

Service Date: December 8, 2022



STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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December 8, 2022

Karma Suchan, Manager
Yakima County
Department of Public Services
Solid Waste Division
7151 Roza Hill Drive
Yakima, WA 98901

**Re: Yakima County Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan;
Docket TG-220810**

Dear Karma Suchan:

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) has completed its review of the Yakima County Department of Public Services (County) 2023 through 2029 Solid Waste and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan (Plan).

There are three regulated haulers with operating permits in Yakima County. Only Basin Disposal of Yakima, LLC, and Yakima Waste Systems, Inc., are actively providing service to customers at the time of the Plan's writing. The third hauler authorized to collect solid waste in the County is Rabanco, LTD, which reports it does not have current customers in the County. The companies serve the unincorporated regions of the County and have contracts with several cities and towns. The Plan indicated the companies primarily dispose of collected materials at County operated facilities or in the privately held transfer station at Granger, Washington.

The County operates two landfills and four transfer stations. Two of the transfer stations are located at active landfills for self-hauling residential use. One of the landfills is expected to shut down in 2030. When this occurs, disposal companies will be allowed to off-load at the transfer station for transport to the other landfill. These facilities also offer drop off sites for recyclable and organic materials. County facilities only accept waste generated within the County.

Additional disposal facilities include two privately held limited-use landfills that primarily handle waste construction materials. Yakima Waste Systems, Inc., also operates a transfer station in Granger, Washington. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, the Granger transfer station is not

open to the public according to the Plan. These sites are privately owned and operated, and not subject to the County’s overview of disposal rates.

The Plan recommends the County consider implementing flow control in 2023. Further, the County does not mandate recycling. Recycling services are optional subscription services offered by regulated companies in urban growth areas with higher populations. Due to the extreme differences in population densities, the Plan indicates it is not economically viable to offer the services in rural areas. This is backed by regulated company data provided to the County showing a small number of customers utilize the additional services offered.

In its Plan, the County does note that some possibly recyclable items, such as glass, are not considered viable for general collection. The Plan explains that some products are too expensive to transport to markets and local markets are not developed enough to handle the volumes generated. The County mentions consulting with local companies regarding product stewardship such as collecting, sanitizing, and reusing bottles and packaging.

The Plan discusses multiple roadblocks and issues related to increasing waste diversion of organics disposal due to apple maggot quarantine requirements. Apple maggots pose a substantial threat to agriculture in the County, which causes restrictions on disposal of organic materials by diversion to alternate uses, such as commercial composting. As such, most agricultural and organic waste is either disposed of on site or into the general solid waste stream.

The cost assessment questionnaire provided by the County states the tipping fees set by resolution of the Board of County Commissioners will increase over the life of the Plan at all facilities. As a result, there will be rate impacts to ratepayers served by regulated solid waste collection companies in Yakima County. The tip fees shown below are the per-ton fees at all County operated facilities. The estimated impacts are shown in the table below.

	2022	2023-24	2025-26	2027-29	Total
Projected Disposal Fees					
Per Ton Disposal Cost	\$38.00	\$44.00	\$46.00	\$48.00	
Per Ton Increase		\$6.00	\$2.00	\$2.00	\$10.00
Projected Rate Increases					
<i>Basin Disposal of Yakima, LLC</i>					
<i>Residential</i>					
Monthly rate for one 32-gallon can per week service		\$0.34	\$0.09	\$0.09	\$0.52
Monthly rate for one 96-gallon can per week service		\$0.68	\$0.13	\$0.13	\$0.94
<i>Commercial</i>					
Per pickup rate for one-and-a-half-yard service.		\$0.57	\$0.16	\$0.16	\$0.89

<i>Yakima Waste Systems, Inc.</i>					
<i>Residential</i>					
Monthly rate for one 32-gallon can per week service		\$0.28	\$0.09	\$0.09	\$0.46
Monthly rate for one 96-gallon can per week service		\$0.56	\$0.19	\$0.19	\$0.94
<i>Commercial</i>					
Per pickup rate for one-and-a-half-yard service.		\$0.48	\$0.16	\$0.16	\$0.80

Staff has no further comment on the cost assessment questionnaire. Please direct questions or comments to Ben Sharbono at (360) 664-1242 or by email at benjamin.sharbono@utc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

AMANDA MAXWELL
Executive Director and Secretary

cc: Michelle Mulrony, Department of Ecology, Regional Planner and Grants Manager