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LESVOS EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS ASKED TO PAY PROPERTY TAX 1

Lesvos Earthquake Victims Asked to Pay Property Tax

Another case of bureaucratic inefficiency was recorded this week, when earthquake-stricken inhabitants of Lesvos island are obliged to pay ENFIA property taxes for their ruined houses.

After the late July earthquake in Kos island which devastated houses in neighbouring Lesvos, the government had promised it would scrape property taxes for people whose houses were ruined, if they produced official documents proving it.

They dutifully did so, but due to the usual Greek bureaucracy, the deadline for the tax scraping passed. Now if the unfortunate islanders want to be tax-efficient, they have to pay the full amount of their property taxes, running from September on.

As soon as the local radio station transmitted the report, Public Revenue Independent Authority (AADE) official Vasilis Tendomas attempted to reassure the earthquake-stricken citizens that “in the long run”, their taxes will be scraped.

What he means is that while they are obligated by law to pay their property taxes by the end of the year, when their claim concerning their destroyed houses is finally approved, the payed taxes will be subtracted from future tax obligations.

The president of the earthquake-stricken Lesvos citizens was furious that the usual case of bureaucracy caused the issue, adding that those affected by the quake cannot afford their property taxes in the midst of trying to rebuild their ruined houses.

He said that come Monday, they will appeal to the Citizens’ Advocate and they will seek penalties for those in the Greek public administration responsible for the mess.