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Auditor General DePasquale Livid at Wyoming County Officials for Dodging Blame for Leaving Over \$226,000 in State Funds Unclaimed

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today said he is furious at Wyoming County officials for continuing to shirk their responsibility to claim \$226,962.46 in bridge inspection reimbursements from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, as revealed in an audit released last week.

“I’m livid at county officials, who seem unfazed about ignoring \$226,962 in available funding – instead of passing the buck, they should be claiming it,” DePasquale said. “It’s dereliction of duty to fail to obtain every cent of gas tax funding so that residents and first responders can avoid long detours because of bridges and roads in need of repair.”

The audit found the money was not claimed because county officials failed to submit the required paperwork for more than 11 years, spanning his and the previous auditor general’s administrations.

“I really shouldn’t have to tell county officials how to do their jobs, but my office is working with PennDOT to make sure the county gets every dollar still available to be claimed,” he added. “County residents pay gas taxes every time they visit the pump, so why can’t county officials bother to fill out the paperwork to reap the benefits?”

Five previous audits, dating back to 2007, have recommended officials in Wyoming County seek the reimbursements. It is unclear how much PennDOT will reimburse because some of the claims are so old.

Wyoming County officials offered no explanation why they did not request the reimbursements or what they intend to do in the future, according to the audit which examined the liquid fuels fund in 2016.

The audit also found Wyoming County officials failed to designate nearly \$100,000 in liquid fuels gas tax funds to road projects. Because county officials failed to designate the funding, PennDOT guidelines call for the county commissioners to distribute half of the unencumbered, or undesignated, funds to the municipalities in what is called a forced distribution.

The liquid fuels gas tax funding PennDOT provides comes from a one-half cent tax collected on each gallon of gasoline consumers buy at the pump.

The Wyoming County Liquid Fuels audit report is [available online at: www.PaAuditor.gov](http://www.PaAuditor.gov).

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