

UPGRADED TOOL HELPS PREVENT NEW TAXES

The Treasurers of Franklin City, Southampton County and Isle of Wight County are revamping an old tool to better collect taxes and help prevent future increases. Treasurers are tasked to collect the revenue necessary for local services such as Fire, Police, Schools, Emergency services and other funds. While most of the revenue is collected on time, a small yet significant percentage of the the taxes are not paid and require other means of collection to prevent large write-offs and future tax increases.

As far back as 1950, the Virginia State Code 58.1-3919 has allowed Treasurers to issue Seizure Warrants as a means of collecting delinquent taxes. Until recently, the manual method of Seizure collection was the best option. Single warrants were given to in-house collectors or to the Sheriff's department to

locate the delinquent property, serve the warrant, seize the property, and collect the taxes. While this process has merit, it is limited due to the amount of time, labor and cost required of the locality. When seizures are processed in house, all cost to locate, seize and collect taxes must come out of collected taxes. This reduces the net amount to be applied to the needs of the locality.

The Treasurers announce an upgrade to the seizure process that will collect more taxes, allow one hundred percent of the taxes collected to be applied to the needs of the city or county and reduce the need to increase future budgets due to loss of revenue. The Treasurers of Franklin City, Southampton County and Isle of Wight County are utilizing the service of Virginia Auction and Collections company (VAC) and their license plate readers to locate and seize delinquent taxes.

Here's how the system works and what you need to know. In place of a single warrant, the Treasures upload their delinquent list to VAC. Using license plate readers equipped with the Treasurer's information, VAC scans all parked cars in parking lots, driveways and streets. Once the readers

locate a license plate matching a delinquent account, the VAC agent verifies the vehicle's identification and boots the cars for tow later that evening. The agent also places a warrant explaining the seizure on the vehicle. If your vehicle is booted, immediately call the Treasurer Office to settle your account. If you make payment before close of business that day, you can avoid having your vehicle towed and only incur the booting fee and 20% collection fee. Should you fail to pay the Treasurer before close of business your vehicle will be towed to a secure compound and you will incur tow and storage fees. Due to city and county liabilities, no car can be left booted in parking lots or on the street.

In other jurisdictions where VAC is working, 98% of all seizures are redeemed and released within 3 days. Most of that occurs within the first twenty -four hours. For the 2% who do not redeem their vehicle, the treasurers can carry their vehicle to auction to cover the unpaid taxes and costs to seize the vehicle.

The Treasures, encourage you to pay your taxes on time and help keep future taxes low.