

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Tariff Revisions to  
Increase Rates Due to a Disposal Fee  
Increase Filed by

COLUMBIA RIVER DISPOSAL, INC.

Certificate G-48

DOCKET TG-180250

ORDER 01

ORDER GRANTING EXEMPTION  
FROM RULE; GRANTING LESS  
THAN STATUTORY NOTICE

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On March 26, 2018, Columbia River Disposal, Inc. (Columbia River Disposal or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its Tariff No. 8 to recover the increased cost of disposal fees. Although the tariff pages reflect an effective date of May 10, 2018, the Company requested the Commission allow the proposed changes to become effective on Less than Statutory Notice. The Company serves approximately 1,870 customers in Skamania County. The Company's last general rate increase became effective on April 1, 2018.
- 2 On January 16, 2018, the Skamania County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste and Recycling Division sent the Company notice of an increase to disposal fees from \$71.16 per ton to \$74.21 per ton at Mt. Pleasant's, Stevenson's, and Underwood's Transfer Stations effective May 1, 2018. Staff's analysis shows the Company's proposed rate increase to recover these increased fees would generate approximately \$8,350 (0.9 percent) additional annual revenue. The 45-day notice period for a May 1, 2018 effective date occurred when the Company's last rate case was in process. During the rate case, Staff and the Company agreed that the Company would wait until the revised rates were agreed upon prior to filing for the disposal fee increase. This was done to help streamline the disposal fee increase filing. It is for this reason that the Company is requesting the tariff revisions be approved with Less than Statutory Notice.
- 3 A disposal fee increase falls within the definition of a general rate increase pursuant to WAC 480-07-505. WAC 480-07-520 lists the minimum required information the Company must provide in a general rate increase filing. The Company provided information pertinent to the disposal fee increase but did not provide the remainder of the information required by the rule; instead the company requested an exemption from the work paper filing requirements of WAC 480-07-520(4).

4 WAC 480-07-110 allows the Commission to grant an exemption from or modify the  
application of its rules if consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying  
regulation, and applicable statutes.<sup>1</sup>

5 WAC 480-70-266 requires a company to provide at least 45 calendar-days' notice to the  
Commission for any filing that will result in an increase in rates or charges to customers.

6 Commission Staff reviewed the proposed tariff revisions together with other factors and  
recommends the Commission grant the Company's request that the proposed tariff  
revisions become effective May 1, 2018, on Less than Statutory Notice, and grant the  
Company an exemption from WAC 480-07-520(4), work paper filing requirements, for  
the following reasons:

- (a) The company's revised rates from its most recent rate case had not been finalized as of the 45-day notice date. The Company and Staff agreed to wait until these rates were finalized before filing for the disposal fee increase.
- (b) There have not been any significant changes since the last rate increase, which became effective on April 1, 2018. Customer numbers are relatively unchanged, inflation has been low, and the Company has not changed its collection methods.
- (c) The increased disposal fees are set by the Skamania County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste and Recycling Division and are required as a part of the Company's operations.
- (d) The Company's financial information supports the proposed revenue requirement and the proposed rates.
- (e) Staff concluded the proposed rate increase, by reason of the increase in disposal fees, is fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.

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<sup>1</sup> See also WAC 480-70-051.

## DISCUSSION

7 The Commission concurs with Staff's recommendation. The purpose of the work paper filing requirements in WAC 480-07-520(4) is to provide the Commission with information to determine whether a proposed rate increase is fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. Here, the Company has provided sufficient information to enable the Commission to make that determination, and providing the additional information the rule requires would be unnecessary and unduly burdensome. Accordingly, an exemption from this requirement for purposes of the filing in this docket is consistent with the public interest and the purposes underlying the rule and should be granted. We also find it reasonable to grant the Company's request to allow the tariff revisions to become effective on May 1, 2018, on Less than Statutory Notice, to allow the Company to begin recovering the increased disposal fees that also become effective on that date.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate the rates, rules, regulations, practices, and accounts of public service companies, including solid waste companies.
- 9 (2) Columbia River Deposal is engaged in the business of providing solid waste services within the state of Washington and is a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 10 (3) Columbia River Deposal is subject to the filing requirements of WAC 480-07-520, for general rate increase proposals. The Company did not file the work papers required by WAC 480-07-520(4); instead, it requested an exemption from the requirement.
- 11 (4) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 26, 2018.
- 12 (5) An exemption from general rate increase filing requirements set forth in WAC 480-07-520(4) for the filing in this docket is in the public interest and is consistent with the purposes underlying the regulation and applicable statutes and should be granted.

- 13 (6) It is in the public interest to allow the revisions to Tariff No. 8 filed on March 26, 2018, to become effective on May 1, 2018, on less than statutory notice.

**ORDER**

- 14 **THE COMMISSION GRANTS** Columbia River Disposal, Inc.'s request for an exemption from WAC 480-07-520(4), for purposes of the tariff revisions filed in Docket TG-180250 on March 26, 2018, and grants the Company's request to allow the revisions to become effective on May 1, 2018, on less than statutory notice.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective April 26, 2018.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary