The state won’t tell you who collected the most EMPIRE zone tax breaks.

**THE SECRET:** It’s a New Jersey company that runs old, dirty power plants that didn’t add workers. In New York, $22 MILLION is …

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**Money for Nothing**

The Post-Standard

TWO NEW YORK’S Empire Zone program, state taxpayers reimburse NRG Energy of New Jersey for $2 million a year in property taxes it pays for the Oswego Steam Station, built 30 years ago. The plant only runs on the coldest and hottest days, during peak demand for electricity.

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**ONE WOMAN’S STRUGGLE THROUGH CHEMOTHERAPY**

Staff writer

A

Lauren Mangicaro, of Lysander, was told April 16 she had ductal carcinoma in situ in her right breast. It is a form of breast cancer that grows in the milk ducts. She underwent a procedure on May 16 to remove the cancer and to try to prevent a recurrence. On May 29, she learned she would need chemotherapy and hormone therapy because her cancer had spread into the breast tissue.

---

**CNY race sets national political fire**

By Mark Weiner

It’s the battle of the First Lady versus the “Funny Lady” — Laura Bush against Barbra Streisand. It’s the clash of tough guys Dick Cheney and Eliot Spitzer. It’s right versus left, red against blue.

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**The Great Empire Zone Giveaway**

The Post-Standard’s reporters update the news of Central New York from morning until night seven days a week.

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**Ann Taylor Makeover**

Money

Breakfast

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NRG Energy Inc.

NRG Energy, Inc., a New York-based power company, is one of the nation's largest electricity generators. The company has a long history of controversy over its business practices and environmental impact.

**In Empire Zones:** NRG employs 441 workers at an electric generating station in Tonawanda, 149 at station in Dunkirk and 82 at the Oswego Steam Station.

**Profit:** $44 million

**Revenue:** $1.7 billion

**Employees:** 82

**Location:** Tonawanda, New York

NRG is one of the few companies that have benefited significantly from Empire Zone tax breaks. The company has used the breaks to attract new business to New York state, despite concerns about the environmental and social impact of its operations.

NRG has been a target of scrutiny for its role in the alleged market manipulation. The company has been accused of engaging in manipulative practices in the California electricity market, leading to a series of legal and regulatory actions.

**NRG and Pennsylvania:**

NRG is also active in Pennsylvania, where it has faced similar criticism for its business practices and environmental impact. The company has been involved in a number of controversies related to its operations in the state, including allegations of market manipulation and environmental violations.

NRG's actions have led to a number of regulatory and legal actions, including a lawsuit brought by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission against the company. The lawsuit alleges that NRG engaged in unfair and deceptive practices in the state's retail electricity market.

**NRG and the New York Times:**

NRG has been the subject of a series of investigations by the New York Times, which has published articles critical of the company's practices and the use of Empire Zone tax breaks.

**NRG and the Empire Zone Program:**

The Empire Zone program was created by the New York state government to attract new businesses and create jobs in the state. The program offers tax breaks to eligible businesses that meet certain criteria, including a minimum number of employees and certain investment thresholds.

**NRG and the Empire Zone Program:**

NRG has been a significant beneficiary of the Empire Zone program, using the breaks to attract new business to New York state. However, the company has also faced criticism for its business practices and the environmental impact of its operations.

**NRG and the Environmental Integrity Project report:**

The Environmental Integrity Project has released a report critical of NRG's operations in New York state. The report highlights the company's environmental violations and its role in the alleged market manipulation.

**NRG's response:**

NRG has denied the allegations and has defended its business practices. The company has stated that it is committed to improving its environmental performance and has invested in new technologies to reduce its impact on the environment.

**NRG and the New York Times:**

The New York Times has published a series of articles critical of NRG's business practices and the use of Empire Zone tax breaks. The articles have highlighted the company's role in the alleged market manipulation and its environmental violations.

**NRG and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission:**

NRG has been involved in legal and regulatory actions related to its operations in Pennsylvania. A lawsuit brought by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission against the company alleging unfair and deceptive practices in the state's retail electricity market.

**NRG and the Pennsylvania public utility commission:**

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has filed a lawsuit against NRG, alleging that the company engaged in unfair and deceptive practices in the state's retail electricity market.

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**Taxes paid and reimbursed**

NRG Energy Inc., which has plants in Oswego, Tonawanda and Dunkirk, collects to benefit

**2005**

NRG pays $21.8 million in local property taxes in Erie, Chautauqua and Oswego counties.

**2006**

NRG Energy tells New York's Department of Economic Development it will seek a $13.6 million Empire Zone real property tax credit. To qualify, an NRG subsidiary had to employ one employee at one of NRG's electric generating plants. NRG Energy files a Corporate tax return with New York.

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**MONEY FOR NOTHING**

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**BONE, FROM PAGE A-12**

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Husband, Wife Killed in Apparent Murder-Suicide

Witness: Young woman ran from garage, police say, for help, then heard three shots, then a fourth.

By Pedro Ramirez III and Elizabeth Duran

A Cicero couple died in an apparent murder-suicide Saturday afternoon in their home, state police said.

Robert James P. Dirk, 50, and Wendy Dirk, 47, died of gunshot wounds, state police said.

State police investigators were working Saturday night to determine who shot whom, said Capt. Jeffrey Kuhl of the trooper barracks on North Syracuse. Autopsies are scheduled for today.

Michael Ciotti, who lives in the neighborhood, said he called 911 for help just before 4 p.m. after he saw a young woman run screaming and crying from the garage at the house.

Then a scream came from inside the house, followed by three gunshots, he said. Ciotti said he heard a fourth shot while talking to the emergency dispatcher.

“I was pretty shaken,” Ciotti said. “I drove a couple of houses away, because I had my girl friend in the car and I thought he might come out shooting.”

Then he saw the woman who’d come out of the garage lying in the road crying, so he returned to console her until police arrived.

Ciotti said he saw a white Chevrolet Avalance speeding by his home and fol-

In the county: 911, page B-8

WEATHER

Wet and Windy

Sunday's gray weather brings some wind and blows into town, bringing showers and thunderstorms with it.

The cold front is the key to the sky through the evening, when the wind and rain returns with temperatures taking a dive.

ARMY SP C Robert Callahan, who was the first to die in the late war, was killed in Iraq Tuesday while serving with Fort Drum’s 10th Mountain Division. Kristen grew up in North Syracuse.

A-15-17, 20, 21

On the Web:

www.syracuse.com/specialreports

These companies, and hundreds more, made themselves appear new as a state, businesses that make up the very foundation of New York’s history, businesses that make up the very foundation of New York’s history, businesses that make up the very foundation of New York’s history.

Peter and Elizabeth Harden, the couple behind the company, said they have always been a family business.

They started with a small workshop in Oneida County in 1844, after an unsuccessful career in gold mining.

Meyer started to become a furniture-making business in Fulton since 1902, the same year the city was founded.

Yet Harden Furniture, Cllisfar Corp., and Birds Eye Foods look like new companies in the eyes of New York’s Empire Zone program.

These companies, and hundreds more, made themselves appear new as a state, businesses that make up the very foundation of New York’s history, were reborn and rewarded with millions of dollars in tax cuts.

The state cut a decade’s worth of state income taxes for new businesses. The Empire Zone program was meant to entice new businesses to grow in New York, and they didn’t appear in Fulton until 1990. Within the same year, the state cut a decade’s worth of state income taxes for new businesses.

The enterprise zone was modeled on the Empire Zone program.

Oneida County in 1844, after an unsuccessful career in gold mining.

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Oneida County in 1844, after an unsuccessful career in gold mining.
New name, new tax breaks

By Michelle Breidenbach
Staff writer

Gov. George Pataki says he has done away with the Empire Zone program, one of the state's longest-running economic development efforts.

The governor says that the $30 million annual cost of the program is not worth the benefits it delivers to businesses.

But some businesses and accountants say they are not sure what it means for them.

The Empire Zone program was created in 1980 to help New York state attract new businesses and keep existing ones from moving to other states.

The program allows businesses to claim tax credits for the first 10 years of their operations, up to $2.5 million per year.

But the program has been criticized for being too lenient, with some businesses able to claim tax credits even if they did not create new jobs.

The governor said he would use the money saved from the program to fund other economic development initiatives, such as the Empire Zone for Upstate New York.

State inflates 'new job' counts

By Michelle Breidenbach
Staff writer

Gov. George Pataki said during his budget address on Tuesday that the state has inflated the number of new jobs created through the Empire Zone program.

The governor said that the state has overcounted the number of new jobs created through the program.

The state has counted new jobs created through the Empire Zone program since 1980, and the number of new jobs has been rising steadily.

But the governor said that the state has been counting jobs that were already existing, or that were not created through the program.

The governor said that he would work with the state Legislature to come up with a more accurate way of counting new jobs.

But some business owners and economists say that the governor's proposals are too narrow.

They say that the program has been an important tool for economic development in New York state.

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They say that the program has been an important tool for economic development in New York state.
Old Sabres, new money

How businesses made themselves appear new

Some Empire Zone companies that assumed new identities, qualifying them for the most tax breaks. (Note: Date refers to when predecessors started; benefits include either zone tax breaks or property taxes eligible for reimbursement.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Date of origin</th>
<th>What’s new</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shape Asic</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Moved assets to holding company</td>
<td>2006 property taxes $504,598</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird’s Eye Foods, Fulton</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Put real estate into BIMSA Holding Inc.</td>
<td>2006 property taxes $387,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo Sabres</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Tom Golisano bought, created two corporations</td>
<td>2006 credits: $541,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chifforboard, Dunkirk</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Put real estate into Star Real Property</td>
<td>2006 credits: $352,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corning Inc.</td>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Put real estate into Corning Property Management</td>
<td>2006 credits: $4.6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crucible Specialty Metals, Gates</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Put real estate into Crucible Development Corp.</td>
<td>2006 credits: $782,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden Furniture, McConnellsville</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Converted owned by Hayden Holdings Inc. in Delaware</td>
<td>2006 credits: $333,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Falls Bristow Co., Rochester</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Sewance Bristow managers bought the assets, managed as a family</td>
<td>2006 credits: $11.3 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weld Alllyn, Skaneateles Falls</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Put real estate into Alllyn Development Co.</td>
<td>2006 credits: $201,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How businesses beat the deadline

As word spread that Empire Zone loopholes would end after July 2002, businesses rushed to get in the program. The companies approved that month represented nearly 10 percent of all the businesses certified.

A save and a bonus

Ask anyone in Buffalo; billionaire Tom Golisano saved the Buffalo Sabres. The first thing he did, however, was cut 10 percent of the hockey team’s payroll. “I think that on that day got hammered,” he said. He now has 400 workers not to come back.

Because the company was starting from scratch, however, it was easy to look as if it had created hundreds of new jobs in its first year. In its first company, the company claimed 1,758 former IBM workers as new employees.

In reality, the company has cut as many as 200 jobs, but no one being forced to pay back another kind of state grant. Worth $4 million, from the same state officials who regulate Empire Zones.

EIT asked engineer Rick White to leave after 12 years with IBM and then two months for EIT.

“The companies were senior engineers and scientists who were Ph.D. or, at the very least, had several different degrees in science,” White said. “They get fired.”

White, now a union organizer for Alliance IBM, said the state’s investment in EIT is “nothing more than corporate welfare.

“They really bothers me why they can’t invest their own money from scratch and seek or own on the money,” he said. “Why do they need taxpayer dollars?”

Tax breaks and layoffs

Similarly, Enduro Interconnect Technologies scored hundreds of jobs at the birthplace of IBM. But it still cut some.

IBM was looking to get out of its microelectronics division in 2002. Patarak called its chairman and vouched for the capability of a group of local investors who wanted to buy it, said Tom Davis, a minor investor who served as the accountant for the deal.

EIT got into the Empire Zone program a week before the loophole closed.

The new company used anticipated zone credits and refinanced as collateral for private financing. In 2003, the new EIT and its real estate division took $9.5 million in credits.

“It provided a real safety net for the investors,” Davis said.

The tax breaks covered operating losses and equipment costs in the first year, he said.

EIT inherited about 2,800 employees from the former IBM. In the first month, the new owners told 200 workers not to come back.

Because the company was starting from scratch, however, it was easy to look as if it had created hundreds of new jobs in its first year. In its first company, the company claimed 1,758 former IBM workers as new employees.

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Money Wise

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Carpet
Vinyl
Ceramic
Hardwood
Laminate
Area Rugs
Without Promised Expansions, Pyramid Collects Millions

How one man with a Web site in Oregon exposed Hazing at dozens of NCAA schools

His claims spark probes at Cortland, Ithaca and Oswego

By Rebecca James

I f student athletes get drunk and hold initiation parties in Central New York, will people 2,800 miles away have something to say about it? In this digitally connected world of online photo albums and blogs, count on it.

William Schut, a 37-year-old in Portland, Ore., in this digitally connected world of online photo albums and blogs, count on it.

William Schut, a 37-year-old in Portland, Ore., "His rants have exposed more sports teams and Manhattan College canceled its women's lacrosse fall season. The State University of New York at Oswego and Ithaca College are in the midst of investigations."

His site sure does point out the ability of a blog to raise hell and to effect changes," New says. "Years ago he would have been reduced to writing letters to newspapers that could have been denied protection from

His site sure does point out the ability of a blog to raise hell and to effect changes," New says. "Years ago he would have been reduced to writing letters to newspapers that could have been denied protection from

The 40,000 new Destiny jobs Pyramidal predicted don't exist. But New York taxpayers reimbursed Pyramid for the Carousel Center property taxes in 2004 and 2005. And it can continue to claim these tax breaks through 2015. Sixty-seven miles to the north, a similar scene is playing out.

Cortland's son, Scott Congel, announced in 2003 that a Pyramid partnership was planning a $170 million expansion of its Watertown mall. The project was canceled.

But Scott Congel told Watertown officials that before Pyramid could turn the Salmon Run Mall into an international tourist destination — with a convention center, hotel, golf course and housing — they had to build a Pyramid in an Empire Zone.

Today, the Salmon Run Mall looks essentially the same. There's no convention center. No hotel. No golf course.

The GREAT BIRDSEYE VIEW GIVEAWAY

One in a series of stories about the Great Birdseye Giveaway, a story exploring the strategies to encourage businesses to bring jobs to town.

On the Web: Talk about the story, read previous stories and enter the giveaway at www.syracuse.com/specials/giveaway

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Pyramid’s ‘new’ companies had to add one job to save millions

ERIK KRESS

PYRAMID’S ‘FROM PAGE A-1’

‘No one took it at face value,’ said Peter Clough, a Watertown businessman. ‘We couldn’t believe it.’

In all, Pyramid partnerships are claiming $9 million per year in Empire Zone tax breaks for the new mall next to Pyramid’s Hudson Valley Mall in Kingston.

Pyramid’s tax breaks

Pyramid Cos. partnerships are claiming $9 million per year in Empire Zone tax breaks for a new mall next to Pyramid’s Hudson Valley Mall in Kingston, they now have the credit breakdown for 2000:

Carousel Center.

Sources: State records, the Post-Standard.

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Sources: State records, the Post-Standard.
How You Can Cut Your Utility Bill

Pick market rate for electricity and save, but there’s a risk

Families around Fort Drum can’t wait until next year, when about 7,500 U.S. Army soldiers are scheduled to return home from zones. But the thought has given James W. Conrave a few sleepless nights.

“I want to make sure they have power,” said Conrave, public works director at Fort Drum, the fast-expanding Army base near Watertown.

The delivery adjustment varies. As of last month, customers on market rate service do not pay the so-called “delivery adjustment.” Those on fixed rates pay the adjustment.

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SPITZER — Central New York Oil & Gas holds off its tips on thwarting spammers. For more stories, read previous stories and find extra coverage: www.syracuse.com/specialreports

Jim Gladziworski has a hot tip for you. The local energy consultant is advising his clients and friends to take advantage of a little-known billing option from National Grid that can offer significant savings.

New York customers on market rate service do not pay the so-called “delivery adjustment.” Those on fixed rates pay the adjustment.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2006  FINAL EDITION SYRACUSE, N.Y.  $1.75

INDEX

Halloween contest Hey kids, finish Bruce Coville’s scary story for a chance to win.

SUNDAY WEATHER

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CAMPBELL ‘06

If you ask National Grid to put you on market rate service, rather than the default “standard service,” one of the changes in your bill each month will disappear.

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Both candidates for governor carry some baggage

**Eliot Spitzer, Democrat**

- Spitzer is a politician who has been involved in various public and legal affairs.

**John Faso, Republican**

- Faso is a politician who has been involved in various public and legal affairs.

**The difference?**

- In 2003, AG Properties purchased the former IBM complex in Endicott for $2.5 million in property taxes.

**Top 12 zone properties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>New tax (in millions)</th>
<th>2003 real estate tax credits (in millions)</th>
<th>New tax as a percent of total tax credit</th>
<th>New tax as a percent of total tax revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. NRG Energy, New York</td>
<td>Power plant built in 1950, dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$16.9</td>
<td>$5.7</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Agusta Generating Co.</td>
<td>Power plant built in early 1960s, works only at peak demand</td>
<td>$4.3</td>
<td>$1.4</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NRG Energy, New York</td>
<td>Power plant built in 1950, second dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$5.3</td>
<td>$1.4</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dunkirk</td>
<td>$1.3 million tax refund to power plant in 1950, no longer in state property tax list</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. NRG Energy, New York</td>
<td>$2.5 million property tax refund to power plant in 1950, dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Corning Property Management, Corning</td>
<td>$2.5 million tax refund to power plant in 1950, dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Greenpeace, New York</td>
<td>$2.5 million tax refund to power plant in 1950, dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Central New York Gas Co., Oswego</td>
<td>$2.5 million tax refund to power plant in 1950, dirtiest in state</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>$2.5</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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**Loophole allows companies to keep getting state tax refunds**

- The loophole allows companies to keep getting state tax refunds even if they have already received the maximum tax breaks.

**Some successes**

- The Empire Zone program, which was created in an effort to attract new businesses to the state, has been successful in some cases.
State policy on abusive men: They will never change

Vera House lost funding for its program for abusive men. Why? It tried to counsel them.

By John O'Brien
Staff writer

For 10 years, New York state had $920,000 a year to the Vera House battered-women’s shelter to run a program for abusive men.

But state officials discovered the Syracuse organization ran experiments on a form of physical abuse that none of the men in the program liked.

It is one more example of how the state’s policy on abuse is run on the brink of the law in a sometimes tenuous way.

The state’s law permits three forms of counseling, all of them experimental:

- Helping abused men
- Conducting counseling
- Empowering violence survivors

The law specifies that any program must be approved by the Domestic Violence Moran’s Court.

The state has approved 64 programs, but few have been successful in getting trained counselors to help abused men.

The state’s policy is to do the lightest counseling that can work, and that is giving the men, who are often violent, a chance to change.

How will we do this work if we didn’t believe there was a possibility it could help change abusive behavior?

-Rand Bregman, Vera House executive director

The philosophical divide: Those who think abusive behavior can be changed and those who think that even trying to change them gives victims false hope for recovery.

State officials say programs for bat

Smokeys beware: The foot is coming down

Many communities, including Oneida County, move to pass laws to discourage smoking.

By Marnie Eisenstadt
Staff writer

Smoking banned on sidewalks? A ticket for juggling in front of the kids?

This year won’t be unlike, but both are happening already.

Climate change prohibits smoking in almost everywhere, including sidewalks, parks and outdoor businesses. Louisiana and Arkansas this year made it illegal to light up in the car if a child is present.

Oneonta County is poised to pass its own next step in the war on cigarettes.

Over the next 10 years, prediction: The state will copy it, extending the ban even further.

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Parishes must submit their plans by Thursday on how they will deal with priest shortage.

By Renée K. Gadoury
Printer’s ink

After more than 20 years of discussions and studies, the Syracuse Diocese this week faces a significant turning point in a restructuring that could close or merge dozens of Roman Catholic churches.

Thursday is the deadline for all priests to submit to bishops proposals for how they will operate with fewer than 100 parishioners.

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State officials say programs for bat
The cost of Empire Zone tax breaks statewide jumped from $30 million in 2001 to an estimated $546 million in 2006.

SCHONI COUNTY Planning Director Alicia Terry is in front of the unelaborated Guilford Mills textile plant in Cobleskill last week. The village and town of Potsdam sold about $354 million in their zone acres to businesses in adjacent Schoharie County. The village and town of Potsdam sold about $354 million in their zone acres to businesses in adjacent Schoharie County.

Loophole closed; tax breaks remain

The state's top officials are trying to close a loophole that allowed zone breaks to be worth more than $72 million in one year in a county outside of Potsdam across St. Lawrence County. The Tompkins County businesses still cannot get zone benefits. More than 98 percent of the state's 544,000 businesses are still not eligible for zone benefits.

Looking up with Destiny

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Keeping up with Destiny

The state Lagoo zone acres across many of the state's 544,000 businesses are still not eligible for zone benefits. More than 98 percent of the state's 544,000 businesses are still not eligible for zone benefits.

No bids

Rules usually govern how a city gets rid of anything of value. When Geneva wants to sell a downtown police station, it installs the car to the highest bidder. In general, state law requires cities to hold public auctions or advertise for sealed bids before they sell surplus property, that ensures that municipalities collect the highest price and that everyone has an equal opportunity to bid on public property.

State keeps its low-key

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The Great Empire Zone Giveaway

Some findings from The Post-Standard's hands-on look at the Empire Zone program:

- Some businesses that could have paid a tax of $22 million in one year for rennovating old, polluting paper mills. The state reported that it added one-half of one.

- Business that existed for generations gained tax breaks by simply changing their names and pretending to be new. For this reason, the state's top officials thought The state eliminated a decade's worth of profitability to the Empire Zone. They weren't exactly right.

- The biggest property tax refunds for 2003 were to Geneva, Utica, Binghamton and the towns and cities that received more coverage at www.syracuse.com/spotlocalreports.

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