

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,)	DOCKET TG-121791
)	
Complainant,)	ORDER 01
)	
v.)	
)	
MASON COUNTY GARBAGE CO., INC., dba MASON COUNTY GARBAGE - G-88)	
)	COMPLAINT AND ORDER
)	SUSPENDING TARIFF; ALLOWING
Respondent.)	RATES ON A TEMPORARY BASIS,
.....)	SUBJECT TO REFUND

BACKGROUND

- 1 On November 13, 2012, and December 3, 2012, Mason County Garbage Co., Inc., dba Mason County Garbage (Mason or Company), filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its currently effective Tariff No. 13. Mason proposes a general rate increase for residential, commercial, and drop box garbage, and recycling service due, in part, to a January 1, 2013, increase in Mason County disposal fees. Mason’s proposed rates were designed to increase revenues by approximately \$387,000 (13 percent) annually. The stated effective date is January 1, 2013.
- 2 Staff has not completed its analysis of the Company’s proposed rates and recommends that the Commission suspend the November 13, 2012, and December 3, 2012, tariff filings.
- 3 If the Commission suspends a tariff that includes rates to recover disposal fees, RCW 81.77.160 requires the Commission to allow the rates related to the disposal fees to become effective on the originally filed effective date on an interim basis, subject to refund, pending the Commission’s final order.
- 4 On December 19, 2012, the Company filed revised rates to recover just the disposal fee increase portion of the proposed rates. The revenue impact is approximately \$11,000 (0.44 percent) of additional annual revenue. Staff recommends that the Commission

suspend the tariff revisions filed on December 19, 2012, and allow them to become effective on January 1, 2013, on a temporary basis, subject to refund.

5 Mason notified its customers of the proposed rate increase by mail on November 30, 2012. The Commission received one comment from a customer concerning Mason's original November 13, 2012, filing.

6 The proposed rates, filed November 13, 2012, December 3, 2012, and December 19, 2012, might injuriously affect the rights and interests of the public. The Commission therefore suspends the tariff filings on November 13, December 3, 2012, and December 19, 2012, and allows the revised rates for only increased disposal fees filed on December 19, 2012, to become effective on January 1, 2013, on a temporary basis, subject to refund.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

7 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, regulations, practices, accounts and affiliated interests of public service companies, including solid waste companies. RCW 80.01.040, RCW 81.01, RCW 81.04, RCW 81.16, RCW 81.28 and RCW 81.77.

8 (2) Mason is a solid waste company and a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.

9 (3) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 27, 2012.

10 (4) The tariff revisions Mason filed on November 13, 2012, and December 3, 2012, increase rates for residential and commercial garbage, drop box collection and recycling services. The revised tariff pages filed on December 19, 2012, increase rates to recover only disposal fees.

11 (5) Mason has not yet demonstrated that the proposed rates are fair, just, reasonable and sufficient. The Commission finds it reasonable to allow the revised rates to recover just the disposal fee increase filed on December 19, 2012, to become effective January 1, 2013, on a temporary basis, subject to refund.

- 12 (6) In addition, the Commission invokes the rights, remedies and procedures contained in the reparations statute; RCW 81.04.220, to the extent the Commission finds that any rate subject to this investigation is excessive or exorbitant.
- 13 (7) Mason may be required to pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to such an investigation consistent with RCW 81.20.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 (1) The tariff revisions filed by Mason County Garbage Co., Inc., dba Mason County Garbage, on November 13, 2012, December 3, 2012, and December 19, 2012, are suspended.
- 15 (2) The proposed revised tariffs Mason County Garbage Co., Inc., dba Mason County Garbage, filed on December 19, 2012, which recover only the increased cost of disposal fees, shall become effective on January 1, 2013, on a temporary basis, subject to refund if the Commission determines that different rates will be fair, just, reasonable and sufficient.
- 16 (3) The Commission may hold hearings if needed at such times and places as required.
- 17 (4) Mason County Garbage Co., Inc., dba Mason County Garbage, must not change or alter the tariff pages filed in this docket during the suspension period, unless the Commission authorizes the change in this docket.
- 18 (5) The Commission will institute an investigation of Mason County Garbage Co., Inc.'s books, accounts, practices, activities, property and operations as necessary and as described above.
- 19 (6) Mason County Garbage Co., Inc., dba Mason County Garbage, shall pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to the Commission's investigation, consistent with RCW 81.20.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective December 27, 2012.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

JEFFREY D. GOLTZ, Chairman

PATRICK J. OSHIE, Commissioner

PHILIP B. JONES, Commissioner