



# *Upper Montgomery Joint Authority*

*1100 Mensch Dam Road,  
Pennsburg 18073*

*East Greenville*

*Pennsburg*

*Telephone: 215.679.5133*

*Facsimile: 215.679.5206*

*UMJA.org*

*Red Hill*



Welcome to the  
**Upper Montgomery Joint Authority**  
(UMJA)

**Office Hours:**

**Monday through Friday**

**7:00 am to 3:30 pm**

**Please call to schedule an appointment if you wish to visit in person.**

## Welcome!

Welcome to your new home and welcome to the Upper Perkiomen Valley! We know how hectic the moving process can be and we want to make your transition as smooth as possible. We hope you will keep this booklet as a handy reference guide for your sewer utility-related questions. Of course, we are always here to assist with your needs, and we want you to contact us if you need more personalized service.

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## Mission Statement

Serving East Greenville, Pennsburg, Red Hill Boroughs and a portion of Upper Hanover Township, UMJA's mission is to operate and maintain its wastewater treatment plant and collection system in a socially, ethically, and environmentally responsible manner, to protect the health, well-being, and quality of life of our customers and the public at large, living, working and playing within the Valley.

## History

Upper Montgomery Joint Authority (UMJA) was formed in 1958 by elected representatives from the Boroughs of East Greenville, Pennsburg and Red Hill. Our board consists of two members from each borough served. In the early 1960s a wastewater treatment facility was constructed providing area residents with an improved level of wastewater treatment from that offered by onsite systems, many of which were malfunctioning at that time. By 1972 the Federal Government recognized the nationwide need to improve water pollution control facilities and enacted what many of us know as the 'Clean Water Act'. In the early 1980s the PA Department of Environmental Resources (DER) enforced more stringent wastewater treatment standards. In the mid-1980s UMJA began planning for a major upgrade to its wastewater treatment facility. The new, more modern wastewater treatment plant was completed in 1990. And in 2015 we began planning for the next upgrade as the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has established additional constraints to wastewater treatment process.

2021 marked a monumental milestone in Upper Montgomery Joint Authority's continued effort to improve and advance their wastewater system. The \$19.3 million-dollar construction project was funded by the United States Department of Agriculture through the USDA Rural Development loan program. This project transformed UMJA's wastewater treatment system and improved multiple facets of the facility, including:

- Eliminated the bypass overflow during storm events
- Implemented both Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus removal, while improving water quality of the Green Lane Reservoir
- Made the treatment plant more energy efficient and reliable
- Replaced old worn-out equipment
- Improved safety for wastewater treatment plant operators
- Provided technological improvements to increase efficiency of operations

This new upgrade was a result of many years of work with Woodard & Curran, UMJA, USDA and Pennsylvania DEP, and was made possible through an innovative financing and funding strategy that allows the facility to meet water quality goals in a cost-effective manner while improving the overall reliability of the wastewater treatment system.

# Sewer Rental Billing

Red Hill Borough		Pennsburg Borough		East Greenville Borough	
Bill Sent*	Bill Due**	Bill Sent*	Bill Due**	Bill Sent*	Bill Due**
January 31 (estimated)	February 21	February 28	March 21	March 31	April 21
April 30	May 21	May 31	June 21	June 30	July 21
July 31 (estimated)	August 21	August 31	September 21	September 30	October 21
October 31	November 21	November 30	December 21	December 31	January 21

\*If this date is a weekend or Holiday, bills are sent the last business day of the month.

\*\*If the 21<sup>st</sup> is on a weekend or Holiday, bills are due the next business day.

## Quarterly billing fee breakdown

All metered customers are billed based on water consumption as follows:

Base Rate Fee per quarter, per unit	\$135.66
Meter Read Fee	\$1.29
Water Consumption	\$6.18/1,000 gallons
Properties with wells (no meter)	\$264.04

Fees are subject to change. See UMJA Rules & Regulations for most current rates.

Sample Quarterly Bill	
Single Family Home using 10,000 gallons of water per quarter - metered	
Base Rate (1 unit)	\$135.66
Meter Read Fee	\$1.29
Consumption (10k gals)	\$61.80
<b>Total Due</b>	<b>\$198.75</b>

## Attention Landlords

All invoices must be sent to the property owner. If you wish to have invoices sent to a tenant or property manager, the property owner and tenant/property manager must sign an Owner/Tenant (Property Manager) Agreement allowing the invoices to be sent directly to them respectively. Agreements are available on our website, [www.umja.org](http://www.umja.org) (Resources – Forms).

## Where to pay your bill . . .

- ♦ **Mail** to our office at 1100 Mensch Dam Road Pennsburg, PA 18073
- ♦ **Online** using Visa, Mastercard, Discover or Electronic Check
  - Go to <https://umja.authoritypay.com/>
  - In order to create an account, you will need your account number, which is your current account number followed by "-0" or "-1", example G-1111-0, you will also need your CID number, both are located in the middle section of your new billing invoice.



### OR

- Go to [www.officialpayments.com](http://www.officialpayments.com)
- Click on Local Payments
- Enter Jurisdiction Code 7853
- Follow the prompts
- ♦ **Phone** using Visa, Mastercard, Discover or Electronic Check
  - 1.888.272.9829
  - Choose Option 3 then Enter Jurisdiction Code 7853
  - Follow the prompts
- ♦ **UMJA Office** –
  - Drop box located at 1100 Mensch Dam Road, Pennsburg
  - Check or Money Order **(WE DO NOT ACCEPT CASH)**
  - In office visits by appointment only

## What if I can't pay my bill on time?

The following fees may apply

Paid after due date	15% penalty
Two weeks late	Past due notice
30 days late	Water shut off notice
12 days before shut off, tag hung	\$150 fee
Water shut off	\$75 field service fee
Water restored	\$25 to \$50 fee

Fees are subject to change. See UMJA Rules & Regulations for most current information.

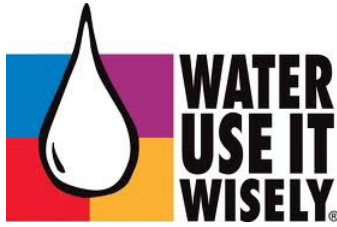


### Questions about your bill?

Please contact our Billing Office

- ♦ 215.679.5133
- ♦ [billing@umja.org](mailto:billing@umja.org)

**If your mailing address, phone # or email address changes, please be sure to let us know!**



The American Water Works Association estimates that the average person uses between 40-80 gallons of water per day. For a family of four, that amounts to between 14,000 and 29,000 gallons of water consumed per quarterly billing cycle (not including any outside use such as irrigation, swimming pools fills, etc.).

Irrigation systems and leaking toilets are two of the most common causes of high water usage resulting in costly sewer bills. Keep a check on all water sources regularly to ensure there are no leaks, even a slight drip can be costly over time.

If you frequently use water for irrigation, washing your car, filling a swimming pool, you may want to consider having a deduction meter installed on your outside water source so that those gallons, being used outside and not entering the sewer system, can be deducted from your sewer bill. Please contact our Billing Office for more information about this program.

Is your home more than just your home?

**Do you have an in-law suite?**

**Do you run a business from your home?**

*If you answered yes to either of these questions here are a few things you should know...*

1. Each home is considered a single-family dwelling unit and is assigned one EDU.
2. If you have an in-law suite, your home is no longer a single-family unit but now a multi-family unit and must be accounted for accordingly.
3. If a living section of your home has its own separate entrance and its own separate toilet facilities (such as an in-law suite or business), it is considered a second unit and must be assigned a separate EDU.
4. If you conduct business in your home but do not have a separate entrance or separate toilet facilities, your home is considered a combination unit, meaning it is no longer just a single-family unit and now must follow the consumption limitations of a non-residential unit. As a combination unit you are limited to using 21,000 gallons of water per billing cycle. If consumption exceeds this limit, an additional EDU would be necessary.

## Sewer Lateral Maintenance

All homes and businesses connected to sanitary sewer systems have a lateral. It's the pipe that transports wastewater from inside your home out to the sanitary sewer system in the street. Just like roofs and driveways, maintaining a lateral is the homeowners responsibility.

### What doesn't belong in the sanitary sewer lines?



Grease



Roots



Medications



Rainwater

### Simple steps to prevent future problems

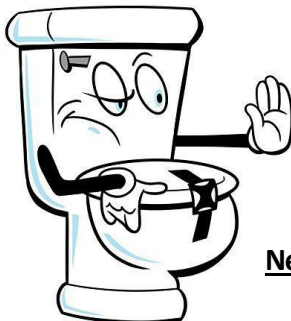
- ◆ **Sinks need to be on a fat free diet!**

FOG (fats, oils, grease) is public enemy #1 because it is the primary cause of sewer line blockages. Homeowners should never pour FOG down the drain, instead, it should be poured into an appropriate container and thrown out on trash day!

- ◆ **Tree Root Problems**

Homeowners are responsible for keeping their sewer lateral running free and clear from their residence all the way to the point of connection to the sewer main in the center of the street. Tree roots can invade the line and restrict flow or cause a backup in the system. Root control products are available at local hardware stores. Minor root problems can be handled with these products, but a plumber may be required to cut out major root growth.

When planting trees, be sure not to plant them over or near the sewer laterals because over time the roots will work their way into your lateral creating a blockage which may result in a sewage backup into your home!



# **NO Wipes in the Pipes!**

*Your toilet is not a trashcan*

**Never Flush:** Baby wipes, paper towels, towelettes, diapers, feminine products, etc.

## ♦ Medications

Many homeowners dispose of liquid or pill form medications by pouring them down the drain or flushing them down the toilet. Although many believe this is the proper way to dispose of unused medications, it absolutely is not. Medicines that are flushed or poured down the drain can end up polluting our waters, impacting aquatic species, and contaminating our food and water supplies. Most medicines are not removed by wastewater treatment plants or septic systems. Scientists have found medicines in surface, ground and marine waters as well as soils and sediments in the Pacific Northwest. Even at very low levels, medicines in the environment hurt aquatic life.

Using a medicine take-back program is the simple, safest and most environmentally protective way to dispose of unused medication. Most pharmacies have a medicine take-back program as well as our local police department.



## ♦ Why your Sump Pump and Downspouts should NOT be connected to the Public Sewer System

. . . to prevent sanitary sewer overflows and sewer backups by eliminating storm water and groundwater from entering the sanitary sewer system.

### Why is clear/clean water a problem?

Clear water entering the wastewater collection and treatment system create two main problems:

First, it consumes system capacity. An 8-inch sanitary sewer pipe can handle wastewater from approximately 200 homes. But only 18 sump pumps will consume the same capacity. If clear water is directed into the sanitary sewer and the capacity is ultimately overwhelmed, sewers can back-up into houses and overflow from manholes causing the release of raw sewage into the environment. This creates health and safety issues that can be costly to resolve.



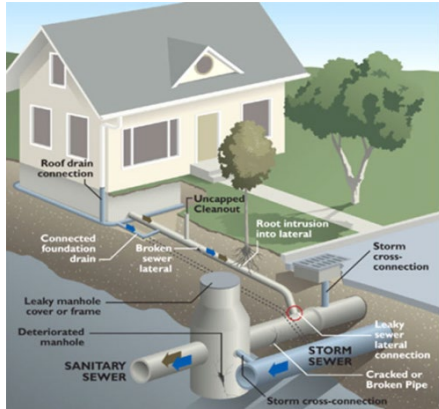
Second, clear water that reaches the treatment plant is treated unnecessarily. This increases the cost of treatment and adds to the wear and tear on equipment, reducing its life span. The added cost of treating this clear water is then passed onto the customers, increasing quarterly billing rates.

### What is the solution?

Inflow water from sump pumps and downspouts needs to be directed to lawn, ditches, storm drains, retention ponds and natural waterways. Sump pumps currently connected to the sanitary sewer system must be disconnected and rerouted to the storm water system.



## Sewer Lateral Inspections



The Upper Montgomery Joint Authority requires property owners to have a private sewer lateral inspection upon sale of their property or upon addition of fixtures, such as adding a bathroom, kitchenette, etc. We will inspect your surface cleanout, televise your private lateral and survey your outside drainage system.

**Property owners are asked to contact our office (215.679.5133) as soon as a settlement date has been set or at least (30) thirty days beginning construction.** East Greenville and Red Hill Boroughs currently include this inspection as part of their U&O. Although Pennsburg Borough does not include this

inspection with their U&O, we, as a public service provider, do require such inspections.

*WHAT'S UNDERGROUND IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS WHAT'S ABOVE!*



## UMJA Fertile Fuel the natural organic fertilizer

Upper Montgomery Fertile Fuel is highly processed and monitored fertilizer, which contains more than 50% organic matter. Natural organic fertilizer is the original slow-release fertilizer that many synthetic slow-release fertilizers strive to mimic. This product also features a very low burning potential, micronutrients, and a large amount of organic matter. Natural organic fertilizers typically have a large amount of water insoluble nitrogen (WIN); that is, the nitrogen, along with other nutrients, remains slow-release and are minimally affected by watering or rainfall.

### Where can I safely use this fertilizer?



Lawns  
new or established



Flower garden



Vegetable garden



Trees & Shrubs

**Come and get it – it's **free!****

We have 10 lb. bags or bring your own containers to fill.

Please call ahead to schedule pickup, 215.679.5133.

**Pick up at:** UMJA Plant 1100 Mensch Dam Road, Pennsburg

# FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***HOW DO YOU DETERMINE HOW MUCH SEWER SERVICE I'VE USED AND HOW MUCH TO CHARGE ME?***

First there is a base rate that is charged to all customers with a connection. That base rate is just for the connection; it does not include any consumption. Secondly, we receive water meter readings from the water authority and use those readings to determine the amount of flow entering the sewer system. The water meter read fee charged is a fee that is passed through to you, this is what the water authority charges us for your reading.

### ***HOW DO I CHECK FOR A TOILET LEAK?***

Put several drops of food coloring in the tank of the toilet. Do not flush. Let it set for 20-30 minutes. If color appears in the bowl without flushing, you have a 'silent' toilet leak.

### ***CAN I SET UP AUTOMATIC PAYMENT?***

Yes, this service is available via our Customer Portal, <https://umja.authoritypay.com/>.

### ***CAN I ARRANGE TO BE BILLED MONTHLY INSTEAD OF QUARTERLY?***

While we cannot change the billing schedule, we are able to accept payment on an account at any time. If you are making a payment on an account that has no current balance due, the payment will be applied as a credit which will then be applied to the next bill. Please be sure to include your account number and the service address when making a payment.

### ***WHAT IF I CAN'T PAY MY BILL BY THE DUE DATE?***

If full payment is not received in our office on or before the due date, whatever portion is not paid will be subject to a 15% late penalty. See Page 5 for a schedule of fees associated with late payments.

### ***WILL I STILL BE BILLED IF THE PROPERTY IS VACANT?***

Yes, even if the property is vacant and no consumption is being used, you will continue to receive a bill for the base rate and water meter read. Sewer rental fees will not be terminated until the sewer drain is permanently plugged in accordance with Authority direction, inspected by a Borough designated Inspector, and written notice is given to the authority.