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Jefferson County
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PRESS RELEASE

Florida Gas and AT&T Mobility dispute tax assessment.

Jefferson County, January 7, 2014: Jefferson County Property Appraiser, Angela Gray has been named along with the Florida Department of Revenue and the Jefferson County Tax Collector as a defendant in suits filed by Florida Gas Transmission Company, LLC and AT&T Mobility LLC.

In the Florida Gas case, Jefferson is one of seven counties in which Florida Gas Transmission has filed suit. Florida Gas recently completed a 17-mile loop of new pipeline spanning most of the southern end of the county. The Property Appraiser declined to accept Florida Gas' demand that its pipeline be valued at approximately 50% of its reported cost. Instead, the Property Appraiser assessed the pipeline the same way the other tangible property in the County is assessed, which resulted in Florida Gas' property being valued at \$57.9 million dollars.

Florida Gas had 25 days to contact the Property Appraiser's office after the Truth in Millage notices were mailed to discuss any concerns with the calculation of the value. If not satisfied, Florida Gas then had the right to file a petition to appear before the Value and Adjustment Board. Florida Gas did not exercise such rights and has instead filed suit in Circuit Court.

AT&T is disputing the assessment on ten different accounts. The Property Appraiser hired a consultant in 2012 that assisted with the inventory and historical cost of all cell tower sites in the county. This inventory data was considered by the Property Appraiser in 2012 and 2013 when calculating AT&T's assessment. In 2012 AT&T filed a petition with the Value Adjustment Board, but withdrew. In 2013 AT&T again filed a petition, but failed to appear at the hearing, and the Board ruled in favor of the Property Appraiser. Now, AT&T has filed suit in Circuit Court.

It is the Property Appraiser's duty to fairly value all property within the county for tax purposes. Property Appraiser Angela Gray states, "This is a fairness issue, and it is my duty to follow the law and to ensure that everyone is treated the same. I believe our office was fair and just in calculating the value for both Florida Gas and AT&T. They are both big businesses with deep pockets and it appears they are going to use this power to try to get a tax break."