

## Why do we have to pay rates?

Council needs income to pay for services, maintenance and capital works. It is so we can provide the community with services such as libraries, recreational facilities, community buildings, waste services and roads maintenance - all the things that the community needs and wants.

## Who pays rates?

Everyone who owns 'rateable' property as defined in the *Local Government Act 1989* pays rates.

## How do you calculate your rates?

Rates are calculated according to the Capital Improved Value (CIV) of your property. This is the value of the land plus buildings and any other improvements. Rates are calculated by multiplying the CIV of your property by the rate in the dollar which Council sets in order to fund the budget. This financial year the general rate is 0.3415 cents in the dollar. In 2014/15 it was 0.3222 cents in the dollar. If your property is valued at \$250,000 your rates will be:

$$\$250,000 \times 0.003415 = \$853.75$$

Council adopted a new Rating Strategy in March 2015 which included an expansion of its existing differential rates to include two new categories. These are to be applied to commercial/industrial properties and to vacant developable land. Council's differential rates as of 1 July 2015 are:

- Rural 1 properties (>40 hectares) – 75% of the general rate
- Commercial/Industrial properties – 125% of the general rate
- Vacant Land – 150% of the general rate

Details of the classes of land which are subject to each differential are set out in Appendix B of Council's 2015-16 Adopted Budget.

Council offers a subdivided vacant land differential rebate. Application forms detailing eligibility criteria are available from all Council offices and from Council's website at [www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au](http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au).

## Who decides the Capital Improved Value?

All properties across the shire are revalued every two years by a qualified valuer appointed by the Valuer-General, as required by the *Local Government Act 1989*. The valuer is an independent contractor who works out the values using a combination of property sales information and inspections. All properties were revalued on 1 January 2014.

These valuation figures were first used in 2014/15 and will again be used in 2015/16.

## Can I object to my property valuation?

You can object to your valuation within two months of the issue date on your rates notice.

Lodge your written objection on the appropriate form available from all council offices or our website. This is then referred to the valuer who will give you an opportunity to discuss your objection. See the back of your rate notice for more information on lodging an objection.

## What other charges are there?

All rateable properties are charged a Municipal charge. For 2015/16 this will be \$307.00. If you have a Council garbage collection it will cost you \$337.00 and the charge for recyclables will be \$83.00.

The State Government introduced a Fire Services Property Levy in 2013 as recommended by the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. This Levy will appear on rates notices and is payable along with your rates payment. ***This is not a Council charge***, but collected on behalf of the State Government. For information on the Fire Services Levy visit [www.firelevy.vic.gov.au](http://www.firelevy.vic.gov.au)

## Can I pay by instalments?

Yes. If you choose to pay by instalments the due dates are:

30 September 2015  
30 November 2015  
28 February 2016  
31 May 2016

If you pay the first instalment by the due date we will send you reminder notices for the rest, otherwise the full amount is payable by 15 February 2016.

## What happens if I don't pay on time?

Interest will be charged on late or unpaid rates and charges. If you pay annually, any outstanding balance after 15 February 2016 will be charged interest on and from the date on which each missed instalment was due. Interest on arrears will date from 1 July 2015.

## What if I have difficulty paying my rates?

Please call our rates department on 5772 0333 to discuss alternate payment options and arrangements.