



Excerpt from the Borough Manager’s FY 2025 Budget Message

As Provided to Council, Mayor, and Borough Citizens November 4, 2024

Fire Tax Implementation

Municipalities in the state of Pennsylvania are required to ensure that fire protection is provided within their community. The Borough Code provides, at 8 Pa.C.S.A. § 1302(a)(6), that the Borough Council has the power to levy and annually collect a tax, not exceeding three mills for, among other things, making appropriations to fire companies both within and outside the Borough, including payment of salaries, benefits or other compensation of fire suppression employees. Within the 2025 proposed budget, a 1.25 mill fire tax is to be implemented. By introducing this special purpose tax, it allows the Borough to generate approximately \$52,000.00 annually which will be provided to the Rescue Hose Company.

2024 Fire Tax Rates for Franklin County Municipalities	
Municipality	Fire Tax Rate
Chambersburg Borough	3 mills
Mercersburg Borough	2.4 mills
Shippensburg Borough	2.33 mills
Washington Township	2.5 mills
Waynesboro Borough	3 mills

Table 1

Table 1 identifies the municipalities in Franklin County that have an existing fire tax and provides the 2024 millage rate of each municipal fire tax. With the 1.25 proposed fire tax, Greencastle Borough would have the lowest rate of any municipal fire tax in Franklin County.

For the 2025 calendar year, Rescue Hose Company No. 1 has requested \$127,805.68 from the Borough to fund 25% of the annual cost for their paid firefighter/EMT staff. An annual donation of \$17,500.00 has historically been provided to the Rescue Hose Company in addition to the quarterly requested paid staff costs. With a total amount of \$145,305.68 requested and no American Response Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help offset this cost as was utilized in prior years; the Borough Council determined the implementation of a fire tax would be the most prudent and transparent means of generating the necessary funds to support fire protection services within the Borough.

Based on the certified assessment roll for tax year 2025 as provided by the Franklin County Assessment Office, the average annual impact of a 1.25 mill fire tax on a residential property in the Borough of Greencastle will be approximately \$27.17. For comparison, the Franklin County library tax is currently 1.3 mills and equates to an average annual cost of \$28.26 for a residential property.