

Sullivan County Solid Waste User Fee: Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *There is a new charge on my tax bill labeled "Solid Waste Fee." What is this charge for?*

A: The Solid Waste Fee is charged to all improved real property parcels in Sullivan County, including parcels that are exempt from ad valorem property taxes. The revenue generated by the Solid Waste Fee is used to pay for costs incurred by the County for the operations and maintenance of the Solid Waste System. The Solid Waste System includes:

- Operation of the County's Transfer and Convenience Stations in Ferndale, Highland, Mamakating, Monticello, Cochecton, and Livingston Manor;
- Exportation contract with IESI for the long-distance hauling of waste generated in Sullivan County;
- Debt service associated with the now full County Landfill; and
- Costs associated with the constructing, operation, and maintenance of a long-haul transfer station at the site of the Landfill in Monticello, as well as upgrades and operations of the Materials Recovery Facility (recycling center).

Q: *How was the fee determined?*

A: The total charge for the Solid Waste Fee was initially based on the real property class code of each tax parcel.

- Single Family residential properties are charged \$84.95.
- Parcels classified as seasonal homes are charged \$49.25 (classification based on construction of the home).
- Apartments, Cottages, and Bungalows are charged \$79.50 per billing unit, where a billing unit is equal to 900 square feet of rentable area. There is an \$850.00 cap on the total amount charged on any given parcel.
- Non-Residential/Commercial properties are charged \$300.00.
- Houses of Worship, firehouses, ambulance corps, libraries, and veteran organizations are charged the residential rate of \$84.95.
- Municipalities are billed as non-residential properties, with a cap of \$850.00 in total charges.

Q: *Do I still have to pay tipping fees when I drop off my solid waste?*

A: Yes. The Solid Waste Fee structure was designed to provide adequate revenues to cover the costs incurred by the County for the operations and maintenance of the Solid Waste System without a subsidy from the property tax levy. Maintaining the tipping fee as a part of the structure was meant to encourage recycling, due to the fact that a higher rate of recycling translates to a lower cost when disposing of waste at the transfer stations.

Q: *I already pay a private hauler to pick up my garbage and recycling. Do I still have to pay this fee?*

A: Yes. Fees paid to private haulers cover the companies' expenses related to staff, fuel, and other overhead costs, as well as tipping fees. If you pay a private hauler to pick up your solid waste and recycling, you are paying for the convenience of their services.

Q: *How did Sullivan County pay for the Solid Waste System in previous years?*

A: Sullivan County charged tipping fees at the transfer stations/convenience centers and the County Landfill. Since the amount of revenue collected via tipping fees was inadequate to pay for the total cost of the system, a subsidy from the property tax levy was necessary to make the system whole. The amount of the subsidy varied from \$3.5 million to as much as \$5 million per year. In 2009, approximately 10% of the total tax levy was used to subsidize the Solid Waste System.

Q: *I paid my bill, and then I received a new bill with a lower charge. What do I do?*

A: A refund will be issued to you.

Q: *How do I appeal the charge?*

A: You must fill out an appeals form, attach a copy of your tax bill, and mail it to:

Sullivan County Treasurer's Office
PO Box 5012
Monticello, NY 12701

The form is available online and through various County offices. ***You must attach a copy of your tax bill to the appeals form, or your appeal may be delayed.***