

KING COUNTY SOLID WASTE DIVISION 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW IN BRIEF



It was a busy year for King County's Solid Waste Division, with 2023 set up for lots of exciting opportunities to collaborate on advancing our regional goal toward a zero-waste future.

In March, the King County Council approved a **rate restructure** that will take effect on Jan. 1, 2024. This change in how the county assesses disposal fees will reduce escalation in per ton rates and provide a baseline level of funding to maintain operations, and allow investment in the County's Re+ Program to attain a zero-waste, circular economy future. Most cities will need to complete a contract amendment with your hauler.

Last fall, the County Council unanimously approved a **rate increase** of 9.6%, or \$0.79 per month for curbside customers that took effect on Jan. 1, 2023. Revenue from the 2023 rate will allow the Solid Waste Division to keep investing in essential services, and support capital projects and programs crucial to environmental progress on climate change mitigation, recycling, and waste reduction.

The **South County Recycle and Transfer Station** in Algona reached final design in 2022, with construction scheduled to begin in mid-2023. This new state-of-the-art facility will replace the 60-year-old Algona Transfer Station, and finally bring recycling, yard waste and hazardous waste disposal services to south King County.

[South County Recycling & Transfer Station Project - King County Solid Waste Division](#)

The siting process for the **Northeast Recycle and Transfer Station Project** began in 2019. When it begins operating in 2029, the new station will replace the aging Houghton Transfer Station, which has been in service since the 1960s and lacks many recycling services customers want. The division continues to work closely with the cities of Redmond, Kirkland, Woodinville, and unincorporated King County to engage the community in project decision making. Site selection was narrowed down to three alternatives: two in Kirkland and one in Woodinville.

[Northeast Recycling & Transfer Station Project - King County Solid Waste Division](#)

The division also made big strides in the development of our **Re+, zero-waste, circular economy program**. The Re+ Plan identifies a list of Fast Start Actions and pulls together key policy components from the existing comprehensive plan, Strategic Climate Action Plan and the guiding principles of K4C.

[Re+, zero-waste, circular economy program](#)

2023 Preview

There is a lot of movement locally, regionally, and statewide on efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce the amount of recycling and compostable material that ends up in the landfill. In late January, the King County Solid Waste Division officially launched its Re+ Program, which aims to divert the 70% of recyclable materials from waste stream and back into the economy.

Division staff have been making presentations on Re+ to our city partners since late July and have presented to or are scheduled to 21 city councils to date, with a goal of reaching all 37 by June.

The success of the Re+ Program will depend on a number of actions such as state legislation approval and collaboration with cities across King County. With the support of our advisory committee members, we developed the Re+ Pledge to showcase regional momentum for efforts to implement a shared vision for healthy, safe and thriving waste-free communities in King County.

Many cities in King County have already taken action on implementing these goals, and we look forward to continued collaboration on goals to preserve landfill space, reduce waste and combat climate change. Many thanks to those partners who have already signed the Re+ Pledge!

As part of the Re+ Program, we will be launching the City Re+ Circular Economy grant program in early 2023. These grants are meant to help accelerate the implementation of the Re+ Plan and provide cities with assistance to achieve the goals of a zero-waste, circular economy. Cities that sign on to the Re+ Pledge will be eligible for funding.

[Re+, zero-waste, circular economy program](#)

If you have questions about Re+, or would like to schedule a Re+ presentation in your city, please contact Amy Ockerlander (aockerlander@kingcounty.gov) to get on the calendar.

Compost Procurement Ordinance

During the 2022 legislative session, HB 1799 was approved, which sets standards for compost procurement in public projects and requires businesses that meet a certain threshold to compost their organic waste. King County approved its ordinance in late 2022, with all qualifying jurisdictions required to implement by Jan. 1, 2023.

If you need assistance on finding resources, please see the links below or contact Dorian Waller (dorian.waller@kingcounty.gov) or Amy Ockerlander (aockerlander@kingcounty.gov)

[Organics Management - Compost Procurement Ordinances and Reporting](#)

Comprehensive Plan Update

The division will begin an update to its 2019 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan. The update will feature engagement with our city partners, community organizations, businesses, and residents to offer input and feedback on priorities for waste management.

Renton Redevelopment Analysis

In the biennial budget, the King County Council approved appropriations to study potential future uses for the current Renton Transfer Station, which has been in service for 60 years and lacks services offered at the nearby Factoria and Bow Lake transfer stations. With the new full-service South County Recycling and Transfer Station set to begin operating in 2026, the division can explore new opportunities for the Renton Transfer Station property.

Join the Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee!

The Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWAC) advises the King County Executive, the Regional Policy Committee, acting as the solid waste interlocal forum, and the King County Council in all matters relating to solid waste management. The committee participates in the development of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Elected officials or staff from each city served by King County Solid Waste Interlocal Agreements are eligible for membership.

In 2023 the committee will be advising on the Solid Waste Management Plan update, providing feedback and insight to the Re+ Program and more.

Unless otherwise noted, MSWAC meetings take place at 11:15 a.m. on the second Friday of each month. People can attend in person at King Street Center's Eighth Floor Conference Room, located at 201 S. Jackson Street in Seattle, or virtually by Zoom.

Note: Members of the public are encouraged to participate in-person or virtually. Please contact Dorian Waller dorian.waller@kingcounty.gov to register for upcoming meetings or for more information on participating.

[King County Solid Waste Advisory Committees](#)

IN DEPTH...

Take a Deep Dive into the Rate Restructure

The rates charged by the Solid Waste Division (SWD) are an investment in programs to reduce waste, increase recycling, and continue to responsibly and cost-effectively manage the disposal of garbage for 37 partner cities and 1.5 million people daily.

SWD currently derives about 90% of its revenue from the basic fee to dispose of garbage at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill at a time when it's striving to meet the Re+ goal of diverting the 70% of materials that still have economic value out of the landfill.

A rate restructure was approved by the King County Council in March 2022. The new structure changes the formula by including a fixed annual charge to commercial waste haulers that will provide a stable revenue source, independent of how much tonnage is brought in.

This restructure will maintain a baseline level of funding necessary for operations and reduce escalation in per-ton rates that would have been necessary under the previous structure due to fewer tons of waste arriving at the landfill. The reduced tonnage will be a result of increased composting and recycling.

While the restructure was approved early in 2022 for implementation in 2023, many cities and haulers requested more time to make solid waste contract amendments with the County Council approving a delay until January 1, 2024.

If you haven't already begun working with your hauler, we highly recommend starting the dialogue as soon as is practical to ensure a smooth transition in 2024.

Solid Waste Cost of Service and Rate Restructure Study

2023 Rate Change

Starting January 1, 2023, King County's Solid Waste Division enacted a rate adjustment of 9.6 percent for solid waste disposal, an estimated \$0.79 increase to monthly residential curbside collection bills. The new rate was approved unanimously by the King County Council on September 13.

Revenue from the 2023 rate will allow the Solid Waste Division to continue essential services and avoid drastic cuts to vital programs and services while supporting capital projects and programs crucial to environmental progress on climate change mitigation, recycling and waste reduction efforts.

In addition, the new rate further supports the division's goal of climate neutrality by 2025 by strengthening commitments to resource recovery and green innovations such as electric trucks, renewable diesel and other low emission technology, and by continuing to harness landfill gas as a source of renewable energy.

New King County Solid Waste Disposal Rates for 2023