

Registered Vehicle Q&A

Q: How do I remove a block on my tag?

A: Once your bill is paid, the Tax Office can remove your block. Should you need this block removed immediately, please inform the Tax Cashier when paying your bill.

Q: What if I do not pay my vehicle tax bill and ignore all attempts by the Collection's Office to communication with me by phone or mail concerning payment of my delinquent tax bill?

A: All Swain County taxpayers are provided ample notice to pay their vehicle tax bill. In addition to other forced collection remedies available to the Collection's Office such as the garnishment of wages and attachment of bank accounts, a block is place on the ability to renew or purchase a current license plate tag or sticker from the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Ultimately, any registered vehicle owner who fails to pay his or her vehicle tax bill will risk losing that vehicle. The names and addresses of registered vehicle owners who have not paid their vehicle tax bills are delivered to the Swain County Sheriff's Office on a bi-monthly basis. Sheriffs' Deputies are authorized to confiscate your car, truck, motorcycle, van or trailer and sell it at auction in order to collect the delinquent taxes and recoup the costs of seizure. Vehicles are seized by Sheriff's Deputies at the taxpayer's residence or workplace any time day or night, seven days a week.

Q: I sold my registered vehicle (car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.). How do I get this vehicle off the tax records?

A: Your vehicle will not be charged anymore because you will not be renewing the tag. However, we may be able to do a proration and refund some money. We will need a copy of your Bill of Sale showing you sold the vehicle and a receipt (form FS-20) from the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) showing the tag has been turned in.

Q: I turned a vehicle tag into the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office. What should I do concerning my vehicle taxes?

A: You *may* be entitled to a partial refund if taxes are paid or a tax bill proration if the taxes are not yet paid. In order to make a determination as to if any adjustment is warranted, we need to see a copy of the receipt (FS-20) from the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) along with proof of ownership transfer of vehicle. This could include a copy of the Bill of Sale or a copy of the front and back of the title transfer showing you sold the vehicle.

Q: I have moved to another county and I am receiving a bill from Swain County. Do I owe this bill?

A: The state does not prorate vehicle property taxes from county to county. State law require you pay the county you lived in on the day the license tag was renewed. You will need to pay this bill and submit a change of address to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) so they will have your correct address to mail a renewal card. After you renew your tag, the DMV will give your vehicle information to your new county of residence and they will begin billing you.

Q: I have turned in my leased vehicle and the leasing company says I owe this tax bill. What do I do now?

A: If the leasing company sold the vehicle you turned in, our office will need to see a Bill of Sale from the leasing company and a receipt (Form FS-20) from the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) showing the tag has been turned in. Our office will then look into prorating the leasing company's bill. Please note that depending on lease agreements, some companies pay the taxes and bill the lessee. Others expect the lessee to pay the Tax Office directly. If instead of selling the vehicle you turned in, the leasing company leased this vehicle to another person, there are no provisions for prorating the tax bill.

Q: My car was stolen but I have a bill. Do I owe the taxes?

A: Please provide a letter from the insurance company stating they have taken possession of the title and a receipt from the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) showing the tag has been turned in or recognized as lost/stolen. Then we *may* be able to prorate your bill and you will only pay for the time the tag is valid.

Q: I have purchased a new car but I've received a tax bill for my old car. I transferred the tag, do I still owe this bill?

A: Yes, tax bills are based on the vehicle the license tag was on the day the tag was renewed. This bill needs to be paid and it will cover your new car for the tag year as well. You will receive the bill for the new car next year.

Q: I received a tax bill for a car I just purchased a few months ago. Why am I getting a tax bill? Didn't I pay this when I registered the car?

A: When you purchase a car in North Carolina and register it for the first time, you pay state taxes, a road use fee, registration fee, tag and title fees. The tax bill you have received is for county and applicable municipal taxes. You pay this every year and the bill is produced approximately 3 to 4 months after you register or renew the tag for your vehicle. This bill covers a full year beginning with the date the license tag was registered to the date the license tag expires.

Q: Can you change my mailing address on my vehicle tax bill?

A: No. Address information comes directly to us from the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). You need to change it with their offices and they will send us the corrected information the next time you renew your license tag.

Q: Why do I have to send in a copy of my driver's license to receive a tax bill receipt?

A: Vehicle information is secured by Federal Law. We need a photo ID in order to release that information.