

ELITE 360 LIFE | DULUTH, GEORGIA

THE NORTH ATLANTA HAIR REMOVAL COST STUDY

What Gwinnett and Forsyth County Women Actually Spend on Temporary Methods — and What Permanent Electrolysis Costs by Comparison

2026 | A Research Report by Elite 360 Life

Expert commentary: Teresa, Owner | Elite 360 Life | Duluth, Georgia | 31 Years of Experience

Data: U.S. FDA | U.S. Census Bureau | BLS Consumer Expenditure Survey | Industry pricing data

\$15,000+ lifetime waxing cost (facial hair only)	\$400–\$3,000 electrolysis one-time cost	64.5% Gwinnett non-white- alone population	\$67M+ annual hair removal spend in two counties	Most clients learn FDA facts first from Teresa
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Most North Atlanta women have spent years — and thousands of dollars — on hair removal methods that were never going to permanently solve the problem. Shaving, waxing, and plucking are subscriptions with no endpoint. Laser treatments are classified by the FDA not as permanent hair removal but as permanent hair reduction — a distinction most consumers have never encountered. And for the majority of women in Gwinnett County, one of the most diverse counties in the Southeast, laser's clinical limitations on darker skin tones and lighter hair colors make it an even less reliable option.

This report combines FDA regulatory data, U.S. Census Bureau demographic data for Gwinnett and Forsyth County, Bureau of Labor Statistics consumer spending data, and 31 years of clinical observation from Teresa, owner of Elite 360 Life in Duluth, Georgia, to produce the first locally-specific analysis of what North Atlanta women actually spend on hair removal — and what the permanent alternative costs by comparison.

The headline finding: a North Atlanta woman who relies on facial waxing for 35 years will spend an estimated **\$11,200–\$24,500** on a single area — while permanent electrolysis for the same area typically costs **\$400–\$3,000 once**, and never again. The information gap that keeps most women from making this comparison is, according to Teresa, almost universal: most new clients learn for the first time in their consultation that electrolysis and laser are not equivalent options, and that only one is recognized by the FDA as achieving permanent hair removal.

THE 5 KEY FINDINGS

FINDING 1	Electrolysis is the only method the FDA recognizes as permanent hair removal — laser is classified only as permanent hair reduction
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FDA: Permanent

The FDA's official classification for electrolysis — the only method designated as permanent hair removal. Laser devices are cleared for 'permanent hair reduction,' meaning significant reduction but not complete or permanent removal.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration draws an explicit distinction between electrolysis and laser hair removal that most consumers have never seen. Electrolysis — which destroys individual hair follicles using electrical current — is the only method the FDA recognizes as achieving permanent hair removal. Laser devices are cleared for 'permanent hair reduction,' defined as a long-term, stable reduction in hair count that may not result in complete removal and may not be permanent. In practical terms: laser can significantly reduce hair in many patients, but it cannot guarantee that hair will not return, and it cannot eliminate hair in all patients — particularly those with lighter hair colors or darker skin tones. Most North Atlanta consumers use the terms interchangeably. The FDA does not.

"Most new clients are unfamiliar with the fact that electrolysis is the only FDA-recognized method for permanent hair removal. Instead, they often rely on social media for information regarding other providers' experiences. I take time during every consultation to explain the FDA classifications and the fundamental differences between electrolysis and laser treatments."

— Teresa, Owner — Elite 360 Life, Duluth, Georgia

FINDING 2 A North Atlanta woman who waxes her face for 35 years spends an estimated \$11,200–\$24,500 — for hair that always grows back

\$15,000+

Midpoint lifetime cost estimate for facial waxing (upper lip, brows, chin) over 35 years at \$40–\$70 per session, 8–10 sessions per year — compared to \$400–\$3,000 for permanent electrolysis of the same areas

The math of lifetime hair removal is straightforward — and most consumers have never done it. A standard facial waxing appointment covering the upper lip, brows, and chin typically costs \$40–\$70 per session. At the standard frequency of 8 to 10 sessions per year, annual facial waxing costs \$320–\$700. Over 35 years of adult life, that accumulates to \$11,200–\$24,500 spent on a single body area — with hair returning every four to six weeks, indefinitely. For women who also wax legs and bikini areas professionally, the lifetime total climbs to \$22,400–\$52,500. For women who shave, the 40-year cost of razors, shaving cream, and moisturizer runs \$12,000–\$20,640. In every case, the spending never stops because the result is never permanent. Permanent electrolysis for facial areas typically costs \$400–\$3,000 as a one-time investment — after which the treated hair does not return.

FINDING 3 Many North Atlanta women arrive at their first electrolysis consultation after experiencing complications from other methods — not to compare prices

Complications

Paradoxical hirsutism from laser (treatment-induced hair growth), burns from waxing, and discoloration and ingrown hairs from plucking — clinical complications Teresa observes regularly in new clients

The conventional framing of hair removal as a consumer choice between options of varying cost and convenience misses what Teresa observes in her Duluth practice every week. By the time most clients schedule a consultation, the decision has already been made — not by cost comparison, but by experience. They arrive after years of temporary solutions that caused problems of their own. Paradoxical hirsutism — a documented complication of laser hair removal in which the treatment stimulates increased hair growth rather than reduction, most commonly on the face and neck of patients with darker skin tones — is a clinical reality that laser providers rarely discuss in marketing. Waxing burns, while uncommon, occur when wax is applied at incorrect temperatures or over sensitized skin. Plucking and threading cause chronic discoloration and ingrown hairs in many patients over time. These are not edge cases — they are regular presentations in a North Atlanta electrolysis practice that serves one of the most diverse communities in the state. The clients who arrive at Elite 360 Life are not asking about price. They are looking for something that will finally, permanently, work.

"I generally do not focus on cost comparisons during consultations. By the time most clients come to see me, they are already seeking a definitive solution after trying other methods. Many have experienced issues like paradoxical hirsutism from laser, burns from waxing, or discoloration and ingrown hairs from plucking. At that stage, they are simply ready for a permanent solution."

— Teresa, Owner — Elite 360 Life, Duluth, Georgia

FINDING 4 In 64.5% non-white-alone Gwinnett County, electrolysis is the only method that works permanently on all skin tones, hair colors, and body areas

64.5%

Gwinnett County's non-white-alone population — one of the most diverse counties in the Southeast — for whom electrolysis offers universal efficacy that laser cannot match (U.S. Census Bureau)

Gwinnett County's demographic profile makes the electrolysis-versus-laser distinction not just a consumer preference but a clinical one. The county's population is 27.4% Black or African American (262,709 people), 13.3% Asian (127,152 people), 12.1% Some Other Race (116,276 people), and 10.7% two or more races (102,581 people). Forsyth County's Asian population at 18% is the highest share of any major Georgia county. Combined across both counties, an estimated 219,000 adult women belong to demographic groups for whom laser hair removal is clinically less effective or carries elevated risk — because laser targets melanin contrast between hair and skin, making it less reliable on darker skin tones and completely ineffective on lighter hair colors. Electrolysis uses electrical current to destroy individual follicles — a mechanism that is entirely independent of skin color, hair color, or hair texture. As Teresa notes, it is effective on eyebrows and even tattooed skin, areas where laser cannot be safely used. In the specific demographic context of North Atlanta, electrolysis is not an alternative to laser — **for a significant portion of the local population, it is the only option.**

"Electrolysis is effective for all hair colors, skin tones, and nearly any area of the body — including eyebrows and tattooed skin — which sets it apart significantly from laser technology."

— Teresa, Owner — Elite 360 Life, Duluth, Georgia

North Atlanta women spend an estimated \$67 million per year on hair removal products and services — almost entirely on methods that never permanently solve the problem

\$67M/year

Estimated annual hair removal spending by adult women in Gwinnett and Forsyth County — derived from BLS Consumer Expenditure Survey Table 1110 personal care spending data applied to the two-county adult female population

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey documents that personal care product and service spending rises with household income — and Gwinnett and Forsyth County households are concentrated in the upper income deciles where spending is highest. Gwinnett County's income profile corresponds to the 8th decile of the BLS table, where households spend \$947 per year on personal care — 23% above the national average of \$771. Forsyth County's higher incomes correspond to the 9th decile at \$1,113 per year — 44% above the national average. Applied to the estimated 380,000 adult women across both counties, total personal care spending exceeds \$373 million annually. Industry data consistently shows that hair removal products and services represent approximately 18% of personal care spending — producing an estimated \$67 million per year spent on hair removal in the two-county area. The overwhelming majority of this spending goes to temporary methods: razors, shaving products, waxing services, depilatory creams, and laser treatments that require ongoing sessions to maintain results. Permanent electrolysis — the only FDA-recognized permanent solution — represents a one-time investment that removes a category of spending entirely.

THE NUMBERS: LIFETIME COST OF HAIR REMOVAL

The following table presents the estimated lifetime cost of common hair removal methods compared to permanent electrolysis, using standard industry pricing applied to a typical adult hair removal routine over the full course of adult life.

Method	Frequency	Annual Cost	Lifetime Duration	Lifetime Total	Permanent?
Shaving (legs, underarms, bikini)	Daily	\$300–\$516	40 years	\$12,000–\$20,640	No
Facial waxing (upper lip, brows, chin)	8–10x/year	\$320–\$700	35 years	\$11,200–\$24,500	No
Professional waxing (legs + bikini)	8–10x/year	\$640–\$1,500	35 years	\$22,400–\$52,500	No
Laser hair removal (multiple sessions required)	6–8 sessions + touch-ups	\$800–\$3,000/area	Ongoing (not permanent)	\$4,000–\$15,000+	No — reduction only (FDA classification)
Electrolysis (Elite 360 Life)	Series of sessions then done permanently	One-time	Permanent — no further treatment	\$400–\$3,000	YES — only FDA-recognized method

The core comparison for facial hair: waxing for 35 years costs \$11,200–\$24,500. Permanent electrolysis for the same areas costs \$400–\$3,000 once — and then it is done. Even at the highest electrolysis cost versus the lowest waxing cost, electrolysis saves \$8,200 over a lifetime on facial hair alone.

GWINNETT COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS — WHY THIS MATTERS HERE

Laser hair removal works best on light to medium skin tones with dark, coarse hair. It is significantly less effective — and carries higher risk of hyperpigmentation — for deeper skin tones, and it cannot treat lighter or gray hair at all. Electrolysis has no such limitations. In Gwinnett County, the demographics of the community make this distinction clinically significant.

Population Group	Gwinnett County	Forsyth County	Electrolysis Relevance
White alone	35.5% (339,822)	65.1% (163,687)	All methods potentially effective
Black / African American	27.4% (262,709)	4.3% (10,721)	Electrolysis preferred — laser risk of hyperpigmentation
Asian	13.3% (127,152)	18.0% (45,203)	Electrolysis preferred — varies by skin tone and hair color
Some Other Race	12.1% (116,276)	4.1% (10,270)	Electrolysis preferred — skin tone and hair variation
Two or more races	10.7% (102,581)	8.1% (20,293)	Electrolysis universal — works regardless of combination
NON-WHITE-ALONE TOTAL	64.5%	34.9%	~219,000 adult women for whom electrolysis may be the only universally effective permanent option

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022. Electrolysis relevance assessments reflect general clinical guidance on laser hair removal efficacy by skin phototype (Fitzpatrick scale). Individual results vary. Consult a qualified electrologist for personalized guidance.

WHAT NORTH ATLANTA WOMEN SHOULD KNOW

■ The information most consumers have about hair removal is incomplete — and social media makes it worse.

Teresa observes in her Duluth practice that most new clients arrive having formed their understanding of hair removal options through social media — where laser providers dominate advertising and where the FDA regulatory distinction between 'permanent reduction' and 'permanent removal' almost never appears. The result is a widespread consumer belief that laser and electrolysis are equivalent options that differ mainly in price, speed, and pain level. The FDA's classification tells a different story.

■ The lifetime cost of 'temporary' solutions is rarely calculated — and rarely small.

Individual waxing appointments feel like modest expenses. Accumulated over decades, they represent five-figure lifetime spending on a problem that never gets permanently resolved. Most consumers have never done this calculation. This study does it for them — and the result consistently shows that permanent electrolysis is not a luxury alternative to temporary methods. Over a lifetime, it is the less expensive one.

■ For a significant portion of Gwinnett County's diverse population, electrolysis is not a preference — it's the only option.

In a county where 64.5% of residents identify as non-white alone, laser hair removal's dependence on melanin contrast creates real clinical limitations for many of the women who want permanent hair removal most. Electrolysis — which works through electrical current rather than light energy — is effective on all skin tones, all hair colors including gray and blonde, eyebrows, and even tattooed skin. These are not marketing points. They are FDA-supported clinical distinctions that make electrolysis the universally available permanent solution in a diverse community.

■ Starting with electrolysis avoids the complications that bring many clients to Teresa in the first place.

Paradoxical hirsutism, waxing burns, chronic discoloration, and ingrown hairs are not rare complications — they are regular presentations in Teresa's practice. Many clients who arrive at Elite 360 Life are not exploring options. They are recovering from the side effects of methods that were marketed as safe and effective and proved, in their experience, to be neither. Starting with electrolysis means starting with the only FDA-recognized permanent method — and avoiding the costs, discomfort, and complications of the methods that precede it for most clients.

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE ELECTROLYSIS CONSULTATION AT ELITE 360 LIFE

Teresa has 31 years of experience providing permanent hair removal for clients throughout Gwinnett and Forsyth County. Elite 360 Life in Duluth, Georgia offers electrolysis for all skin tones, all hair colors, and nearly any area of the body — including eyebrows and tattooed skin. The only FDA-recognized method for permanent hair removal, delivered by one of North Atlanta's most experienced practitioners.

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METHODOLOGY & DATA SOURCES

FDA classification: U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Consumer Updates: Removing Hair Safely. The FDA distinguishes electrolysis as the only method recognized as permanent hair removal. Laser devices are cleared for 'permanent hair reduction,' defined as long-term stable reduction in the number of terminal hairs but not necessarily complete or permanent removal.

Lifetime cost calculations: Industry pricing data for hair removal services and products, 2024–2026. Shaving cost range: \$25–\$43/month based on typical razor, shaving cream, and moisturizer expenditure; 40-year lifetime. Facial waxing: \$40–\$70/session, 8–10 sessions/year, 35-year lifetime. Professional leg and bikini waxing: \$80–\$150/session, 8–10 sessions/year, 35-year lifetime. Electrolysis: \$50–\$100/hour, 8–30 total hours for facial areas, one-time cost range \$400–\$3,000.

Demographic data: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022. Gwinnett County total population: 957,062. Forsyth County total population: 251,283. Race/ethnicity breakdowns from ACS five-year estimates. Adult women estimates apply 50.7% female share and 62% working-age (18–64) proportion to county populations.

Personal care spending: Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey, Table 1110 (Deciles of Income Before Taxes), 2021. Personal care products and services: national average \$771/year; 8th income decile (Gwinnett profile) \$947/year; 9th income decile (Forsyth profile) \$1,113/year. Hair removal subset estimated at 18% of personal care spending based on industry data.

Clinical complications: Paradoxical hirsutism is a documented complication of laser hair removal recognized in dermatology literature and acknowledged by the FDA. It refers to increased hair growth following laser treatment, most commonly occurring on facial and neck areas in patients with darker skin tones. Waxing burns and plucking-related discoloration and ingrown hairs are standard clinical presentations documented in dermatology and aesthetics practice.

Expert commentary: Teresa, owner, Elite 360 Life, Duluth, Georgia. 31 years of professional electrolysis experience. Structured expert interview, June 2026. Quotes are Teresa's direct responses, used with permission.

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