

ATTESTATION ENGAGEMENT

City of Hazleton
Luzerne County, Pennsylvania
40-301
Liquid Fuels Tax Fund
For the Period
January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018

July 2019



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of the Auditor General
Eugene A. DePasquale • Auditor General



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EUGENE A. DePASQUALE
AUDITOR GENERAL

Independent Auditor's Report

The Honorable Leslie Richards
Secretary
Department of Transportation
Harrisburg, PA 17120

We examined the accompanying Forms MS-965 With Adjustments for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018. The municipality's management is responsible for presenting the Forms MS-965 in accordance with the criteria set forth in Note 1. 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 opinion.

We are mandated by Section 403 of *The Fiscal Code*, 72 P.S. § 403, to audit each municipality's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund to ensure that funds received are expended in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States include attestation engagements as a separate type of audit. An attestation engagement performed pursuant to *Government Auditing Standards* involves additional standards that exceed the standards provided by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Accordingly, this attestation engagement complies with both *Government Auditing Standards* and Section 403 of *The Fiscal Code*.

As described in Note 4, the adjustments included on the Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are made by the Department of the Auditor General.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

As discussed in Finding No. 1, the municipality expended \$75,103.90 for paving on Diamond Avenue and Thompson Street without obtaining project approval from the Department of Transportation. Additionally, as discussed in Finding No. 2, the municipality expended \$35,104.74 for road construction without advertising for bids. These expenditures were also included in Finding No. 1.

In our opinion, except for the matters 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 City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018, in accordance with the criteria set forth in Note 1.

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 or regulations that have a material effect on the Forms MS-965; and any other instances that warrant the attention of those charged with governance; noncompliance with provisions of contracts or grant agreements, and abuse that has a material effect on the Forms MS-965. 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 reporting on the Forms MS-965 or on compliance and other matters; accordingly, we express no such opinions.

A deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the Forms MS-965 will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control over reporting on the Forms MS-965 was for the limited purpose of expressing an opinion on whether the Forms MS-965 are presented in accordance with the criteria described above and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our engagement we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Independent Auditor's Report (Continued)

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Forms MS-965 are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County's compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of amounts on the Forms MS-965. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our engagement, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed the following instances of noncompliance that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*:

- Failure To Obtain Project Approval.
- Noncompliance With Advertising And Bidding Requirements.

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the municipality's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund money is spent in accordance with the laws and regulations identified in the Background section of this report and the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9*. This report is not suitable for any other purpose.

We appreciate the courtesy extended by the City of Hazleton, Luzerne County, to us during the course of our examination. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michael B. Kashishian, CPA, CGAP, CFE, Director, Bureau of County Audits, at 717-787-1363.



Eugene A. DePasquale
Auditor General

July 9, 2019

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CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
BACKGROUND
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Background

The Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law, Act 655 of 1956, as amended, (72 P.S. § 2615.5 et seq.), provides municipalities other than counties (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: (1) 50 percent on the municipality's proportion of local road mileage to the total local road mileage in the state, and (2) 50 percent on the proportion of a municipality's population to the total population in the state.

The Vehicle Code, Title 75 P.S. § 9511, provides municipalities with annual maintenance payments to be received from the Motor License Fund for functionally local highways that were transferred to a municipality from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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).
2. Make deposits and payments or expenditures in compliance with Act 655 of 1956, 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 into the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
BACKGROUND
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Background (Continued)

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.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2017 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Expenditure Summary</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments (Note 4)</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
Minor equipment purchases	\$ 8,752.95	\$ -	\$ 8,752.95
Computer/Computer related training	-	-	-
Major equipment purchases	232,195.65	-	232,195.65
Agility projects	-	-	-
Cleaning streets and gutters	-	-	-
Winter maintenance services	184,925.76	-	184,925.76
Traffic control devices	91,414.18	7,408.69	98,822.87
Street lighting	115,376.49	(7,408.69)	107,967.80
Storm sewers and drains	6,720.20	-	6,720.20
Repairs of tools and machinery	101,957.67	-	101,957.67
Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges	66,525.58	-	66,525.58
Highway construction and rebuilding projects	132,927.01	-	132,927.01
Miscellaneous (Bank service charges)	8.00	-	8.00
 Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	 <u>\$ 940,803.49</u>	 <u>\$ -</u>	 <u>\$ 940,803.49</u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2017 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Fund Balance</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
1. Balance, January 1, 2017	\$ 486,543.70	\$ -	\$ 486,543.70
Receipts:			
2. State allocation	769,332.94	-	769,332.94
2a. Turnback allocation	-	-	-
2b. Interest on investments (Note 3)	602.66	-	602.66
2c. Miscellaneous (Note 5)	8,993.40	-	8,993.40
	<u>855.28</u>		
3. Total receipts	<u>778,929.00</u>	-	<u>778,929.00</u>
4. Total funds available	<u>1,265,472.70</u>	-	<u>1,265,472.70</u>
5. Expenditures (Section 1)	<u>940,803.49</u>	-	<u>940,803.49</u>
6. Balance, December 31, 2017	<u><u>\$ 324,669.21</u></u>	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 324,669.21</u></u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2017 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Equipment Balance</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$ 478,174.12	\$ -	\$ 478,174.12
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)	153,866.59	-	153,866.59
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition	632,040.71	-	632,040.71
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures	<u>232,195.65</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>232,195.65</u>
6. Remainder	<u>399,845.06</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>399,845.06</u>
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	<u>\$ 324,669.21</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 324,669.21</u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2018 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 1
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Expenditure Summary</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments (Note 4)</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
Minor equipment purchases	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00
Computer/Computer related training	899.00	-	899.00
Major equipment purchases	314,848.00	-	314,848.00
Agility projects	-	-	-
Cleaning streets and gutters	8,104.25	-	8,104.25
Winter maintenance services	161,953.82	-	161,953.82
Traffic control devices	35,492.90	30,967.67	66,460.57
Street lighting	181,522.03	(30,995.74)	150,526.29
Storm sewers and drains	658.25	-	658.25
Repairs of tools and machinery	99,643.92	-	99,643.92
Maintenance and repair of roads and bridges	252,901.29	-	252,901.29
Highway construction and rebuilding projects	-	-	-
Miscellaneous (Note 6)	5,028.00	(28.00)	5,000.00
 Total (To Section 2, Line 5)	 <u>\$ 1,064,051.46</u>	 <u>\$ (56.07)</u>	 <u>\$ 1,063,995.39</u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2018 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 2
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Fund Balance</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
1. Balance, January 1, 2018	\$ 324,669.21	\$ -	\$ 324,669.21
Receipts:			
2. State allocation	806,651.25	-	806,651.25
2a. Turnback allocation	-	-	-
2b. Interest on investments (Note 3)	4,679.21	-	4,679.21
2c. Miscellaneous (Note 5)	<u>251,673.83</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>251,673.83</u>
3. Total receipts	<u>1,063,004.29</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,063,004.29</u>
4. Total funds available	<u>1,387,673.50</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,387,673.50</u>
5. Expenditures (Section 1)	<u>1,064,051.46</u>	<u>(56.07)</u>	<u>1,063,995.39</u>
6. Balance, December 31, 2018	<u><u>\$ 323,622.04</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 56.07</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 323,678.11</u></u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 2018 FORM MS-965 – SECTION 3
 WITH ADJUSTMENTS

<u>Equipment Balance</u>	<u>Reported</u>	<u>Adjustments (Note 4)</u>	<u>Adjusted Amount</u>
1. Prior year equipment balance	\$ 324,669.21	\$ -	\$ 324,669.21
2. Add: Current year equipment allocation (20% of Lines 2 + 2a, Section 2)	161,330.25	-	161,330.25
3. PENNDOT approved adjustments	<u>-</u>	<u>197,446.00</u>	<u>197,446.00</u>
4. Total funds available for equipment acquisition	485,999.46	197,446.00	683,445.46
5. Less: Major equipment expenditures	<u>314,848.00</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>314,848.00</u>
6. Remainder	<u>171,151.46</u>	<u>197,446.00</u>	<u>368,597.46</u>
7. Equipment balance available for subsequent year (Lesser of Line 6 or Section 2 balance, but not less than zero)	<u>\$ 171,151.46</u>	<u>\$ 152,526.65</u>	<u>\$ 323,678.11</u>

Notes to Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are an integral part of this report.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 NOTES TO FORMS MS-965 WITH ADJUSTMENTS
 FOR THE PERIOD
 JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

1. Criteria

Section 1

This section 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:

2014	2015/2016	2017	2018
\$10,300.00	\$10,500.00	\$10,700.00	\$10,900.00

- 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:

2014	2015/2016	2017	2018
\$10,300.00	\$10,500.00	\$10,700.00	\$10,900.00

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

Section 2

This section 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.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
NOTES TO FORMS MS-965 WITH ADJUSTMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

1. Criteria (Continued)

Section 2 (Continued)

- Expenditures include the total transferred from Section 1.

Section 3

This section 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.

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 Forms MS-965 have been prepared in accordance with reporting requirements prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation as a result of the Fuels Tax Act 655, dated 1956 and as amended, which does not constitute a complete presentation of the entity's assets, liabilities, expenses, and fund balance. Accordingly, the presentation of Forms MS-965 With Adjustments is restricted to the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund, which represents a segment of the entity.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
NOTES TO FORMS MS-965 WITH ADJUSTMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

1. Criteria (Continued)

Basis Of Accounting

The accompanying Forms MS-965 With Adjustments are 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.

2. Deposits

The Third Class City Code, Title 53 P.S. § 36804.1, authorizes the city to deposit its funds in the following:

- Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits, other than certificates of deposit or share accounts, of institutions having their principal place of business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or other like insurance. For any amount above the insured maximum, the depository shall pledge approved collateral.
- Certificates of deposit purchased from institutions insured by the FDIC or other like insurance to the extent that such accounts are so insured. For any amounts in excess of the insured maximum, such deposits shall be collateralized by a pledge or assignment of assets. Certificates of deposit may not exceed 20 percent of a bank's total capital surplus or 20 percent of a savings and loan or savings bank's assets minus liabilities.

Deposits consist of receipts and deposits in a financial institution. Pennsylvania statutes require all deposits to be insured and, for any amount above the insured maximum, to be secured with approved collateral as defined.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
NOTES TO FORMS MS-965 WITH ADJUSTMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

2. Deposits (Continued)

There were no deposits exposed to custodial credit risk as of December 31, 2018. Custodial credit risk, as defined by GASB No. 40, as amended, includes deposits that are not covered by depository insurance and the deposits are uncollateralized, collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution, or collateralized with securities held by the pledging financial institution's trust department or agent but not in the municipality's name.

Fund Balance

The fund balance as of December 31, 2018, consists of the following:

Cash	<u>\$323,678.11</u>
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3. Interest On Investments

Our examination disclosed that the municipality deposited idle liquid fuels tax money in an interest-bearing account which earned \$602.66 during 2017, and \$4,679.21 during 2018, thus providing additional funds for road maintenance and repairs.

4. Adjustments

2017 - Section 1

Adjustments were made to "Traffic control devices" and "Street lighting" because expenditures of \$7,408.69 were misclassified.

2018 - Section 1

An adjustments of \$30,967.67 was made to "Traffic control devices" because these expenditures were misclassified as street lighting.

An adjustment of \$(30,995.74) was made to "Street lighting" because expenditures of \$30,967.67 for traffic control devices were misclassified and these expenditures were overstated by \$28.07.

An adjustment of \$(28.00) was made to "Miscellaneous" because these expenditures were overstated.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 NOTES TO FORMS MS-965 WITH ADJUSTMENTS
 FOR THE PERIOD
 JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

4. Adjustments (Continued)

2018 - Section 3

An adjustment of \$197,446.00 was made to “PENNDOT approved adjustments” because a reimbursement for equipment was not reported as an approved adjustment.

5. Miscellaneous Receipts

The following miscellaneous receipts were deposited into the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund during the examination period:

<u>Source</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Housing development	Reimbursement for street lights	\$1,281.22	\$ 808.09
Various	Reimbursement for traffic light	1,055.18	1,897.98
Various	Sale of emulsion	6,657.00	-
Vendor	Rebate	-	510.41
Vendor	Share of street restoration	-	42,938.50
General Fund	Deposit in error (Note 6)	-	5,000.00
Insurance company	Insurance settlement	-	3,072.85
General Fund	Reimbursement for street sweeper	-	197,446.00
	Total	<u>\$8,993.40</u>	<u>\$251,673.83</u>

6. Deposit in Error

On March 29, 2018, the municipality deposited \$5,000.00 into its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund in error. On December 31, 2018, the municipality transferred this amount from its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund to its General Fund to correct the deposit in error.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Finding No. 1 - Failure To Obtain Project Approval

Our examination disclosed that the municipality expended \$75,103.90 for paving on Diamond Avenue and Thompson Street. The municipality must obtain the approval of the Department of Transportation before paving of one inch or greater is done. However, the municipality could not provide us with documentation of the depth of the paving and did not file an application with the Department of Transportation for the project and also failed to submit specifications for approval.

The Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* contains the policies and procedures for the administration of the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund. *Publication 9*, Chapter Two, Section 2.7.2, states that nonpermissible expenditures include "Construction and reconstruction projects without prior PENNDOT approval."

Additionally, *Publication 9*, Chapter Two, Section 2.8, states, in part:

The following criteria is used to determine when a project is required for work on local roads utilizing Liquid Fuels Tax Funds, when construction, reconstruction and/or resurfacing work exceeds one inch or more in depth as well as other activities.

Other:	Reconstruction, such as removal and replacement of one inch or more of existing road metal, including base and surface. This would include cold-mill recycling and reclamation work
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The failure to comply with the Department of Transportation's *Publication 9* could result in the municipality having to reimburse \$75,103.90 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

Recommendations

We recommend that the municipality reimburse \$75,103.90 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification by the Department of Transportation.

We further recommend that before the municipality expends money on a project, it applies for and obtains prior approval for the project, and when the project is completed it obtains approval of the completed work.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Finding No. 1 - Failure To Obtain Project Approval (Continued)

Management's Response

The city administrator stated:

In what was considered an emergency, but ultimately not handled in technically correct emergency procedures, the city incorrectly used these funds. The city accepts this finding and will immediately reimburse its highway aid fund.

Auditor's Conclusion

The municipality did not provide documentation to support that this was an emergency repair. During our next examination we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations.

CITY OF HAZLETON
 LUZERNE COUNTY
 LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
 FOR THE PERIOD
 JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Finding No. 2 - Noncompliance With Advertising And Bidding Requirements

Our examination disclosed that the city expended \$35,074.74 during 2018 from the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund for the road construction without advertising for bids. These expenditures were as follows:

<u>Invoice Number</u>	<u>Invoice Date</u>	<u>Check Number</u>	<u>Check Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
29894	07/27/18	3261	09/14/18	\$11,169.08
29912	07/30/18	3261	09/14/18	11,791.43
29913	07/30/18	3261	09/14/18	12,114.23
Total				<u>\$35,074.74</u>

The above expenditures were not made in compliance with the advertising, bidding, and contract requirements of *The Third Class City Code*, 53 P.S. § 36901(b), (also found at § 1901 of *The Third Class City Code* as published by the Local Government Commission), which requires that purchases over \$18,500.00 during 2012 must be advertised, bid, and awarded by contract. The bidding threshold increased to purchases over \$19,700 for 2017, \$20,100.00 for 2018, and \$20,600.00 for 2019. *The Third Class City Code*, 53 P.S. § 36902, and § 1902 of *The Third Class City Code* as published by the Local Government Commission further states that advertising, bidding and contract requirements should not be evaded through piecemeal purchases.

The expenditures in this finding are included in Finding No. 1

The failure to follow *The Third Class City Code* could result in the city having to reimburse \$35,074.74 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund.

Recommendations

If the Department of Transportation does not require reimbursement for Finding No. 1, we recommend that the city reimburse \$35,074.74 to its Liquid Fuels Tax Fund upon official notification by the Department of Transportation.

We further recommend that, in the future, the city complies with *The Third Class City Code* as noted in this finding.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

Finding No. 2 - Noncompliance With Advertising And Bidding Requirements (Continued)

Management's Response

The city administrator stated:

In what was considered an emergency, but ultimately not handled in technically correct emergency procedures, the city incorrectly used these funds. The city accepts this finding and will immediately reimburse its highway aid fund.

Auditor's Conclusion

The municipality did not provide documentation to support that this was an emergency repair. During our next examination we will determine if the municipality complied with our recommendations.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
SUMMARY OF EXIT CONFERENCE
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

An exit conference was held May 31, 2019. Those participating were:

CITY OF HAZLETON

Daniel Lynch, City Administrator

DEPARTMENT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Mr. Vernon J. Brennan, Auditor

The results of the examination were presented and discussed in their entirety.

CITY OF HAZLETON
LUZERNE COUNTY
LIQUID FUELS TAX FUND
REPORT DISTRIBUTION
FOR THE PERIOD
JANUARY 1, 2017 TO DECEMBER 31, 2018

This report was initially distributed to:

The Honorable Leslie Richards
Secretary
Department of Transportation

City of Hazleton
Luzerne County
40 North Church Street
Hazleton, PA 18201

The Honorable Jeffrey Cusat
Mayor

Mr. Daniel Lynch
City Administrator

Mr. Alan F. Wufsus
Civil Engineer Technician

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.