

Agenda Date: February 27, 2002  
Item Number: 3A

**Docket Number:** TG-020077  
Company Name: Couse's Sanitation and Recycle, Inc. G-169

**Staff:** Layne Demas, Regulatory Analyst  
Kim Dobyms, Regulatory Analyst  
Penny Hansen, Public Involvement Coordinator

**Recommendation:**

Issue a complaint and order suspending the filing in Docket TG-020077 for Couse's Sanitation and Recycle, Inc., and allow temporary rates for the disposal fee increase to become effective March 11, 2002.

**Discussion:**

On January 23, 2002, Couse's Sanitation and Recycle, Inc., (Couse) filed a new Tariff 6 replacing Tariff 5 in Docket TG-020077 to reflect increased residential and commercial rates for solid waste collection. The reason for the filing is to recover increased disposal fees, utility costs, and wage increases. The disposal fees at the Ferry County Torboy transfer station are increasing from \$116.00 to \$120.00 per ton effective March 5, 2002. Couse serves approximately 500 residential and commercial regulated customers in Ferry County. The company also has a government contract with the United States Department of Agriculture to provide solid waste service to the Curlew Job Corp.

The Commission received two letters. One commenter opposed the rate increases and one commenter suggests the company change or add an option in its rate design for quarterly pickups instead of weekly pickups to allow customers the flexibility to use their service on an as needed basis.

Staff is in process of reviewing the filing and has recently received operating and financial data necessary for the completion of the review. Staff is recommending that during the suspension period temporary rates be approved to allow for recovery of the disposal fee increase as allowed in RCW 81.77.160. When staff has completed its review, a recommendation will be made for permanent rates.

The proposed rates will generate approximately \$16,000 (10%) in additional revenue. The recommended temporary rates will generate approximately \$3,500 (2.2%).

The following is a representative sample of current, proposed, and staff recommended temporary rates:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Staff Recommended Temporary Rates</u>
<u>Per Month, Residential</u>			
1 Can Weekly	\$14.01	\$15.41	\$14.30
2 Can Weekly	18.24	20.66	18.68
1 Can Monthly	6.48	7.12	6.65
<u>Per Pickup, Commercial</u>			
2 Yd Container	24.05	26.45	24.70

**Conclusion:**

Staff recommends that a complaint and order suspending the filing in Docket TG-020077 be issued and temporary rates for the disposal fee increase be allowed to become effective March 11, 2002.