

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS WATCHDOG

ASSESSORS POSITION ON VALUATION FACTORS TABLE

In December 2009, the State Board of Equalization (BOE) recommended new percent good factors (the flip side of depreciation) for sheetfed lithographic presses for business property tax assessment. The BOE recommendation, however, is just that, a recommendation or advisory.

The 58 county assessors can follow the recommendation or set their own values for locally assessed property.

In a unanimous vote, the County Assessors' Association voted to adopt the BOE's recommendation. But it went one step further: It included web presses—except newspaper web presses—to the definition of lithographic presses. The change will be reflected in the County Assessors' Association annual position paper, entitled Business Assessment Factors. The position paper is then used by all County Assessors in determining business tax assessment.

We are in discussions with the County Assessors' Association on how printers will report lithographic presses on their Business Property Statement (Form 571L).

For additional information, contact Gerry Bonetto at (323) 728-9500.

ARE YOUR WORKPLACE POSTINGS UP TO DATE

In California, all employers must meet workplace posting obligations. It doesn't matter whether you have one

DO NOT MAIL UPDATE

Over the past three months, we've reported on Do Not Mail registry activity in Oakland and Berkeley. Recently, a variation of Do Not Mail has been introduced in Monterey.

After public testimony and meeting with members of the Mail Moves America coalition, the Oakland measure has been put on hold, and Berkeley measure has been withdrawn. In Berkeley the authors want to pursue the feasibility of providing information to residents about existing mail management options, such as *DMAchoice.org*.

The Monterey ordinance (not a resolution) restricted the distribution of handbills and unsolicited print publications that are not delivered through the U.S. Postal Service.

The ordinance has been introduced by Supervisor Dave Potter. His main focus is yellow page directories. To get at directories, the author had to include all hand delivery publications so as not to illegally target one type of publication. By limiting the ordinance to hand delivery, the author avoids the need to get a statewide or national registry. This is a new way to get a foot in the door.

We'll keep members informed of the Do Not Mail movement if it surfaces elsewhere in the state.

employee, one hundred, or one thousand. You are required to post employment notices in a central location, accessible to all employees.

If your posting is not up-to-date, you are exposing your company to fines of more than \$15,000. In this time of financial struggle, can you afford such costs? And if you think your safe because OSHA has never inspected your facility, you're mistaken. There are many attorneys soliciting employees to bring action against their employer for this oversight.

We have the required poster for sale. It

combined all 20 state and federal notices (27" x 39"). The USERRA posting, which in previous years was a separate poster, has now been added to the combination poster. There are no changes to last year's Wage Order, so it doesn't have to be replaced.

The cost, which includes shipping and handling, is \$24.00 for members and \$33.00 for non-members. You can't find it as cheap anywhere.

The easiest way to order is at the rotating banner at www.piasc.org or call Marcos Uribe at Ext. 299.



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Printing Industries of California

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NEW WORKERS' COMP ASSESSMENT

Before the recent budget crisis, a significant portion of the operations of the California Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) was funded through the state's General Fund.

Over the last two years, the DIR has been subject to budget cuts. In order to stabilize funding for DIR operations, which include the Division of Workers' Compensation, Cal/OSHA and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE), the Legislature authorized a temporary funding mechanism to collect fees to replace General Fund monies cut from the agency's budget.

The fund shift, the Workers' Compensation Premium Assessment (WCPA), began in 2008 when approximately 16 percent of General Fund dollars (\$14.8 million) were cut from the Cal/OSHA budget.

Through this mechanism, the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) bills insurance companies for fees, which are then deposited into the appropriate trust fund. The insurance company then assesses employers a fee based upon their calculated premiums. Self-insured employers are billed directly by DWC.

Under the WCPA funding mechanism Cal/OSHA funding will be as follows:

- 41 percent (\$34.9 million) will be covered by the assessments;
- 28 percent will come from the federal government; and
- 31 percent will come from fees generated from the division's operating functions, including elevator, pressure vessel, amusement ride, and tramway inspections.

The WCPA will also be used to cover the 30 percent reduction (approximately \$15 million) in General Fund money cut from the DLSE budget. The DLSE General Fund budget reduction (approximately \$21.89 million) will occur in the 2010-11 fiscal year.

The increased Cal/OSHA and DLSE assessments will sunset in 2013 unless the Legislature acts to continue the WCPA at the current level. Until that time, the assessments are capped and may not exceed \$52 million for Cal/OSHA and \$37 million for DLSE; these amounts can be adjusted only for inflation (based on the

JUNE BALLOT MEASURES

California Secretary of State Debra Bowen has released proposition numbers for the five measures that will appear on the June 8 statewide direct primary election ballot. Below is a list of the propositions and PIC's position at this time.

Proposition 13: Bars property tax increases on construction for seismic retrofits — SUPPORT

Proposition 14: CA Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act — NO POSITION
This proposed measure mirrors the development of the successful "open primary" election system that is in place in Washington State. This system allows the top two vote getters, regardless of party, to compete in the general election and has been validated by the U.S. Supreme Court. The measure will appear on the June 2010 primary election ballot.

Proposition 15: California Fair Elections Act of 2008 — NO POSITION
If passed, Proposition 15 would institute a pilot program of publicly financed elections for the office of California Secretary of State. The publicly-financed election would be funded by taxing lobbyists, lobbying firms and lobbyist employers. The measure is currently the subject of litigation. A similar measure in Vermont was ruled to violate the U.S. Constitution. An Arizona court has also struck down lobbyist "fees" used to fund a public campaign financing program.

Proposition 16: Taxpayers Right to Vote Act — NO POSITION
The act requires two-thirds voter approval before local governments may use public funds, bonds or other indebtedness to start up electric delivery service, expand electric delivery service into a new territory or implement a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program.

Proposition 17: Continuous Coverage Auto Insurance Discount Act — SUPPORT
This measure amends Proposition 103, passed by the voters in 1988, to authorize the use of an additional discount on premiums for automobile insurance policies. In particular, the act would allow an insurer to offer a "continuous coverage" discount to new customers who have maintained their coverage while they previously were customers of another insurer.

For more information and to view all of the special election ballot measures, visit the Secretary of State website, www.ss.ca.gov.

state-government inflator) and to reconcile any over/under credits from previous years.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOCUS

The Little Hoover Commission has recommended the state re-create a high level economic development effort that can market the state, assist businesses wishing to locate or expand in California, and coordinate a statewide strategy of economic development strongly influenced by successful local economic development efforts.

The report can be found at <http://www.lhc.ca.gov/studies/200/report200.html>.

After a lengthy investigation and several public hearings, the Commission found the state juggling a diffused collection of state economic development activities, generally without authority.

This created problems, including a void in leadership and accountability that diminishes the state's ability to coordinate activity and resources, a lack of capacity to promote or align delivery of services, and a lack of a point of contact in Sacramento for businesses, economic development organizations, or even other state-level actors to learn about and access state economic development programs, or to resolve permitting issues or navigating regulations.