



# BOROUGH OF TARENTUM

318 E. SECOND AVENUE TARENTUM,  
PENNSYLVANIA 15084

## Utility and Trash Fees Explanation Sheet

### Why Are Electric, Water, and Trash Fees Charged Even If No One Occupies the House?

The Borough of Tarentum requires property owners to pay for electric, water, and trash services regardless of occupancy. These charges are necessary to ensure essential municipal services' ongoing maintenance and availability. Below are the reasons for this and relevant Borough ordinances governing these fees.

#### Electric Service Fees

##### 1. Service Availability:

- Even if no one is residing in the home, the Borough still maintains electrical infrastructure, including lines, transformers, and meters, to ensure service is available when needed.
- A base charge ensures the Borough can recover costs for maintaining and operating the electric grid.

##### 2. Borough Ordinance Reference:

- **Tarentum Borough Electric Ordinance 25-02** states that all properties connected to the municipal electric system must pay the base service charge, regardless of usage.

##### 3. Preventing Service Disconnection Issues:

- Keeping the service active helps avoid issues related to reconnection fees, meter reinstallation, and potential damage from prolonged disconnection.

#### Water Service Fees

##### 1. Water System Maintenance:

- The Borough must maintain and operate the water treatment and distribution system, ensuring safe and clean water is available when needed.
- Even if a property is vacant, water lines, hydrants, and infrastructure require continuous upkeep.

##### 2. Borough Ordinance Reference:

- **Tarentum Borough Water Ordinance 91-10 & 07-02** mandates that all properties connected to the municipal water system must pay a base service charge, regardless of usage.

##### 3. Public Health and Safety Considerations:

- Keeping the water system active prevents potential damage from stagnant or frozen pipes.
- Ensures fire hydrants remain operational for emergency use.

#### Trash Service Fees

##### 1. Municipal Waste Collection Requirement:

- The Borough provides waste collection services as a public health measure. The cost is shared among all property owners to maintain affordability and efficiency.
- Properties, whether occupied or vacant, still produce waste (e.g., maintenance debris, eviction cleanouts, storm damage cleanup).

##### 2. Borough Ordinance Reference:

- **Tarentum Borough Trash Ordinance 91-6 & 17-04** mandates that all properties within Borough limits must participate in the municipal waste collection service and pay the associated fee, regardless of occupancy.

##### 3. Illegal Dumping and Public Nuisance Prevention:

- Ensuring every property contributes to trash collection helps prevent illegal dumping and maintains community cleanliness.

**Property Owner Responsibility**

- Property owners are responsible for maintaining active utility accounts for their properties, even if the home is vacant.
- Failure to pay utility bills may result in penalties, service disconnection, or liens placed on the property.