



Solid Waste Frequently Asked Questions

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Do I need garbage service?

Yes. According to San Francisco Health Code, Article 6, Section 291.1, the owner of any dwelling or commercial property is required to subscribe to and pay for approved adequate refuse collection service. This service must be provided by a licensed refuse collection company. ([back to top](#))

What is a refuse lien?

A lien is a legal claim or a "hold" on real property, whether personal or real property, making it collateral against monies or services owed to another person or entity. In this case, a lien is placed on the property due to an unpaid or delinquent payment for garbage service. ([back to top](#))

Why was a refuse lien placed on my property?

When a bill for garbage service goes unpaid or is delinquent, the Department of Public Health makes a payment for the past due service period for the tenant or property owner to either Sunset Scavenger or Golden Gate Disposal. The

Department of Public Health then places a lien on the property to recover the payment from the property owner. ([back to top](#))

How can I avoid having a lien recorded against my property?

If you received a Notice of a Recorded Delinquent Refuse Service Payment Lien from the S.F. Health Department, a lien has already been recorded against the property. The lien will be scheduled to be released once the full payment has been made to our office. To avoid having future refuse liens recorded against your property, be sure to make timely payments on your garbage service bills to either Sunset Scavenger or Golden Gate Disposal. Check which one is your garbage service provider (see next question). ([back to top](#))

Who should I contact if I have any questions or disputes regarding my garbage service or garbage service payments?

You must contact your garbage service provider. Sunset Scavenger: (415) 330-1300 or Golden Gate Disposal: (415) 626-4000. ([back to top](#))

I recently made a payment to the garbage company, why did I still get a lien?

When payment is made to the garbage company for a service period that is past due, the payment is credited towards a **future (or following) service period**. Your late garbage bill payment cannot be applied to a past due period. If payment is not made by the determined due date, a lien is placed on the property in which case the delinquent amount plus an administrative fee will be owed to the Department of Public Health. ([back to top](#))

I am a property owner, why was a lien placed on my property for my tenant's delinquent garbage payment?

The property owner is held responsible for any delinquent garbage service payments on the property. ([back to top](#))

When is a refuse lien released?

Lien releases generally are processed on a monthly basis and only once a month, after payment is received. ([back to top](#))

What happens if I don't pay the refuse lien?

If the lien is not paid, interest will accrue on all charges and fees due at a rate of 1.5% monthly, one month from the date of recordation of the lien until the end of the fiscal year (July 1-June 30). At the end of the current fiscal year, the amount of the lien will automatically transfer over to the property taxes and will appear on your property tax statement as a special assessment item # 70 (SA-70) or #71 (SA-71). ([back to top](#))

How do I request a demand for a lien payoff?

If you are a title or escrow company, you may fax your demand to (415) 252-3875. Please provide the property address and parcel (block/lot) information, title or escrow company name and address, escrow officer name, escrow #, phone #, e-mail and fax to expedite the process. ([back to top](#))

How do I get information regarding past refuse liens?

Contact the Assessor-Recorder's main office at: (415) 554-5596. ([back to top](#))

How and where do I make a refuse lien payment?

There are two ways to make a lien payment: (1) in person at our office or (2) mail in payment. Office location and payment address is: Solid Waste Program, Attn: Refuse Lien Unit, 1390 Market Street, Suite 210, San Francisco, CA 94102. Make check or money order payable to "SFDPH"; **cash and credit card payments are not accepted**. You must include the bottom portion of the notice with your payment or include the block/lot parcel and invoice # on the payment. **Partial payments will not be accepted**. If paying in person, please see the following question. Please refer to the next question for our office hours. ([back to top](#))

What are the Solid Waste Program's office hours?

We are open Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and closed from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM. You may also contact our office at (415) 252-3872. We are closed on City observed, legal holidays. ([back to top](#))

As a property owner, how do I change my mailing address?

Contact the Assessor-Recorder's main office at: (415) 554-5596 or using their website www.sfassessor.org under "Other Information," click on Forms. For a direct link to the form, click on the following: <http://sfassessor.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=584>. ([back to top](#))

Why did I receive a Notice to Subscribe to Licensed Refuse Collection Service?

Your property address was forwarded to us by the refuse collection company as being in violation of San Francisco Health Code, Article 6, Section 291.1, which states that the subscription and payment of approved Adequate Licensed Refuse Collection Service is required. If a property is vacant or you believe the notice was sent in error, contact the investigator listed on your Notice. If you fail to contact the investigator within 15 days, the Department of Public Health may initiate service for the addressed property. ([back to top](#))

Why did I receive a garbage bill if I did not subscribe to garbage service?

Failure to arrange for adequate refuse collection service within 15 days of the initial Notice to Subscribe letter may result in service being initiated by the Department of Public Health with the property owner responsible for the charges. ([back to top](#))