



OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

1230 Municipal Services Building
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19102

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Sept. 15, 2026

Illegal Dumping Costs City Almost \$9M Annually to Clean Up

City Controller's latest monthly report reviews impact of illegal dumping & the neighborhoods most impacted

PHILADELPHIA – City Controller Christy Brady's latest monthly Municipal Money Matters report issued today finds that illegal dumping costs Philadelphia almost \$9 million each year in cleanup expenses.

In Fiscal Year 2025, the city cleaned up nearly 14,000 tons of illegally dumped material. A statewide study estimates that it costs \$619 per ton to clean up illegal dumping, which accounts for the costs associated with labor, equipment operation, and proper disposal associated with remediating illegal dump sites.

"Illegal dumping is more than just a neighborhood eyesore, it carries a significant cost for Philadelphia taxpayers," said Brady.

From 2014 to 2025, almost 210,000 illegal dumping reports were submitted to the city, according to the city's 311 data. Neighborhoods that span Kensington, Juniata Park and Port Richmond experienced the most illegal dumping incidents, representing about 9% of the total reports submitted. The following ZIP codes recorded the highest number of illegal dumping reports over the 11-year period reviewed:

ZIP	Neighborhoods Impacted	Total Illegal Dumping Reports
19134	Kensington, Juniata Park and Port Richmond	17,359
19140	Hunting Park, Tioga, Nicetown, Fairhill	12,624
19146	Point Breeze, Grays Ferry, Graduate Hospital	11,948
19148	East Passyunk, Pennsport, Packer Park, Marconi Plaza	10,111
19132	Strawberry Mansion, Allegheny West	9,170

"Repeated dumping is particularly challenging at sites that are cleaned, only to have trash and debris dumped there again," said Brady. "This cycle creates ongoing costs for the city while affecting the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods."

In November 2025, the city launched the Illegal Dumping Task Force, coordinating multiple city agencies and using surveillance, enforcement, and legal actions against those involved in illegal dumping. The city's current budget allocates almost \$3 million to fill up to 56 positions for the Illegal Dumping Crew. The budget also includes about \$170,000 to hire vendors to help manage short-dumping enforcement.

In March 2025, the Streets Department testified that more than 300 cameras were installed to combat illegal dumping, with city data showing more than 100 additional cameras installed in 2025 and 2026. Additionally, the city strengthened penalties for illegal dumping, with fines up to \$5,000 per violation.

In addition, the city reported seeking \$3.2 million in legal judgments against illegal dumpers in 2025 and another \$908,000 through April 2026. However, city officials reported that only \$70,000 has been collected, according to statements made by city officials during the latest budget hearings.

“Collecting money from illegal dumpers remains a challenge. While the city is pursuing many efforts and initiatives, illegal dumping continues to require significant public resources. Reducing the ongoing costs of illegal dumping will require a continued focus on prevention, enforcement and holding illegal dumpers accountable.”

The September 2026 Municipal Money Matters report is available on the City Controller's website: controller.phila.gov/

###