



# BOROUGH OF HATBORO

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February 10, 2025

## RE: 2025 Refuse Fees

Dear Residents and Property Owners,

As your elected officials, Borough Council continually works to update Hatboro's Code of Ordinances to ensure these rules and regulations are consistent with neighboring municipalities, fair for property owners, and up to date with modern practices/standards. In the summer of 2024, Borough Council received numerous requests from property owners and business owners to reevaluate the Borough's Solid Waste Ordinance. Many of these requests stated that the ordinance, which had not been amended in large part since the 1980s, was outdated and needed to be changed to address various intricacies facing the refuse collection industry. Many of the comments received noted that the ordinance, which had not been amended in large part since the 1980s, was outdated and had numerous inconsistencies including property classifications, annual fees, eligibility requirements, etc. In response to these requests, Borough Council held numerous public discussions on proposed changes to the ordinance during Council Meetings and Town Hall meetings to discuss concerns and prepare a draft amendment to the ordinance. This process took place across many months ultimately leading up to final adoption of an ordinance on December 4, 2024.

Both the current ordinance and the prior ordinance require all property owners to pay an annual refuse fee for trash, recycling, and yard waste services rendered by the Borough of Hatboro; however, for most residential property owners, a separate refuse fee was not assessed on their tax bills. This fee used to be assessed as a separate fee from the regular tax bills but was consolidated into the regular tax millage in the early 2000s. For owners of commercial properties and non-owner-occupied properties who receive refuse collection from the Borough, a separate refuse fee was assessed on their tax bill per unit in addition to their regular taxes. As you are aware, each property within the Borough has a different assessment from Montgomery County, and as such, pays differing amounts of taxes. Assessing the refuse fee under the millage created an unfair fee structure as properties paying higher taxes paid more in refuse collection fees than those with lower assessments.

In accordance with the Ordinance review, the Borough also performed a detailed review of costs being paid by property owners. In reviewing fees being paid by property owners, the Borough found and collected over \$50,000 in refuse fees that were not correctly assessed to property owners in prior years. Borough staff worked for months to collect these fees and to perform a comprehensive review of all properties receiving refuse collection from the Borough to ensure all properties are paying correct amounts for services rendered.

The Borough also performed a review of costs associated with the Refuse Collection Program. As many are aware, municipalities throughout the country are facing challenges in recent years whether they collect refuse in-house or use a third-party collector. The biggest issues include:

1. Skyrocketing disposal costs for trash and recycling processing sites (these are the facilities waste is taken to after collected by Hatboro Public Works)
2. Inflation of fuel, maintenance and repairs, supplies, and tolls
3. Increased labor costs for disposal

The Borough of Hatboro is not immune to these issues. In calculating costs for the Borough's Refuse Collection program, staff took a detailed look at labor, fuel, fleet maintenance, repairs, dump fees, disposal costs, and tolls incurred by the Borough. After conducting this analysis, the Borough was able to determine new refuse collection fees for each household in Hatboro as listed below:

- Residential Refuse Cost (per unit): \$343.00
- Commercial Refuse Cost (per unit): \$1,200.00

These fees cover the cost of collection per property, a 5% admin fee, as well as a \$50.00 capital fee that will help fund future trash or recycling equipment. Millage rates for properties in the Borough did not change in 2025; however property owners will see the above fees listed on their tax bills beginning in 2025 separately from their regular taxes. As you are aware, the Public Works Department does not solely collect refuse on a daily basis. The tax millage for properties could not be lowered as this millage pays for increased labor/operational costs, the maintenance of parks/streets/facilities, repairs of public infrastructure, improvements, etc. Their services are extremely valuable to the operation of the Borough and through keeping the millage the same, the Borough helps ensure our community continues to receive top of the line services.

Should residents have any questions or concerns regarding refuse collection program, please contact Borough Hall at 215-443-9100. If you have questions regarding your tax bill, please contact Tax Collector April Anders at 215-675-4010.

Sincerely,

*Diane C. Hegele*

Diane C. Hegele, CBO  
Borough Manager  
Borough of Hatboro