

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGONIn the Matter of Approving FY 2024-2025 Solid
Waste Collection Rates

ORDER NO. 25-2024

WHEREAS, Section 5.01(A) of the Columbia County Solid Waste Management Ordinance (SWMO) authorizes the Board of County Commissioners (Board), upon its own recommendation or the recommendation of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC), to approve and establish rate adjustments; and

WHEREAS, Section 5.01(A)(4) of the SWMO authorizes the Board to increase or decrease rates based on the cost of doing business; and

WHEREAS, Section 5.01(B) of the SWMO provides that the Board shall give due consideration to a number of factors in determining whether to increase or decrease rates based on the cost of doing business; and

WHEREAS, Section 5.01(B)(6) of the SWMO identifies one such factor as providing for a reasonable rate of return to the franchisee based upon a percentage of gross receipts under the franchise; and

WHEREAS, in implementing this requirement the SWAC has adopted a policy of keeping rates at a level that supports an operating margin of between 8-14%; and

WHEREAS, to meet that goal, SWAC recommends a hauler-requested rate adjustment to the Board when the operating margin for the franchise area falls below 8%. In doing so it targets an operating margin falling in the middle of the 8-14% range; and

WHEREAS, Section 5.01(B)(8) of the SWMO identifies another factor to be considered by the Board as the cost to the franchisee of the disposal of the solid waste it collects; and

WHEREAS, in implementing this requirement the SWAC has adopted a policy of recommending rate increases to cover increases in the disposal fee charged by the County Transfer Station; and

WHEREAS, Transfer Station disposal rates are adjusted each year based on the prior year CPI. This year's CPI adjustment of 3.6% will take effect on July 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2024, the SWAC At-Large Members and County Staff reviewed Detailed Cost Reports (DCRs) and proposed rate adjustments submitted by the County's two solid waste collection franchises, Waste Management and Waste Connections; and

WHEREAS, based upon their review of the Waste Management DCR's the SWAC At-Large Members and County Staff have concluded that their current rates do not provide for an operating margin within the acceptable range and therefore recommend that rates for Waste Management customers increase by 3.6% for customers in the rural Scappoose area and by 6.7% for customers in the rural Vernonia area. These adjustments include the pass-through to the customers of the increase in Transfer Station disposal fees. A table showing the new rates for Waste Management customers is attached hereto as Attachment A; and

WHEREAS, based upon their review of the Waste Connections DCR's the SWAC-At-Large Members and County Staff have concluded that current rates do not provide for an operating margin across the Waste Connections franchise area that is within the acceptable range. Therefore, it recommends that rates for its three service areas be increased 2.5%. These adjustments include the pass-through to the customers of the increase in Transfer Station disposal fees. A table showing the new rates for Waste Connections customers is attached hereto as Attachment B; and

WHEREAS, following proper notice, the Board held a hearing on June 5, 2024, to consider the rate and fee proposals; and


NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, as follows:

1. The Board of County Commissioners adopt the recommendations of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee as well as its findings and conclusions as its own.
2. The rates for solid waste collection for Waste Management customers shall be increased by 3.6% for the rural Scappoose service area and 6.7% for the rural and Vernonia service area. These adjustments include the pass-through for the increase in the Transfer Station disposal fees. The resulting new rates are shown in Attachment A hereto, which by this reference is incorporated as part of this order.
3. The rates for solid waste collection for Waste Connections customers in the rural Clatskanie, rural St Helens, and rural Rainier service areas shall be increased 2.5%. This adjustment includes the pass-through for the increase in the Transfer Station disposal fees. The resulting new rates are shown in Attachment B hereto, which by this reference is incorporated as part of this order.
4. The changes to rates and fees authorized under this Board Order shall take effect July 1, 2024.

Dated this 12th day of June, 2024.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

Approved as to form:

By: 
Office of County Counsel

By: 
Casey Garrett, Chair

By: 
Kellie Jo Smith, Commissioner

By: Not Present
Margaret Magruder, Commissioner

Proposed Rate Adjustments – WM (Rural Scappoose, and Vernonia Service Areas)

Franchise Area	Current Services	Current Rate	Disposal Pass-Thru (CPI 3.6%)	Proposed Rate Adjustment	Rate Increase including Pass-Thru	New Rate
Scappoose-Rural	35 Gal. Weekly	\$33.45	\$0.39	3.60%	\$0.80	\$34.64
Vernonia-Rural	35 Gal. Weekly	\$33.83	\$0.39	6.7%	\$1.86	\$36.08

Proposed Rate Adjustments – Hudson Garbage Service (Rural Clatskanie, Rainier, and St Helens Service Areas)

Franchise Area	Current Services	Current Rate	Disposal Pass-Thru (CPI 3.6%)	Proposed Rate Adjustment including CPI	Rate Increase including Pass-Thru	New Rate
St. Helens-Rural	35 Gal. Weekly	\$38.40	\$0.39	2.5%	\$0.96	<u>\$39.36</u>
Clatskanie-Rural	35 Gal. Weekly	\$41.47	\$0.39	2.5%	\$1.04	<u>\$42.51</u>
Rainier-Rural	35 Gal. Weekly	\$38.84	\$0.39	2.5%	\$0.97	<u>\$39.81</u>