

Agenda Date: May 23, 2007
Item Number: B1

Docket: TG-070525
Company Name: Waste Management of Washington, Inc., d/b/a Waste Management of Greater Wenatchee, G-237

Staff: Layne Demas, Regulatory Analyst
John Cupp, Consumer Program Staff

Recommendation

1. Dismiss the Complaint and Order Suspending the Tariff Revisions filed by Waste Management of Washington, Inc., d/b/a Waste Management of Greater Wenatchee.
2. Make the temporary rates permanent effective June 1, 2007.

Discussion

On March 15, 2007, Waste Management of Washington, Inc., d/b/a Waste Management of Greater Wenatchee, G-237 (Greater Wenatchee or company) filed a general rate increase for solid waste service. The overall impact of the filing was approximately \$748,000 (15.4 percent). Staff's review of Greater Wenatchee's operations revealed that some proposed rates were excessive. On April 16, 2007, the company filed revised rates at the staff recommended level. The revised rates generate approximately \$725,500 (13.4 percent). The company serves approximately 12,500 customers in parts of Douglas, Chelan, and Grant counties.

Twenty-five customers commented on this filing. Seventeen are opposed, saying the proposed increase is too drastic and rates are already too high. Several of these customers said they are seniors on fixed incomes, and the increase will be hard on them. One customer said she understands the need for an increase. Several customers commented on issues that the commission does not regulate, such as landfill disposal fees.

On April 27, 2007, the commission entered a Complaint and Order Suspending Tariff Revisions to allow customers the opportunity to comment on the revised rates before determining whether the revisions were fair, just reasonable, and sufficient. The commission allowed the revised rates to go into effect on a temporary basis May 1, 2007.

On May 7, 2007, a letter was sent to twenty-five customers who expressed an interest in this filing. The letter showed current, proposed and revised rates. It also made customers aware of a decision at the April 27, 2007, commission open meeting, to allow the revised rates on a temporarily basis effective May 1, 2007. Customers were also informed that the commission would decide whether to make the revised rates permanent at the May 23, 2007, open meeting. Only one additional comment was received from a customer who still feels the revised rates are too high.

The current and proposed rates are shown below:

	Present Rates	Proposed Rates	Revised Rates
Residential - monthly rate			
Mini can	\$ 6.10	\$ 7.40	n/a
One 32 gal. can per week	\$ 7.90	\$ 9.50	\$ 9.40
One 64 gal toter per week	\$12.70	\$15.30	\$15.10
One 96 gal. toter per week	\$16.30	\$19.60	\$19.40
Commercial - per pickup			
One yard container	\$11.30	\$13.80	n/a
Two yard container	\$17.80	\$21.70	n/a
Dropbox per haul 15-50 yard	\$101.70	\$106.90	n/a

Conclusion

Staff recommends that the commission dismiss the Complaint and Order Suspending the Tariff Revisions filed by Greater Wenatchee and make the temporary rates permanent effective June 1, 2007.