



ISLAND COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS
SOLID WASTE DIVISION
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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

SOLID WASTE AND SEPTAGE TIP RATES TO CHANGE

Island County, July 6, 2020:

On July 31, 2020 Island County will implement a Solid Waste tipping rate increase for garbage and septage (septic tank contents) disposal. The rate for municipal solid waste (msw) is going from \$115 per ton plus a \$7.24 base fee to \$155 per ton with no base fee. The minimum charge for msw is going from \$11.00 to \$13.25, and the septage disposal rate is going from \$0.155 per gallon to \$0.279 per gallon. These rate increases are needed to cover the ever increasing costs of running the Solid Waste Division; the Division has been losing money over the last few years. "This is the first increase for Solid Waste tip rate in ten years which averages out to be about a 2% per year increase," says Bill Oakes, Public Works Director for Island County.

In 2019 a Solid Waste Rate study was conducted for the years 2020-2022. The objective of the study was to develop recommended solid waste and septage disposal rates. A large part of the rate increase was an increase in the contractor cost to dispose of septage. The County continues to look for lower costs for septage disposal with the hope that the future rates could decrease.

Island County conducts a rate study every three years. This current study was conducted by Dr. Lisa Skumatz of Skumatz Economic Research Associates of Superior, Colorado and Orcas Island, Washington. Study findings were presented in an advertised public meeting to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) on November 8, 2019. On February 21, 2020 the SWAC voted to recommend the rate increase to the Board of Island County Commissioners. The Commissioners first discussed the rate increase at a work session in March of 2020 and later directed staff to postpone the increase implementation until after the peak of the Coronavirus crisis. The Commissioners approved the rate increase at an advertised public meeting on May 12, 2020 to go into effect on July 31, 2020.

The effects of the new rate produce a lower fee for the average household self-haul customer who brings in 200 pounds of msw. They will now pay \$16.00 versus \$21.00 under the old rate system.

Tipping fees for franchised haulers are also increasing to \$147 per ton except the City of Oak Harbor's rate will be \$137 per ton.

For residents that qualify, Island County has a low-come discount program that helps with disposal fees for household garbage. For more information about this program contact Gynon Nash at 360-240-5592 or by email g.nash@islandcountywa.gov.

For additional information:

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