

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH SEWAGE & REFUSE COLLECTIONS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1) Q: Why do I receive separate water and sewage bills?

A: From 2004 through 2012, Pennsylvania American Water collected sewage fees on behalf of Brentwood Borough. However, PAW subsequently shuttered this business unit. The Borough has entered into agreements with Brentwood Bank and Software Systems to support the in-house collection of sewage usage charges.

2) Q: Why do I no longer receive a separate trash bill?

A: In 2015, Republic Waste ceased the collection of delinquent refuse fees. Balances that were in excess of 90 days past due were subsequently disseminated to the Borough. Rather than burden residents with a confusing two-tiered system, by which Republic would perform current billing and Brentwood would conduct delinquent billing, the Borough chose to transfer all collection duties to our internal staff.

3) Q: I dispose of my trash at my place of employment. How do I remove refuse charges from my bill?

A: It is mandatory for all single family homes, residential duplexes, and residential triplexes to receive refuse service from the Borough. However, a waiver of service can be granted if a property is permanently vacated due to the relocation or death of the owner.

4) Q: How often will I receive a bill?

A: Brentwood issues bills on a monthly basis. The typical mailing date is around the twelfth day of each month

5) Q: What are the terms of the billing cycle?

A: The sewage portion of the bill is associated with usage for the 30 days preceding the most recent meter reading data transmitted to the Borough. Refuse fees are levied on a 30 day cycle on a prepayment basis. For example, a bill that is issued in the month of April will typically reflect sewage usage for a period from mid-February through mid-March and refuse collection for a period of April 1 through April 30.

6) Q: When are payments due?

A: Payment is due 21 days after the date that the bill is printed, which is generally the fifth calendar day of the following month. The exact due date is listed in the upper right corner of the bill.

7) **Q:** What are the billing rates? How are collected funds utilized?

A: The sewage section of the bill contains two separate components. A portion of the fees are imposed by the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority for sewage treatment. ALCOSAN charges both a flat monthly service fee and an additional fee for each thousand gallons of usage. The Borough has no control over the ALCOSAN fee schedule. The remaining charges are assessed by Brentwood for sewer infrastructure maintenance. Borough sewage rates are set annually by Council and also include both a flat service fee and a usage fee. Refuse fees compensate Republic Waste for trash collection, recycling, and landfill disposal. Current rates are conspicuously printed on the monthly statement.

8) **Q:** What are the penalties for late payment?

A: A one-time 10 % penalty is assessed against all past due accounts. Additionally, the account shall accumulate interest at a rate of 1 ½% for each month that any outstanding principal, penalties, or interest remain unpaid. Should a customer fail to satisfy all outstanding charges in full within 90 days of the original billing date, the account may be subject to termination of service.

9) **Q:** Where do I make payment? What payment instruments can I use?

A: Payment can be made via check by mailing to **P.O. Box 98129 Pittsburgh, PA 15227** or by utilizing the dropbox that is located in the drive-thru lane of the Brentwood Bank branch located at **3635 Brownsville Road**. If paying via check, be sure to include the "coupon" (the section of the bill located below the perforated line) in the envelope. Customers can pay with a debit/credit card or sign up for automatic withdrawal from a bank account by visiting the X-Press Pay link on the Borough website. Debit/credit card payments are subject to a convenience fee assessed by the issuing bank. Please **DO NOT** submit payment at the Municipal Building unless explicitly instructed to do so by a termination notice.

10) **Q:** I am a landlord. Why did I receive my tenant's bill?

A: Per the terms of the sewage ordinance, usage charges will be assessed only to the owner of the property. Under no circumstances may a bill be mailed to a tenant. This regulation is beneficial to landlords, as it prevents owners from receiving a "surprise" notice of intent to lien the property due to ongoing tenant delinquency.

11) **Q:** Who do I contact regarding questions about my bill?

A: Borough employees are charged with performing customer service functions. For assistance, call 412-884-1500 x115 between 8AM and 4PM on weekdays or x118 between 9AM and 2PM on weekdays.

12) Q: How do I make changes to my account information?

A: To update a name or billing address, or to initiate or cancel service, customers should contact Pennsylvania American Water. Any alternations received by PAW will be shared with the Borough and electronically changed in the municipal database.

13) Q: What do I do if I did not receive a bill?

A: Contact customer service to receive a duplicate via mail or email.

14) Q: I made payment to Pennsylvania American Water and/or Republic Waste. How do I apply these balances to my Borough account?

A: All payments made to PAW will be applied only to water usage fees. PAW will provide an account credit for overpayments but cannot forward these funds to the Borough. Republic Waste no longer performs any collection functions on behalf of Brentwood residents. Any fees received by this organization will be returned to the sender.

15) Q: I will be away from my address for an extended period of time. How do I avoid the assessment of penalties and interest?

A: If the customer will be residing at an alternate, semi-permanent address for a portion of the year (e.g. "snow birding"), customer service can temporarily forward monthly statements to this secondary address.

16) Q: I believe that I was inadvertently billed for excessive usage due to a water leak. How do I rectify this matter?

A: Customers must contact Pennsylvania American Water to dispute these charges. Please note that the customer is responsible for making full payment of the amount listed on the disputed bill. Should PAW determine that a leak was present, PAW will automatically notify the Borough. The credited amount will be displayed on the next monthly bill.

17) Q: I am having trouble paying my bill. Are there any discounts available to low income customers?

A: Residents with household incomes no greater than 150% of the federal poverty guidelines may be eligible to participate in the ALCOSAN Clean Water Assistance Fund. This program is managed by the Dollar Energy Fund, and applications are processed through this organization's community partner agencies. Qualifying customers will receive a \$30 statement credit once per every three billing cycles.

18) Q: A notice of service termination was posted at my address. How do I prevent the water from being shut off?

A: Customers must make full payment within ten days of the posting date. Payment must either be in the form of cash, certified check, or money order, which is payable at the Municipal Building. Alternatively, a debit/credit payment may be made via the Payer Express module on the Borough website. Payment will be accepted at the Municipal Building ONLY if a termination notice has been issued. If service is terminated, the customer will be subject to additional fees assessed by Pennsylvania American Water.