exemption application at the Smith County Appraisal District office," Chief Appraiser Mike Barnett said. If you received the exemption in 2010, you do not need to reapply in 2011.

A veteran's percentage of service connected disability determines the size of the exemption, which ranges from \$5,000 to \$12,000. The exemption is deducted from the veteran's property value. Barnett explained who is eligible for the exemption:

- \* a disabled veteran;
- \* a surviving spouse of a deceased disabled veteran, as long as the spouse remains unmarried;
- \* a surviving minor child of a deceased disabled veteran, if the veteran's spouse does not survive the veteran and if the child is both under 18 and unmarried;
- \* a surviving spouse of a person killed while on active duty, whether the spouse has remarried or not at application time; and
- \* a surviving minor child of a person killed while on active duty, if the child is both under 18 and unmarried.

**- MORE -**

An applicant may claim exemption on only one piece of property such as a home or any other property the applicant owned on January 1. The applicant must be a Texas resident to qualify.

A disabled veteran who receives from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs 100 percent disability compensation due to a service-connected disability and a rating of 100 percent disabled or of individual unemployability is entitled to an exemption from taxation of the total appraised value of the veteran's residence homestead. This benefit does not accrue to the surviving spouse upon the veteran's death.

The appraisal district requires proof of the disability, such as documentation from the Veterans Administration or the branch of the armed service in which the veteran served. Applicants may also need proof of marriage, age or proof of a spouse's or a parent's death.

More information and application forms may be obtained from the Smith County Appraisal District, 245 S.SE. Loop 323, Tyler, 903/510-8600.

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