

COMMUNITY

Pickens County lowers some

Money received for 1-cent sales tax hike boosts credit for homeowners

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PICKENS — Some Pickens County residents will see the county portion of property tax bill decrease due to increased sales tax collections, however residents of one fire district in

the county will see a substantial increase.

Revenue generated by the county's one-cent Local Option Sales Tax is up, resulting in an increase in credit homeowners receive on their property tax bills, said Brent Suddeth, county auditor.

The amount of the cred-

it is based on home value. For example, it will increase by \$19.50 to a total of \$137.85 on a \$150,000 owner-occupied home, Suddeth said.

But the debt service tax rate for the coming year will increase for residents in two fire districts, Suddeth said.

Residents in the Shady Grove Fire District, will see their bills increase slightly, by about a third of

a mill, Suddeth said.

That comes to about \$2 on a \$150,000 owner-occupied home. That would be more than covered by the local option sales tax credit, so those homeowners still should see an overall property tax reduction.

Residents in the Keowee Springs Fire District will see a larger increase on debt service for their fire house built in 2009 to serve several newer gated

property bills

communities in a northern area of the county.

The debt service tax rate there will increase by 8.5 mills, Suddeth said. That comes to \$51 more on a \$150,000 owner-occupied home, which would be partially offset by the sales tax credit increase.

Not enough taxes have been collected to make bond payments on construction of the district's building and two fire

trucks, said Ralph Guarino, county finance director.

In addition, all homeowners will see debt service on their school taxes rise; however that increase should be offset by the sales tax credit in most cases, Suddeth said.

Debt service for the school district will go up 2 mills this year, which comes to \$12 on a \$150,000 owner-occupied home, Suddeth said.