

Service Date: September 9, 2021



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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September 9, 2021

Kevin Cooke, P.E.  
Spokane County  
Environmental Services Department Director  
1026 W. Broadway Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99260

RE: Spokane County Comprehensive Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Management Plan,  
**Docket TG-210613**

Dear Kevin Cooke:

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) has completed its review of the Spokane County Regional Solid Waste System (County) 2021 through 2026 Comprehensive Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Management Plan (Plan).

The Plan does not propose to increase tip fees between 2021 and 2026, instead looking into alternate means of gaining long term funding or controlling costs. The Plan indicates Spokane County will control costs through budgeting for equipment and facilities ahead of time, supporting legislative actions, and improving efficiencies to provide better and cheaper service.

The Plan's discussion of recycling and organic waste indicates the service is provided by several contracts and Commission-regulated enterprises. These are stated as subscription based single-bin services and are only mandatory in jurisdictions with contracted services. The Plan does not indicate there will be an increase in the cost of service. Using current funding the County is using education to improve the quality of recyclables, noting success where activities are ongoing.

The Pay as You Throw, or rate incentives, at the end of the recycling section appears to discuss the possibility of reducing fees through diversion of solid waste to recycling. This program appears to be a part of the Revenue Sharing agreement with regulated haulers. A Revenue Share agreement allows regulated haulers to use 50 percent of revenue generated from the sale of recycled materials for customer outreach and education by meeting the County's agreed upon criteria. The companies must return the other 50 percent, and any unused funds, to customers through bill credits.

Like recyclables, the diversion of organic waste from the solid waste stream is offered on a subscription basis provided by Commission-regulated haulers. The Plan does not emphasize organic services, giving it a very brief discussion. It does mention the reduced cost for organics service and disposal in comparison to traditional solid waste may incentivize residents to expand use. The Plan also lists several organizations collaborating with the County to offer educational programs on solid waste reduction activities, including disposal and composting of organic wastes.

Commission staff finds no financial rate impact to ratepayers served by regulated solid waste collection companies in Spokane County and has no further comments on the Plan.

Please direct questions or comments about the Commission's plan review process to Benjamin Sharbono at (360) 664-1242 or [benjamin.sharbnono@utc.wa.gov](mailto:benjamin.sharbnono@utc.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Mark L. Johnson  
Executive Director and Secretary

cc: Canning Xiao  
Department of Ecology  
Solid Waste Management Program  
1250 W. Alder Street  
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