

## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What's the Timeframe for this project and when will I need to connect?** Currently the plan is for construction to begin in the fall of 2025, with homeowners being able to start connecting sometime in the spring of 2026. We will continue to update the progress on our website <https://www.guilfordtwp.us/departments/Sewer/MarionSewerProject> to keep residents informed of any time delays etc.

Once the sewer is installed, tested and ready to be connected to, you will be sent a 'Connection Notice'. This notice will inform you that as of the date of the notice, (postdated to allow time to get to your mailbox), you will be granted 60 days to pay your tap fee and 180 days to get your home connected to the sewer. Guilford will begin to bill you for sewer service on the date you connect to the sewer or on the 180 day mark, whichever comes first.

2. **How much is it going to cost me to hook up to the sewer?** The tap fee to connect to the sewer will be \$5,500.00. Guilford Township Authority will provide the grinder pump at no charge to the customer. The customer will then own the pump, just like any other appliance, and will be responsible for maintenance and repairs. The only other cost the customer will incur is the cost to have the pump installed, and connected to the sewer line. That cost will depend on the contractor's price. **Also See Question #9.**
3. **What kind of warranty will we get on the grinder pump?** The pumps Guilford will provide are manufactured by Environment One. They are one of the best pumps out there. Normally these pumps come with a 2 year factory warranty, but Guilford has worked with the manufacturer to have contractors trained and certified to install the pumps. If a homeowner uses one of these trained/certified contractors to install their pump, the manufacturer will extend the warranty from 2 to 5 years. There will be a list of certified installers available to homeowners and businesses when they pay their tap fee and receive their connection permit.
4. **What do I do if I can't afford to pay the fees and connect?** Pennvest is a lending company in PA that works with homeowners who are having difficulty paying for public utilities. They offer low interest loans to help with the cost. Contact information is available on our website. Pennvest is in no way affiliated with Guilford and you will need to contact them directly for more information.
5. **Where will the pump be placed on my property?** You may have your pump installed, by your contractor, anywhere on your property that you desire. We recommend it be placed as close to the home as possible and near where your soil pipe runs out to your septic tank, as it will connect directly between your soil pipe and your septic tank.

During construction, an employee from the contracting company or sewer authority will stop by your home and place a wooden stake on your porch or stoop. This stake is for you to place along the street where you would like your service connection to be installed.

6. **Will future developments or new homes/business receive a free pump?** No, only homes/businesses existing at the time of construction will be given a pump at no charge.
7. **What if my home/business is outside the project area?** If your home or business structure is more than 150ft. from the sewer main, you will not be required to connect, but a service lateral will be installed to your property line in case you would like to connect.

Where there are single or multiple homes/business back a private drive, a sewer service lateral will be installed at the road right of way line. If property owners wish to be connected to the sewer, contact will need to be made with the Sewer Authority to discuss options. Guilford will not extend sewer into the Ag-Residential zone, nor allow developers to extend sewer into that zone.

8. **If I put an additional bathroom in my house do I need to change the pump size or pay an additional tap fee?** No, your pump will be able to accommodate an additional bathroom, and you will not have to pay an additional tap fee. **However**, if you add a separate living quarter/apartment that is independent of the main house, and has its own kitchen/bath, whether connected the house, or above a garage etc., you will be required to pay an additional tap and user fee for that unit.
9. **What is the Purpose of the Tap Fee and How is it Calculated?** Due to the size and complexity of this project, the estimated project cost is between 10 and 13 million dollars. Current grants obtained will cover less than 25% of the total project cost. Guilford Township Authority (GTA) has applications in for additional grants as well. All grants will help offset the burden on the residents. Your tap fee, along with all the other residents/businesses, will only add up to \$2 million. GTA has some funds in reserve for this project but still anticipates the need to borrow an additional 3 to 5 million dollars. GTA is also providing your grinder pump, basin and control panel at no charge. The tap fee does not even cover that cost which is over \$7,000 dollars.

Due to failing septic systems and groundwater contamination it is necessary that GTA provides public sewer to the Village of Marion. DEP had allowed this project to be delayed until such time that sewers were extended to Marion. Numerous development projects funded by private development funding extended the system to where we are close enough to connect Marion. This greatly reduced the cost to the residents of Marion as well.

The purpose of a tapping fee is used to offset the cost of future expansion of the sewer system and projects at the Chambersburg Wastewater Treatment Facility where all flows from GTA including Marion are and will be treated. Our engineer Buchart Horn did a tap fee analysis recently and determined that Guilford could charge \$8,587.00 per state tapping fee guidelines.

The quarterly user fee is used for operation and maintenance of the sewer system including the wastewater treatment plant. Guilford does not have its own treatment plant. Guilford's system consists of 5 pump stations, 3 metering stations and 80 miles of gravity and pressure sewer pipes. Much of the Guilford's sewer system is approaching 50 years in age. The user fee is used to cover these operation and maintenance costs.

The tap fee is a fee that the Authority must charge by law as a contribution to the overall capital expense of building its system. It's sort of a "buy in" of all users into the portion of the system owned and maintained by the Authority. The tap fee is not related to any specific equipment; it is not related to the grinder pumps these connections will require or your building sewer line that will remain yours as the homeowner. There is a lengthy formula in the statute that we must follow to arrive at the tap fee. Our engineer has to look at specific costs of installing the sewer system, replacement values, etc., and give a maximum amount under the law that the Authority can charge per each unit of capacity (called an EDU). The Authority Board then reviews the information and sets the fee. Our Board has never set it at the maximum fee allowed by law, but, it does have to increase it from time-to-time because of increases in cost. Attached is the most recent Resolution pursuant to which the Board adopted the current and future fees. This may be revisited as needed.

With regard to the tap fee, you are not forced to use any specific equipment in that sense that it's not related to what equipment you need to install. Additionally, residents who connect will not be paying for the equipment, i.e., the grinder pump. The Authority has worked hard to obtain funding to permit it to foot that bill and it also conducted a thorough investigation to determine which of the manufacturers of this specialty equipment would work best in this extension. But again, you will not pay that so long as you connect in accordance with the requirements. For the building sewer line installation, you must install pipes, etc., that meet the Authority's specifications, but the Authority isn't telling you where to buy them or what contractor to use. The Authority has worked to obtain an improved/upgraded warranty for the pumps themselves if the contractor who installs this equipment has taken the free training. If you have a contractor in mind, please make sure that individual has signed up to take the training, or have the person contact me so I can get the information out.

**We will be updating this FAQ as more questions come in and we have answers for them.**