



STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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October 28, 2021

Ryan Dicks
 Pierce County Sustainable Resources Administrator
 2702 S 42nd St, Suite 201
 Tacoma, WA 98409

**RE: Tacoma-Pierce County Solid Waste Management Plan Cost Assessment Questionnaire
 TG-210724**

Dear Ryan Dicks:

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) has completed its review of the revised cost assessment questionnaire for the preliminary draft of the Tacoma-Pierce County Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan) submitted on September 14, 2021.

The cost assessment questionnaire in the 2021-2026 Plan proposes changes to tip fees at the transfer stations located in Tacoma-Pierce County. As a result, there will be rate impacts to ratepayers served by regulated solid waste collection companies in Tacoma-Pierce County the impacts are shown in the table below.

	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>2026</i>	<i>Total</i>
Projected Disposal Fees							
Per Ton Disposal Cost	\$168.51	\$170.34	\$171.64	\$171.22	\$172.82	\$174.71	
Per Ton Increase		\$1.83	\$1.30	\$-0.42	\$1.60	\$1.89	\$6.20
Projected Rate Increases							
<i>Residential</i>							
Monthly rate for one 32-gallon can per week service		\$0.13	\$0.10	\$0.00	\$-0.03	\$0.14	\$0.47
<i>Commercial</i>							
Monthly rate for one-yard per pick up service		\$0.69	\$0.49	\$0.00	\$-0.16	\$0.72	\$2.44

Existing collection services are solid waste, curbside recycling, and compostable waste (yard waste). Single stream recycling is in place throughout the county, but glass is now only collected at the county recycling drop off locations (the county has 32 such locations) and is no longer part of the curbside collection. The glass that is collected by the county is taken to a processor who

uses it to produce new glass products. Pierce County Code Chapter 8.29.030 specifies the minimum levels of curbside service within the County and requires cardboard, metal cans, mixed-waste paper, newspaper, plastic bottles, and jars are to be collected in curbside recycling within the County.

Tacoma-Pierce County has produced a Contamination Reduction and Outreach Plan. This plan identifies issues within the recycling stream so that cities and the county can address these items. Since 2015, the County has focused on creating a uniform messaging of recycled materials, having similar coloring of collection containers, so it is easy to identify what items should be placed in the collection container. There has also been targeted outreach to multi-family residences as the study found multi-family residences throw away twice as many recyclables as a single-family household and that on average 20 percent of multifamily solid waste could be recycled. In the City of Tacoma a “three strikes and you’re out” policy where the first major contamination offense results in a cart tag, the second offense results in a cart tag and a call from the route supervisor, and the third offense results in a cart tag and another call from the route supervisor who at this point has the right to remove the cart, and the resident has to pay a setup fee to get it back.

While this plan does have a cost impact on customers, Tacoma-Pierce County is taking steps to improve its waste stream by studying what contamination is in the stream and where it is coming from so that the County can find ways to address it. This should help preserve the County’s solid waste infrastructure.

Commission staff has no further comment on the cost assessment questionnaire. Please direct questions or comments to Scott Sevall at (360) 664-1230 or by email at ssevall@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

AMANDA MAXWELL
Executive Director and Secretary

cc: David Pater, Department of Ecology, Solid Waste Planner