



**DATE:** March 10, 2022

**TO:** Washington County Garbage and Recycling Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Erin Stein, Operations Supervisor

**RE:** Proposed Solid Waste and Recycling Rates – Additional Recycling Collection Service

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## **Background**

Washington County maintains sanitary service certificates with nine private haulers that provide solid waste and recycling collection service to approximately 66,000 customers within the unincorporated area of the County. Pursuant to Washington County Code (WCC) 8.04.320 through 8.04.330 the Board of County Commissioners (Board) maintains the authority to set rates related to the services delivered by certificate holders. The process of determining fair, just and reasonable rates includes an annual review of costs and revenues associated with the provision of garbage and recycling collection service in unincorporated Washington County. Additional or new program elements are reviewed on a stand-alone basis when established and then incorporated into the annual rate review process.

## **Proposed Additional Recycling Collection Program**

On January 18, 2022, staff attended a Board work session and provided the Board with considerations for additional recycling collection services. To ensure that community members have access to recycling collection services for additional items not currently included in the curbside recycling program, the Board directed staff to develop a new additional recycling collection program that would be made available through the County's current garbage and recycling collection service providers.

Developing a new program requires adjustments to the garbage and recycling rate schedule and service standards in the Solid Waste and Recycling Administrative Rules.

## **Rate Considerations**

Additional Recycling Collection Service is proposed to be delivered in two phases. Phase 1 will be made available to single-family to 4-plex customers and is proposed to include:

- Addition of household batteries to standard curbside collection for all residential customers
- New optional on-call collection service for compact fluorescent lightbulbs, plastic film, textiles and clear plastic #1 PET/PETE clamshells for all urban unincorporated residential customers
- New quarterly reuse collection drives for Additional Recycling Collection Service program participants

Phase 2 is proposed to include multifamily households as eligible for program participation in the summer of 2023.

Expanding the current curbside recycling program to include battery recycling for all residential customers is not anticipated to have a significant impact on collection rates. Batteries will be collected by the same collection vehicles and on existing glass recycling routes. There will no initial rate impacts associated with this service implementation. Actual costs will be incorporated into the annual rate review process starting in 2023.

The new optional on-call collection service for the Additional Recycling Collection Service program will have a separate cost component. Staff intends to review the costs associated with the program independently from standard garbage and recycling collection services. As part of the annual rate review process, Additional Recycling Collection Service rates will be reviewed and potentially adjusted. To develop the initial proposed rate for this service component staff engaged with the Washington County Haulers Association's rate consultant and the County's CPA firm, Merina + Co. The rate model was developed by evaluating costs associated with the new service, including labor and benefits, processing fees, vehicles and equipment, return on revenue, other costs, and franchise fees. These estimated costs were then used to model the necessary revenue requirement and proposed rates.

**Proposed Rates**

The proposed rate structure for the Additional Recycling Collection Service program is designed to provide an on-call service for urban community members. Proposed rates include a base fee that covers program fixed costs such as equipment, customer service, account set up and maintenance, and management/oversight of the program. Additionally, there will be a pick-up fee that covers operational, labor and processing costs of the program. The fee schedule is structured to provide community members with the opportunity to either receive the service curbside or non-curbside at different price points. Community feedback received through surveys and listening sessions, namely the ability to take the service monthly or less frequently, was incorporated into the design of the rate structure.

Below is a table outlining the proposed fees:

**ADDITIONAL RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICE RATES**  
*Rates effective July 1, 2022*

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**Additional Recycling Collection Service Rates**

*Additional Recycling Collection Service is available to community members in urban\* unincorporated Washington County residential households (1-4 plex)*

| Fees  | Rate    |
|---|---------|
| Base charge (billed monthly)                  | \$2.50  |
| Curbside Pick-up Fee (each)                   | \$9.25  |
| Non-curbside Pick-up Fee 0-150 feet (each)    | \$11.70 |
| Non-curbside Pick-up Fee over 150 feet (each) | \$13.02 |

*Table 1: Additional Recycling Collection Service Rates*

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Washington County Garbage and Recycling Advisory Committee favorably recommend to the Washington County Board of County Commissioners that the proposed rates, outlined above, be approved and become effective July 1, 2022.