ATTESTATION ENGAGEMENT

Township of Morris

Washington County, Pennsylvania 62-216

Liquid Fuels Tax Fund
For the Period
January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024

September 2025



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General

Timothy L. DeFoor • Auditor General



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TIMOTHY L. DEFOOR AUDITOR GENERAL

Independent Auditor's Report

The Honorable Michael Carroll Secretary Department of Transportation Harrisburg, PA 17120

We have examined the accompanying Forms MS-965 With Adjustments for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of Morris, Washington County, for the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024. The municipality's management is responsible for presenting the Forms MS-965 in accordance with the criteria described in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments based on our examination.

Our examination was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards applicable to attestation engagements contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the examination to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Forms MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above, in all material respects. An examination involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Forms MS-965. The nature, timing, and extent of the procedures selected depend on our judgement, including an assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the Forms MS-965, whether due to fraud or error. We believe that the evidence we obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a reasonable basis for our qualified opinion.

We are required to be independent and to meet our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with ethical requirements relating to the engagement.

As described in the Auditor Description Of Select Transactions section of this report, the adjustments included on the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are made by the Department of the Auditor General.

<u>Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)</u>

As discussed in Finding No. 1, the municipality was overcharged \$307.97 in 2023 and \$1,050.92 in 2024 for stone. In addition, as discussed in Finding No. 2, the municipality expended \$4,626.88 during 2023 and \$4,227.41 during 2024 from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for cinders that were not approved by the Department of Transportation, which is a non-permissible expenditure.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the deviations from the criteria discussed in the preceding paragraph, the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments present, in all material respects, the information required by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the Township of Morris, Washington County, for the period January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2024, in accordance with the criteria described in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*.

In accordance with Government Auditing Standards, we are required to report all deficiencies that are considered to be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal control; fraud and noncompliance with provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, or grant agreements that have a material effect on the Forms MS-965; and any other instances that warrant the attention of those charged with governance. We are also required to obtain and report the views of responsible officials concerning the findings, conclusions, and recommendations, as well as any planned corrective actions. We performed our examination to express an opinion on whether the Forms MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above and not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on internal control over the Forms MS-965 or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions. Our examination disclosed the following findings that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards:

- Vendor Overcharges.
- Non-permissible Expenditure.

Timothy L. Detoor

The purpose of this report is to provide information related to the municipality's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund to assist the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in fulfilling its regulatory authority as described in the laws and regulations identified in the Background section of this report and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*. This report is not suitable for any other purpose.

We appreciate the courtesy extended by the Township of Morris, Washington County, to us during the course of our examination. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Bureau of County Audits at 717-787-1363.

Timothy L. DeFoor Auditor General

August 19, 2025

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Background

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law¹ provides municipalities other than counties (i.e., townships, boroughs, cities, towns, home rule, and optional plan governments) with an annual allocation of liquid fuels taxes from the state's Motor License Fund to be used for the maintenance and repair of streets, roads, and bridges for which the municipality is responsible. The allocation of these funds to municipalities is based upon: (1) 50 percent on the municipality's proportion of local road mileage to the total local road mileage maintained by all political subdivisions making application in the county; and (2) 50 percent on the proportion of a municipality's population to the total population of all municipalities making application in the state.²

Section 9511 (relating to Allocation of proceeds) of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code provides municipalities with annual maintenance payments to be received from the Motor License Fund.³

Each municipality must deposit the allocation of Liquid Fuels Tax funds and annual maintenance payments that it receives into a special fund called either the Municipal Liquid Fuels Tax Fund or State Fund. A municipality may not deposit any other monies into this fund except when the municipality does not have enough money in the special fund to meet the payments called for by its current annual budget for road and bridge purposes. In such a case, the municipality may borrow money or transfer money from its General Fund to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

The Department of Transportation has been given the regulatory authority for the administration of these funds. Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* includes the policies and procedures for the administration of Act 655, as amended, and the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money. However, if there is a difference between *Publication 9* and any legislation, the legislation shall govern.

To qualify for the annual allocation of Liquid Fuels Tax funds, *Publication 9* indicates that each municipality shall:

1. Submit annual reports (MS-965, Actual Use Report, MS-965P, Project and Miscellaneous Receipts, and MS-965S, Record of Checks).

¹ 72 P.S. § 2615.1 et seq., Act 655 of 1956, as amended.

² 75 Pa.C.S. § 9010(c)(1)-(2) as last amended by Act 89 of 2013.

³ 75 Pa.C.S. § 9511, as last amended by Act 89 of 2013 and Act 101 of 2016, *See also* 72 P.S. § 2615.4, as last amended by Act 42 of 2013.

Background (Continued)

- 2. Make deposits and payments or expenditures in compliance with Act 655, as amended. Failure to do so may result in not receiving allocations from PennDOT until all discrepancies are resolved. *Publication 9*, Section 2.6, includes information about investing Liquid Fuels Tax monies, using loan or bond proceeds, and types of receipts that can be placed into the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.
- 3. Submit the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Report of Elected and Appointed Officials by January 31st and the Survey of Financial Condition By March 15th.
- 4. Ensure resolution of all Contractor Responsibility Program (CRP) holds and blocks imposed by the Department of Revenue and the Department of Labor and Industry.
- 5. Ensure resolution of all reimbursements required as a result of audits performed by the Department of the Auditor General or monitoring reviews performed by the Department of Transportation's Financial Consultants.

Criteria

The criteria for the Form MS-965 With Adjustment are described below.

Section 1 of Form MS-965 With Adjustments provides a summary of Liquid Fuels Tax Fund expenditures by category. Categories requiring explanation include:

• Major equipment purchases are purchases of road machinery and road equipment with varying yearly costs in excess of the amounts indicated below:

2021	2022	2023	2024
\$11,500.00	\$11,800.00	\$12,200.00	\$12,600.00

• Minor equipment purchases are purchases of road machinery and road equipment with varying yearly costs that are less than or equal to the amounts indicated below:

2021	2022	2023	2024
\$11,500.00	\$11,800.00	\$12,200.00	\$12,600.00

• Agility projects are exchanges of services with the Department of Transportation.

Background (Continued)

Section 2 of Form MS-965 With Adjustments provides information on the fund balance. Categories requiring explanation include:

- The state allocation is available from the Department of Transportation in March of each year. The amount the municipality receives is based half on its population and half on its road mileage.
- Municipalities that transferred roads from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the municipality through the Highway Transfer Program receive annual turnback allocations in March of each year from the Department of Transportation. Turnback allocations are based on the mileage of the roads transferred.
- Expenditures include the total transferred from Section 1.

Section 3 of Form MS-965 With Adjustments determines if the municipality expended Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money in excess of the permissible amount for equipment and the balance that the municipality may carry forward for the purchase of equipment to the subsequent year.

Department of Transportation *Publication 9* requires that the amount expended for equipment purchases in a given year not exceed the sum of the equipment balance carried forward from the previous year and 20 percent of the current year's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund allocation and, if applicable, 20 percent of the turnback allocation plus other Department of Transportation approved adjustments.

If the municipality spent in excess of the amount listed on Line 4, the excess must be reimbursed to the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

The equipment balance to be carried forward for the subsequent year is the lesser of the amount on Line 6 or the ending fund balance on Line 6 of Section 2, but not less than zero.

Background (Continued)

Basis of Presentation

The financial activities of the municipality are accounted for in separate funds. The Liquid Fuels Tax Fund is used to account for state aid revenues from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation used primarily for building and improving local roads and bridges. The Form MS-965 has been prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation as a result of the Fuels Tax Act 655, as amended, which does not constitute a complete presentation of the entity's assets, liabilities, expenses, and fund balance. Accordingly, the presentation of Form MS-965 With Adjustments is restricted to the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund, which represents a segment of the entity's financial activities.

Basis Of Accounting

The accompanying Forms MS-965 With Adjustments is prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Under this method, revenues are recognized when received and expenditures are recorded when paid.

General Fixed Assets

General fixed assets are recognized as expenditures at the time of purchase. No depreciation has been provided on the heavy equipment used to maintain and repair roads and bridges.

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2023 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Expenditure Summary	Reported		eported Adjustments		Adjusted Amount	
Minor equipment purchases	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-
Computer/Computer related training		-		-		-
Major equipment purchases		-		-		-
Agility projects		-		-		-
Cleaning streets and gutters		-		-		-
Winter maintenance services		6,357.93		(4,626.88)		1,731.05
Traffic control devices		-		-		-
Street lighting		-		-		-
Storm sewers and drains		7,488.68		-		7,488.68
Repairs of tools and machinery		18,022.35		-		18,022.35
Maintenance and repair of						
roads and bridges	10	08,435.17		-		108,435.17
Highway construction and						
rebuilding projects		_		-		_
Miscellaneous				4,626.88		4,626.88
Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	\$ 1	40,304.13	\$	-	\$	140,304.13

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2023 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Fund Balance	Reported	Adjustments	Adjusted Amount
1. Balance, January 1, 2023	\$ 141,040.09	\$ -	\$ 141,040.09
Receipts: 2. State allocation	155,215.61	-	155,215.61
2a. Turnback allocation2b. Interest on investments2c. Miscellaneous	- 11,978.41 13,228.67	- - -	11,978.41 13,228.67
3. Total receipts	180,422.69		180,422.69
4. Total funds available	321,462.78		321,462.78
5. Expenditures (Section 1)	140,304.13		140,304.13
6. Balance, December 31, 2023	\$ 181,158.65	\$ -	\$ 181,158.65

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2023 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Equipment Balance	Reported		Reported A		Reported Adjustments		Adjusted Amount	
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$	83,322.86	\$	-	\$	83,322.86		
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)		31,043.12		-		31,043.12		
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments						<u>-</u>		
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition		114,365.98		-		114,365.98		
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures				-				
6. Remainder		114,365.98				114,365.98		
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	\$	114,365.98	\$	_	\$	114,365.98		
out not less than zero)	Φ	114,303.30	Φ		<u>φ</u>	114,303.70		

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2024 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Expenditure Summary	Reported		Adjustments		Adjusted Amount	
Minor equipment purchases	\$	-	\$	-	\$	_
Computer/Computer related training		-		-		-
Major equipment purchases		-		-		-
Agility projects		-		-		-
Cleaning streets and gutters		-		-		-
Winter maintenance services		7,911.85		(4,227.41)		3,684.44
Traffic control devices		1,432.25		-		1,432.25
Street lighting		-		-		-
Storm sewers and drains		5,214.52		-		5,214.52
Repairs of tools and machinery	,	27,276.63		-		27,276.63
Maintenance and repair of						
roads and bridges	1	19,448.71		250.00		119,698.71
Highway construction and						
rebuilding projects		-		-		-
Miscellaneous		332.36		3,977.41		4,309.77
Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	\$ 10	61,616.32	\$	-	\$	161,616.32

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2024 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Fund Balance	Reported	Adjustments	Adjusted Amount
1. Balance, January 1, 2024	\$ 181,158.65	\$ -	\$ 181,158.65
Receipts: 2. State allocation 2a. Turnback allocation 2b. Interest on investments 2c. Miscellaneous	153,684.85 - 13,428.67 -	- - - -	153,684.85 - 13,428.67 -
3. Total receipts	167,113.52		167,113.52
4. Total funds available	348,272.17		348,272.17
5. Expenditures (Section 1)	161,616.32		161,616.32
6. Balance, December 31, 2024	\$ 186,655.85	\$ -	\$ 186,655.85

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND 2024 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

Equipment Balance	Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported		Reported Adjustments		ustments	Adjusted Amount	
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$	114,365.98	\$	-	\$	114,365.98											
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)		30,736.97		-		30,736.97											
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments																	
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition		145,102.95		-		145,102.95											
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures				<u>-</u>		-											
6. Remainder		145,102.95				145,102.95											
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	¢	145,102.95	\$		¢	145,102.95											
out not less than zero)	<u> </u>	145,102.95	Φ		<u> </u>	145,102.95											

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND AUDITOR DESCRIPTION OF SELECT TRANSACTIONS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2023 TO DECEMBER 31, 2024

The following information relates to certain types of transactions for which the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation requested that we provide additional detail.

Adjustments

2023 - Section 1

Adjustments were made to "Winter maintenance services" and "Miscellaneous" because expenditures of \$4,626.88 were misclassified.

2024 - Section 1

Adjustments were made to "Winter maintenance services," "Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges," and "Miscellaneous" because expenditures of \$4,227.41 were misclassified.

Miscellaneous Receipts

On August 31, 2023, the municipality deposited \$13,228.67 into its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund that was received from the General Fund for the reimbursement of a prior audit finding (see Summary Of 2021 Examination Recommendation).

Miscellaneous Expenditures

The following miscellaneous expenditures were paid from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund during the examination period:

Payee	Description	2023	2024
Vendor	Non-permissible expenditures		
	(see Finding No.2)	\$4,626.88	\$4,227.41
Financial institution	Bank service charge		82.36
Totals		\$4,626.88	\$4,309.77

Finding No. 1 - Vendor Overcharges

Our examination disclosed that the municipality was overcharged a total of \$307.97 during 2023 and \$1,050.92 during 2024 for the purchases of various stone as follows:

Product	Quantity Purchased	Contract Price	Invoice Price	Unit Price Difference	Total Price Difference
#57 stone #67 stone	137.37 ton 203.81 ton	\$25.50 26.50	\$27.00 27.00	\$1.50 .50	\$ 206.06 101.91
2023 Total					307.97
#57 stone 2A stone R4 rip rap	210.08 ton 249.84 ton 388.76 ton	\$25.50 22.50 28.50	\$27.00 23.50 29.75	\$1.50 1.00 1.25	315.13 249.84 485.95
2024 Total					1,050.92
Two Year Total			Amount	overpaid	\$1,358.89

Municipalities should have internal control procedures to ensure that invoice prices are compared to contract prices before payments are made on vendor invoices. The failure to follow this procedure increases the risk of overpayments being made and remaining undetected.

This condition occurred because the municipality did not have sufficient internal controls to ensure that invoice prices are compared to contract prices before payments are made on vendor invoices.

Recommendations

We recommend that the municipality reimburse \$1,358.89 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification of the Department of Transportation. We also recommend that the municipal officials contact the vendor as soon as possible to obtain reimbursement.

We further recommend that the municipality compare invoice prices to contract prices prior to making payments on vendor invoices.

Finding No. 1 - Vendor Overcharges (Continued)

Management's Response

The secretary/treasurer stated:

We will pay very close attention to every charge on an invoice to be sure they match bid.

Auditor's Conclusion

During our next examination, we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations.

Finding No. 2 - Non-permissible Expenditure

Our examination disclosed that the municipality expended \$4,626.88 during 2023 and \$4,227.41 during 2024 from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for cinders that were not approved by the Department of Transportation, which is a non-permissible expenditure.

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law, 72 P.S. § 2615.4, provides, in part, that monies herein allocated may be used only for construction, reconstruction, maintenance, and repairs of such public roads or streets, including bridges, culverts and drainage structures, for which they are legally responsible. Also permitted are expenditures involving acquisition, maintenance, repairs and operation of street signs, traffic signs, traffic signal control systems, road equipment, and snow fences.

The Department of Transportation has been statutorily authorized to promulgate regulations concerning the administration of Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money and has determined that certain items, including cinders, are outside the scope of permissible expenditures.

This condition occurred because municipal officials did not know only state approved cinders are allowed to be purchased using the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

The failure to follow the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law and the Department of Transportation's Regulations as noted above could result in the municipality having to reimburse \$8,854.29 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

Recommendations

We recommend that the municipality reimburse \$8,854.29 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification by the Department of Transportation.

We further recommend that the municipality comply with the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law and the Department of Transportation's Regulations regarding permissible expenditures.

Finding No. 2 - Non-permissible Expenditure (Continued)

Management's Response

The secretary/treasurer stated:

The township was unaware that cinders were not allowable using Liquid Fuels funds. We will no longer use these funds for any cinder purchases.

Auditor's Conclusion

During our next examination, we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations.

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND SUMMARY OF 2021 EXAMINATION RECOMMENDATION FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2023 TO DECEMBER 31, 2024

Summary Of 2021 Examination Recommendation

In our 2021 report, we recommended that the municipality reimburse \$13,228.67 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for failure to maintain documentation for price quotations.

During our current examination, we noted that the municipality reimbursed this amount to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund on August 31, 2023.

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS WASHINGTON COUNTY LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND SUMMARY OF ONSITE CLOSEOUT MEETING FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2023 TO DECEMBER 31, 2024

An onsite closeout meeting was held May 20, 2025. Those participating were:

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS

Ms. Pamela Bartolotto, Secretary/Treasurer

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Mrs. Michele Simpson, Auditor

This report was initially distributed to:

The Honorable Michael Carroll

Secretary
Department of Transportation

Township of Morris Washington County 77 Park Drive Prosperity, PA 15329

The Honorable Patrick Bracey
Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

Ms. Pamela Bartolotto Secretary/Treasurer

This report is a matter of public record and is available online at www.PaAuditor.gov. Media questions about the report can be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General, Office of Communications, 229 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; via email to: news@PaAuditor.gov.