

Sales Tax returns for November

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Sales tax results reflect
U.S. economic downturn
By JOHN SPARKS

Sales tax returns for November 2008 for Hawkins and three of the five other incorporated cities in Wood County were down compared with the same month a year ago. Only Quitman (4.2 percent) and Winnsboro (0.15 percent) showed gains over the month. Wood County's retailers in unincorporated areas of the county also showed a gain of 3.16 percent in sales tax returns.

Hawkins sales tax returns in November were \$20,816.18 or 5.24 percent below the figure a year ago when \$21,968.63 was returned to the city.

For the year-to-date after eleven months of returns, Hawkins is 6.31 percent below collections in the first eleven months of 2007. The county's six municipalities are 0.38 percent below last year's pace.

The sales tax funds are collected by local merchants, sent to the Texas Comptroller along with the state's six and-a-quarter cents tax on each dollar of retail purchase. Hawkins' local portion-one-and-one-half cents/dollar-is then returned two months later (September retailer collections returned in November). Merchants in the unincorporated county areas collect a half-cent sales tax on each dollar sale with the local portion going into the county's general fund.

Hawkins returns of \$20,816.18 are distributed to the two budgets supported by the sales tax, with approximately \$13,877.45 deposited into the city's general fund and the remaining \$6,938.73, representing a half-cent sales tax, into the Hawkins Community Development Corporation budget.

Comparative figures for sales tax returns for the month of November (as collected in September) for each city and the county follow with commentary furnished by Gary McKinley, executive director of the Wood County Industrial Commission