

Agenda Date: May 27, 2016
Item Number: B3

Docket: TG-160424
Company Name: Columbia River Disposal, Inc. Certificate No. G-48

Staff: Scott Sevall, Regulatory Services
Ann LaRue, Regulatory Services
John Cupp, Consumer Protection

Recommendation

Take no action, thereby allowing Tariff No. 8 filed by Columbia River Disposal, Inc., on April 15, 2016, and revised on May 19, 2016, to become effective June 1, 2016, by operation of law.

Discussion

On April 15, 2015, Columbia River Disposal, Inc., (Columbia River or company), filed Tariff No. 8 with the Utilities and Transportation Commission (commission) that would generate approximately \$164,000 (18.5 percent) additional annual revenue. The proposed rates are intended to recover increased costs for wages, employee benefits, disposal fees, and other operating costs. The company's last general rate case became effective on September 1, 2015. The company serves approximately 1,800 regulated customers in Skamania County.

Staff has completed its review of the company's supporting documents and records and found the company demonstrated a need for \$156,000 (17.6 percent) additional annual revenue. The company agreed to the lower revenue requirement and filed revised pages on May 19, 2016. Staff finds the revised rates to be fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.

SAMPLE RATE COMPARISON

	Current Rate	Proposed Rate	Percent Change		Revised Rate (Staff Proposed)	Revised Rate Percent Change
Residential Garbage						
1 Can - Weekly Pickup	\$16.47	\$19.86	20.6%		\$19.47	18.2%
60 Gallon Toter - Weekly Pickup	\$33.34	\$40.20	20.6%		\$39.35	18.0%
Commercial Garbage						
1.5 yard Container Per - Pickup	\$20.82	\$25.10	20.6%		\$24.64	18.3%
4 yard Container Per - Pickup	\$45.74	\$55.15	20.6%		\$54.16	18.4%
Roll-Off Garbage						
20 Yard Drop Box First Pickup	\$132.00	\$159.17	20.6%		\$155.28	17.6%

Customer Comments

On April 30, 2016, the company notified its customers by mail of the proposed rate increase. Customers were notified that they may access relevant documents about this rate increase on the commission's website, and that they may contact John Cupp at 1-888-333-9882 or jcupp@utc.wa.gov with questions or concerns. Staff received three customer comments.

General Comments

- Two customers stated the company has increased its rates more recently than it indicates in the customer notice.

Staff Response

Staff explained the difference between disposal-fee increases and other types of pass-through increases, and this increase. Staff explained state law requires rates to be fair, just, reasonable and sufficient to allow the company to recover reasonable operating expenses and the opportunity to earn a reasonable return on its investment. Regulatory staff reviews filings to ensure that all rates and fees are appropriate.

- A customer stated windy conditions sometimes cause containers to be blown onto the road. He believes the company should provide a more defined pickup schedule so customers will know when to retrieve their containers.

Staff Response

Conditions vary from week to week, making it difficult to predict pickup times.

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