



Memorandum

TO: SATPAL SIDHU, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FROM: Jennifer Hayden – Environmental Health Supervisor

DATE: APRIL 25, 2025

RE: RATE ADDITIONS FOR BUSINESS HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

Whatcom County Disposal of Toxics will need to add fees to the Unified Fee Schedule in order to continue to accept and manage hazardous waste from county businesses.

Background

Whatcom County Health and Community Services (HCS) is preparing to assume operational control of the county's moderate risk waste facility, the Disposal of Toxics (DoT), on July 1, 2025. Currently, the DoT is operated by a private contractor. The DoT accepts hazardous waste from households for free, and from small businesses, or "small quantity generators", for a fee. In 2024 the DoT managed over 75,000 pounds of hazardous waste from 564 small businesses located throughout the County. The current facility operator manages the invoicing and payment collection for business waste, and starting on July 1, 2025, Whatcom County will take on this responsibility. In order for the County to charge for hazardous waste disposal, fees for specific waste types will need to be added to the Unified Fee Schedule.

HCS has determined accurate fee amounts for 53 commonly disposed of waste streams. These fee amounts were determined by including the current disposal cost per container, and the average amount of labor each container requires to be set up, filled, and closed per Department of Transportation requirements. HCS has added a 10% increase on each fee, to account for possible increases in disposal costs once HCS finalizes a contract for transportation and disposal.

The equation to determine fee amounts for each waste stream is as follows:

(cost of container disposal) + (labor to manage each container) + (10%) / (amount of waste each container can hold).

A version of this equation has been used to set fee amounts for waste disposal since the program's start. Reviewing and revising the disposal fees to account for different labor costs, among other considerations, has led to an overall decrease in waste disposal costs across the spectrum of waste streams of approximately 4.5%.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Whatcom County should continue to provide this service to our business community members, and approve the proposed rate additions.

Please call Jennifer Hayden at 360-778-6036 if there are any questions. Thank you.