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Glomar

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Tax Bill

Could Soar

A \$192,943 increase in the county tax bill on the big barge in Redwood City that the CIA reportedly used in its Russian sub-fishing expedition is in the works, San Mateo County assessor Jack Estes said yesterday.

The tax bill on the nine-story submersible barge currently \$7000 yearly - is going to go way up unless he receives "some good answers by mid-June about the activities and uses of the barge," Estes said.

The assessor said he made his decision on the probable increase after meeting yesterday with Lockheed Missiles and Space Co. officials, who are listed as the barge's owners.

"They couldn't answer my questions about the barge," he said. "I couldn't find out from the Lockheed people what the barge is used for. They are pretty tight-mouthed about it."

Estes said the barge was originally taxed at one per cent of its value because it was supposedly being used exclusively for oceanic research.

If it has been used for salvage purposes, he said, the exclusive oceanic research clause has been violated and the barge will be taxed at 25 per cent of its value.

Lloyd Reise, assistant assessor, said San Mateo County will also try to determine if Lockheed owes back taxes at the higher assessment rate.

The barge was reportedly built to carry the massive underwater claw Howard Hughes' Glomar Explorer "sea mining" ship used to fish up part of a Russian submarine from 17,000 feet under the Pacific last July.