

MSWAC Advisory Committee Meeting

November 19, 2025 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and King Street Center)

<u>MSWAC Members</u>		<u>King County Staff</u>
Troy Linnell	Algona	Janine Blaeloch, SWD staff
Joan Nelson	Auburn	Ali Blum, SWD staff
Jon Gire	Bellevue	Caitlin Singer, SWD staff
Emily Warnock	Bothell	Erin Hislop, SWD staff
Shellie Bates	Covington	Christine Kim, SWD staff
Rob Van Orsow	Federal Way	Theresa Curry Almuti, SWD staff
Sam Tarvin	Issaquah	Hannah Scholes, SWD staff
Carly Joerger	Kirkland	Casey Mellnik, SWD staff
Dave Marschall	Kirkland	Amy Ockerlander, SWD staff
Daniel Becker	Mercer Island	Sylvaine Bucher, SWD staff
Alana DeRogatis	Mercer Island	Dan Swope, SWD staff
Dan Marcinko	North Bend	Chris Stubbs, SWD Deputy Director
Aaron Moldver	Redmond	Cailyn Torpie, SWD staff
Amy Tsai	Redmond	Shawn Carter, SWD staff
Meara Heubach	Renton	John Walsh, SWD staff
Genevieve Rubinelli	Sammamish	Andy Smith, SWD staff
Mason Giem	SeaTac	Bonnie Flickinger, PSB
Sarah Bruemmer	Shoreline	Dave Pierce, SWD staff
Colleen Minion	Tukwila	Theresa Thurlow, SWD staff
Tony Donati	Kent	Kerwin Pyle, SWD staff
Penny Sweet	Kirkland	Julie West, PHSKC staff
Paige Scheid	Shoreline	Brian Halverson, SWD staff
Jonathan Bennett	Maple Valley	Nat Bennett, DNRP staff
Mason Giem	SeaTac	Elka Peterson Horner, PSB staff
Jesse Dunbar	Redmond	Kinyan Lui, SWD staff
Ella Williams	Bellevue	
Chris Searcy	Enumclaw	<u>Guests</u>
Sycora Powell	Burien	Dan
Jared Hill	Woodinville	Alissa Campbell, Recology
Brian Spindor	Enumclaw	Wendy Weiker
Jen Tetatzin	Tukwila	Katie Stickels (formerly Jerauld), Dept. of Ecology
		Carolyn Bowie, Dept. of Ecology
		Jeanette Jurgensen, Bin There Consulting
		Kevin Kelly, Waste Management
		Chris Reigelsperger, Waste Management
		Hans Van Dusen

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Sweet called the meeting to order.

Meeting Minutes

Hill moved to approve the minutes of the September meeting and Nelson seconded.

Public Comment

Stickels shared information on a compost market study and the Recycling Reform Act.

Compost Market Study

The Compost Market Study forecasts volumes of incoming feedstocks and finished compost based on the organics management laws taking effect. With more residents and businesses using curbside service to send their food and yard waste to a compost facility, more finished compost will be available for sale. This report estimates volumes of incoming organic feedstocks and finished compost through 2035 at the state- and county-levels. Local governments and compost facilities can use this report to plan for opportunities in the coming years. [Read the Compost Market Study](#). Contact [Cullen Naumoff](#) with questions.

Recycling Reform Act Webinar

Governor Ferguson signed the Recycling Reform Act (Senate Bill 5284) on May 17, 2025, making Washington the seventh state to enact an extended producer responsibility program for consumer packaging. For more information, please visit [Recycling Reform Act - Washington State Department of Ecology](#), or email Recyclingreform@ecy.wa.gov. If you missed the Recycling Reform Act kickoff webinar, you can [watch the September 9th recording](#) or [view the written Q&A from that session](#). If you would like to sign up for email updates, please visit [Washington Department of Ecology](#).

Wendy Weiker of Republic Services commented regarding the Title 10 revisions listed in the agenda: there could be impacts to the regulatory framework and to costs; they suggested that committee member reach out to Republic or WM about impacts. Any letter signed by the committee should be well vetted.

Blum explained that today's agenda item is an overview of the code changes and the letter will be considered at a later time. SWD discussed the topic with the haulers last week and will do so again in December.

Kevin Kelly of WM echoed Weiker's concerns, stating that some changes appeared to be redundant—e.g., the contact list is already provided and customers are informed of wildlife cart availability.

Chair Sweet said MSWAC will want to understand the universal concerns shared by the haulers.

SWD Updates

Stubbs provided the update.

Tonnage update

Garbage tonnage through September was comparable to the same time period last year. The cumulative transfer station recycling tonnage was also comparable to 2024.

Regional Utility Rate Summit

- The summit had 150+ attendees – it drew elected officials, staff, and more and included SPU, PSE, KC WTD, KC SWD and Water-Sewer Districts.
- The emphasis was on the compounded impact of rate increases.

- MSWAC Chair Sweet kicked off the meeting with a strong and clear message of the challenges rate increases are causing.
- SWAC/MSWAC member councilmember Laura Mork participated in a panel discussion.
- Staff facilitated break-out sessions to take a deep dive into the issues.
- Next step will be to determine when and what the next rate summit looks like and continue the discussion.

Cedar Hills Gas to Energy

The facility is now named Cedar Hills Renewable Gas to Energy (CHARGE) Facility. The environmental attribute purchase and sale agreement between King County and Karbone was transmitted to King County Council in early November; approval by Council would garner significant financial benefit for SWD and KC ratepayers. The gas and some environmental attributes go to PSE.

Organics Management Law Rulemaking

Ecology is accepting a third round of comments on draft rule updates to chapter 173-350 WAC, Solid Waste Handling Standards. The rule aims to address contamination in food waste feedstocks, the quality of finished products such as compost, and requirements for pre-processing facilities such as de-packagers. King County submitted comments in earlier rounds. All previous comments are available to view on the rulemaking website. King County supports regulation that will result in the greatest diversion of material and high-quality end products. The deadline was extended this week. SWD's letter is nearing final review. SWD will share with the cities and provide SME support to those who are submitting comments.

Heubach asked what the County's concerns are. Stubbs replied that they focused on ensuring diversion and product quality. Donati asked what date the comment period extension ends. Ockerlander stated it is December 12. Ockerlander reiterated that SWD's letter is nearly final and will share with MSWAC when it is.

Organics Collaboration Workshop

On November 4, SWD hosted an Organics Management Law Collaboration Workshop for King County cities, a forum to share organics management plans, highlight collaborations, and brainstorm opportunities for future work together. Representatives from 24 cities attended, a testament to our region's commitment to minimizing food waste and maximizing organics recovery.

Recycle Right Guide

This popular guide is now available in four additional languages—Moldovan, Russian, Turkish, and Ukrainian. It is available in a total of nine languages [on SWD's website](#).

Stubbs thanked Chair Sweet for her commitment to enhancing health and the environment in our region through collaboration and stated that SWD and the committee are deeply appreciative of her service and leadership on MSWAC. Chair Sweet replied that her work with the committee over 14 years had been a labor of love.

Van Orsow asked whether DNRP and/or SWD anticipate any changes under the new Executive. Stubbs responded that it is too early to tell, but SWD will keep the committee informed on that issue.

Operations Update

Kim and Carter reported on this topic.

Forward Look: Transfer Station Impacts

Vashon Tipping Floor Resurfacing: Nov. 17 through Dec. 3

- Closed to commercial hauling
- Open to the public, including recycling and yard waste

Factoria Tipping Floor Repair and Resurfacing: Dec. 1 through mid-Feb.

- Monday-Friday: Open for commercial; closed for self-haul
- Saturday-Sunday: Closed for commercial; open for self-haul
- Yard waste will be closed throughout the construction period
- Household hazardous waste services will remain open normal hours

Carter noted that there had been a compactor breakdown at Factoria, but it had been managed well by staff, switching to top loading until the problem was resolved.

Operations All-Staff Meeting: Dec. 7

- Meeting will be held on Sunday to minimize service impacts. This is a new approach—in the past, these meetings were conducted with senior management staff visiting all the work sites.
- Delayed openings at SWD transfer stations, Cedar Falls Drop Box, and landfill

Strategic Communication Protocol

Protocol for communicating with city and hauling partners will proceed as follows:

- (1) **Internal communications (0 to 5 minutes):** The on-duty Operations Supervisor alerts key internal partners upon identifying an issue, initiating the Impact Assessment Plan.
- (2) **Verification and mitigation (5 to 30 minutes):** Confirm the cause, scope, and operational impacts and allow time for evaluating all feasible alternatives to prevent unnecessary disruptions.
- (3) **External communication (30 minutes until resolution):** Verified updates are shared within 30 minutes after impact and risk review until resolution.

October Transfer Station Impact Assessment

Station	Date	Impact Assessment Plan and Outcome
ALGONA	10/11-10/12 Sat and Sun	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Packer challenges on 10/10, prompting a self-haul closure to protect commercial operations.• Weekend self-haul volumes are 275% higher than weekday, while commercial tonnage is minimal. The station operated for self-haul only on weekends, with minimal to no impact on haulers.
	10/21 Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Both packers experienced mechanical challenges.• King County managed increased volumes at Bow Lake (18.46%) and Enumclaw (504%). The station returned to normal operations by 10/22, Wednesday
RENTON	10/24 Friday	At approximately 4:00 PM, a broken trailer obstructed commercial access, prompting site closure. No impact to incoming tonnage. The station returned to normal operations by 10/25, Saturday

Chair Sweet asked if an email could be sent out to the haulers so the drivers know what to do or where to go. Kim said the protocol is to send out an email within 30 minutes.

Contingency Waste Export by Rail Contract

Reported by Stubbs, this is a backup plan related to CHRLF expansion.

Background

The backup plan is to establish a contingency contract for short-term waste export by rail to mitigate the risk of not having a disposal option in place if any of Areas 5,6, and/or 9 are not ready to receive waste at the time they are needed. This contract would only be executed if needed, and at the County's discretion.

CHRLF expansion is underway as follows:

- Area 8 (current cell) is anticipated to reach capacity in April 2027
- Area 5W is expected to be open by March 2027
- Plan is to then transition to Area 5/6 top decks, but construction may not be complete in time
- *Why?* Previous permitting delays, two bid protests, and Area 5/6 rebid process

What this Project is NOT

The project would not constitute early partial export, nor would it be the waste-export-by-rail long-term option that is one of the two options being considered for long-term disposal.

Contract Status Update

SWD has had conceptual-level conversations with haulers and railroads, questions that arose included equipment needs, lead times, and intermodal facility turnaround. The RFP is in development and is targeted for publication in December 2025. Contract negotiation would follow the successful bid and contract activation would be done only if needed. Proposals received through the RFP process will help inform SWD about options and decisions to be made, as well as cost and operational impacts. SWD will continue to brief the advisory committees on this backup plan as it is further developed.

Gire asked if this plan would have an impact on the tip fee. Stubbs said the cost implications are not yet clear, but SWD is already looking at mitigation for cost by spreading the cost over a long period and minimizing rate impact.

Williams asked how SWD is approaching the bidding process given the known issues with bidding. Stubbs said the CHRLF expansion project was bid as one project, and SWD has learned more about the requirements of bid packages to help prevent the necessity of going out for re-bid.

Moldver commented that even though this is not a partial export project, RFP process may provide information on that. Stubbs agreed that more would be learned in that vein from this process.

Van Orsow asked if SEPA would apply to the backup plan project. Bucher explained that the short-term, emergent nature of this plan allows SWD to bypass the SEPA process—this has been confirmed by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Gire asked how this differs from the mutual aid agreement (MAA) recently proposed. Stubbs responded that the MAA with SPU was focused on disaster planning.

Title 10 Legislation Update and MSWAC Support Letter

Blum and Scholes reported.

Title 10: Solid Waste

King County Code provisions governing solid waste are found in Title 10. SWD regularly reviews and recommends updates to Title 10 for consistency and to deliver on the division's objectives. For these proposed changes, committee members are asked to flag areas of support or concerns and issue a letter of support.

Types of code changes include service updates, SWD administrative and operational updates, and Re+ policies.

Unincorporated Area Service Updates

Proposed changes include the following:

- Customer credits for inclement weather disruptions of 2+ service days
- UTC service providers must provide contact list
- UTC service providers must deliver replacement carts within 2 weeks
- UTC service providers must include info about wildlife carts in annual outreach materials
- Clarification in code language that customers must qualify as low-income to receive discount (not elderly, as currently says)

Sweet asked for clarification on wildlife carts; Scholes replied that they are bins with a locking mechanism to keep out wildlife, used in more rural areas. Many customers are not aware that they are available.

A member asked, are there currently credits for disrupted service? Kim replied, they are currently in the tariffs, while this proposal would add them to Title 10.

SWD Administrative and Operational Updates

- SWD Director may temporarily change facility operating hours in emergent circumstances. This differs from the procedure for setting permanent operating hours, and includes ability to change hours twice per year to accommodate staff training.
- Change annual report, buffer report, and landfill report due dates to Council from April 1 to May 1 to coincide with data availability

Williams asked what would be considered an emergent circumstance. Scholes said it would be any situation where needed to protect public health or the environment, or to accelerate recovery, such as a major storm.

Williams commented that the language should specify the need to communicate to partners.

Van Orsow asked if there would be the potential for operating hours to change due to mechanical failure or labor unrest. Stubbs responded that this would codify the authority to quickly make a change, but is not a diminishment of SWD's commitment to maintaining service level.

Van Orsow commented that perhaps the code should say hours would be extended at other locations.

Re+ Policy Changes

- SWD Director may change material accepted for recovery at each transfer station by rule, banning yard waste and mattresses from top-load stations. Self-haulers, including junk haulers, will no longer be allowed to bring yard waste or mattresses to Algona, Houghton, or Renton. The Director will have ability to make similar changes via rule in the future.

- Single-family organics diversion requirement
- By 2030, UTC service area customers must have service, manage on-site, or self-haul to organics processor.

Sweet asked what the difference is between changes “by rule;” how are code changes and rule-making different? Ockerlander said the rulemaking process allows the Director to make changes without going through the Council. Sweet asked how rules are distinguished in the code; Ockerlander said she would look for that information. Smith chimed in that examples of rules are the Waste Acceptance Rule and C&D management; these are focused more on public input.

Next Steps

The timetable for completion of these proposals is as follows:

November-December 2025: Public comment period for SEPA

December 2025-January 2026: SWD prepares ordinance package

January-February 2026: Advisory committees prepare letter

February-March 2026: Ordinance transmitted to Council.

Sweet commented that it is important to make sure the haulers’ concerns are addressed. Stubbs responded that SWD has been engaging with the haulers and will continue to do so.

2026 State Legislation Update

Ockerlander reported on the upcoming legislative session, which will be a short session of 60 days. Solid waste-related bills expected in 2026 (to be confirmed):

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Textiles (*building on HB 1420*)
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) – incl. vapes (may not move this session)
- Improving the End-of-Life Management of Electric Vehicle Batteries (*building on HB 1550 / SB 5586*)
- Amending Safe Medication Return (*Agency Request building on JLARC legislative report*)
- Increasing Solid Waste Collection Tax (*building on HB 2018*)
- Deposit-Return System (DRS) for Beverage Containers
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Mattresses (*building on HB 1901*)
- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Sharps (*building on Safe Sharps Advisory Group*) (probably not this session)
- Better Bag Ban

Ockerlander noted that Ecology has reduced staff for the organics law. She also noted that with the new Executive, there could be changes in staff and philosophy that could change SWD’s approach to legislation.

2026 MSWAC Draft Work Plan

Blum reviewed the committee’s 2026 work plan, which had previously been shared as a draft. This plan looks at a quarterly schedule rather than month-by-month. She noted that feedback is welcome.

Van Orsow asked about the LTD decision; Blum responded that the project schedule indicates that Advisory Committees can issue a recommendation in early 2027 after the SEPA process concludes.

Member Comment

Tsai commented that Sweet had been a superstar on this committee.

Sweet reflected on having been urged by John MacGillivray to join the committee, 14 years ago. She urged members to consider leadership, and also to bring in more elected officials. She suggested having an elected official and a technical

expert serving as Chairs is a good model. She surmised that the long-term disposal decision could draw more elected officials to the committee.

Gire similarly urged others to consider what elected officials they could bring in. Van Orsow asked if there was conversation going on about this. Sweet said the two elected officials on SWAC might be good candidates.

Heubach stated that she inquired to the Hazardous Waste Management Program staff for an update on the grant cycle and never received a response. Van Orsow and others added that they had had the same experience. Heubach added that Renton customers contribute \$600,000 to the program and deserve a better response.

Ockerlander urged committee members to let her or Blum know as soon as possible when something like this occurs—the County’s standard for response is 48 hours. She stated that SWD would follow up with the Haz Waste Program.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:37.