



STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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August 8, 2019

Patti Johnson, Director
Kittitas County Solid Waste
925 Industrial Way
Ellensburg, WA 98926
patti.johnson@co.kittitas.wa.us

RE: Kittitas County 2020 Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan Update Supplement TG-190630

Dear Ms. Johnson:

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) has completed its review of the preliminary draft of the Kittitas County 2020 Solid Waste and Moderate Waste Management Plan Update (Plan).

The Plan proposes to increase tip fees for municipal solid waste (MSW) each year during the Plan period, 2020-2025. As a result of the current forecasted tip fees, there will be a rate impact to ratepayers served by regulated solid waste collection companies in Kittitas County. The table below illustrates projected disposal fees and rate increases between 2020 and 2025 based on forecasted tip fees.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total
Projected Disposal Fees							
Per Ton Disposal Cost	\$108.26	\$112.36	\$116.29	\$120.36	\$124.45	\$128.68	
Per Ton Increase	\$3.40	\$3.80	\$3.93	\$4.07	\$4.09	\$4.23	\$23.52
Projected Rate Increases							
<i>Residential</i>							
Monthly rate for one 32-gallon can per week service	\$0.25	\$0.28	\$0.29	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$0.30	\$1.73
<i>Commercial</i>							
Monthly rate for one-yard per pick up service	\$1.29	\$1.44	\$1.49	\$1.54	\$1.55	\$1.60	\$8.92

Existing collection services for recyclable materials consist primarily of drop-off stations, except for within the City of Ellensburg, where single-stream curbside collection is provided by Waste Management on an every-other-week basis. Curbside recycling is not offered by Waste Management of Ellensburg in its UTC-regulated areas. A few private and commercial recycling providers also operate within the County.

There are two multi-material drop-off collection stations for recyclable materials in Kittitas County. They are located at the two County transfer stations in Cle Elum and Ellensburg. The following materials are accepted at these facilities: newspaper, cardboard, magazines, tin cans, aluminum cans, plastic bottles, plastic milk jugs, glass bottles, and household (dry cell) batteries.

Washington State law requires curbside recycling services to be provided in urban areas unless an alternative plan is approved by the Department of Ecology (Ecology). The County's designated urban areas consist of four cities (Ellensburg, Cle Elum, Roslyn, and Kittitas) and one town (South Cle Elum). Currently, curbside recycling is only offered in the City of Ellensburg. The other four designated urban areas would need an alternative recycling plan approved by Ecology to remain in compliance with Washington State law. The Plan does not mention the existence of an alternative recycling plan, and Ecology's regional planner, who is assigned to review the Plan, is not aware of any alternative recycling plan having been filed. The Ecology representative plans to follow up with the County on this issue. The materials collected curbside in Ellensburg consist of newspaper, cardboard, magazines, tin cans, aluminum cans, PETE (#1 plastic), and HDPE (#2 plastic). Glass is not accepted curbside in the city of Ellensburg.

The following list includes some of the recommendations the County has made for improving its recycling programs:

- Expand residential single-stream curbside collection of recyclables to the remaining incorporated cities within Kittitas County by passing an ordinance to require recycling.
- Work with haulers and cities to provide recycling services that support the viability of those programs and are economically feasible based on market conditions.
- Recruit and provide technical assistance to large businesses in Kittitas County to increase recycling.
- Develop a business recognition program for recycling, composting, and waste reduction for exemplary waste reduction, composting, and recycling activities.
- Target agricultural activities to promote recycling of agricultural-related waste including film plastic, pesticide containers, and compostables.
- In Ellensburg, provide beverage container recycling at special events and create a form to communicate best practices for event organizers during receptacle rental. Consider providing beverage container receptacles for events outside of Ellensburg.
- Provide recycling services that support the viability of those programs and are economically feasible based on market conditions. Evaluate expanding materials accepted at transfer station recycling drop-offs annually.
- Assess the feasibility of a Variable Can Rate, or Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT), in remaining incorporated areas (Ellensburg already adopted this structure). PAYT is a volume-based fee structure intended to provide a lower-cost alternative to customers

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who downsize their garbage container by recycling and composting. PAYT can provide a financial incentive to reduce waste.

- Evaluate the status of all recycling and waste reduction programs annually and report findings to the Board of County Commissioners, along with recommendations for changes or additions.

Staff has no further comments. Please direct questions or comments to Greg Hammond at 360-664-1278 or by email at greg.hammond@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark L. Johnson
Executive Director and Secretary

cc: Seth Benge, Department of Ecology, Regional Planner