

PRESS RELEASE

Union County Assessor, Mindy Schaefer, is announcing that door-to-door inspections of all residential properties in Union County started at the beginning of July and continues in Creston. Data collectors from Vanguard Appraisals, Inc. will be working in Creston for several months conducting the door-to-door inspections before moving to the next community. For photos of the data collectors, please go to <https://unioncountyiowa.gov/departments/assessor/>. Vehicle information has been given to local law enforcement and each data collector has an ID signed by the Assessor.

What to expect when data collectors are in your neighborhood.

Data collectors will take photos of the front of each house in the neighborhood. This will typically be done from the road or right-of-way. They will knock on the door in an attempt to make contact with the occupants of the home. Then measure the exterior of the dwelling and any other buildings on the parcel the first time they visit the property. If there is no contact, a second attempt will be made then a yellow door tag will be left if no one is home on the second attempt. Data collectors will ask to inspect the inside of the home if an adult occupant is at home.

For what purpose do data collectors need to see the inside of the home.

Property values are required by Iowa Code 441.21 to be at market value. To establish market value of a property, data collectors need to look at a number of items including the quality of construction and the condition of the home. A more accurate condition can be established by viewing the interior. There are times when the outside of the home may not match the condition inside. The type of finish in the kitchen and bathrooms, for example, help determine the quality of the construction. The amount and to what extent of basement finish also goes to market value. There are indicators inside the home that point to the condition of the foundation, which helps determine the overall condition of the home. These items cannot be determined by viewing just the exterior of the house.

Are property owners required to allow an interior inspection of the home.

No; however, property owners are encouraged to cooperate by allowing a complete inspection of their property and/or providing accurate information so that a fair and equitable assessment may be determined for each property. We understand this could cause privacy concerns for some. Before you decline aiding with this project, please know that new market values will be estimated for every home, regardless of owner participation. Refused assistance will not stop a new value from being estimated, only cause it to be less precise.

The purpose of this Residential Reappraisal.

The Iowa Department of Revenue recommends having a complete reappraisal every 10 years. The last reappraisal for Union County residential properties was in the 1980s. The purpose of a reappraisal is to establish fair and equitable assessments that represent the market value of each specific parcel through the collection of data for each specific parcel and sales analysis, a study of local construction costs, and economic conditions for our local jurisdiction. It is not to increase the assessed value of properties or the taxes property owners pay.

Where to go for information or questions.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the reappraisal project, please contact the Union County Assessor's Office at 641-782-1735 or send an email to mschaefer@unioncountyiowa.gov. Additional information can be found on the Union County Assessor's website: <https://unioncountyiowa.gov/departments/assessor/>. We thank you for your cooperation as we continue through this reappraisal project.