



**King County**

**Reagan Dunn**

Councilmember, District 9

**Metropolitan King County Council**

January 21, 2022

Don Tibbets  
Area Director, Operations  
Republic Services  
8343 154th Ave NE, Ste 110  
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Don,

I am writing on behalf of many households within King County Council District 9, which I represent, who did not receive garbage service for several weeks from Republic Services between December 2021 and January 2022. I have heard 39 complaints and pleas for help to my office alone, mostly from households within unincorporated communities around Maple Valley, Renton, Issaquah, and Kent, who did not have their garbage collected for up to a month.

This service outage is a continuing problem, despite Republic Services' return to full workforce levels earlier this week and the passing of any inclement weather. I am still hearing reports of households who have not yet had their garbage picked up, meaning they have been without trash service since before Christmas Day.

I realize the winter weather and work stoppage rendered Republic Services temporarily unable to perform garbage pickups, and that those circumstances were not fully under your control. However, the resulting service outage and ensuing response have highlighted a number of issues that I am requesting you, in partnership with King County, take action to address for both the short and long term.

First and foremost, I am requesting that Republic Services consider providing reimbursements or statement credits to customers who have paid for a service that they did not receive. In addition to fees for pickups that didn't occur, many households also absorbed additional costs from having to dispose of their trash at King County transfer stations. Notably, Republic Services did not provide drop-off locations within the impacted communities of District 9 for the accumulating garbage, which gave your customers a no cost-free alternative to paying to use a transfer station. A voluntary fee reimbursement by Republic Services would reduce your customers' share of the financial burden from the service lapse and be a small token of goodwill to compensate for the inconvenience of having to forgo what is an essential public service.

Second, I hope you will work with King County's Solid Waste Division on planning for how you can provide a more robust response to customers in the case that another extended collection stoppage ever occurs. Throughout this service lapse, I have been in close contact with the Solid Waste Division and will continue to engage with them to pursue service-level changes that include greater accountability for future service disruptions. I ask that you work with King County's Solid Waste Division, the King County communities that you serve, and the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission to modify your practices in a way that is fair to consumers, treats all King County residents equitably, and sets clear expectations of how you will respond to service outages going forward. Interim solutions that could be considered in service-level changes include the provision of drop-off locations, clear and fair rate reimbursement policies, and thorough and timely communication strategies.

I eagerly await your response and am available to discuss this issue with you further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reagan Dunn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Reagan Dunn  
King County Councilmember  
District 9

Cc: Wendy Weiker, Municipal Relationship Manager, Republic Services

Division Director Pat McLaughlin, King County Solid Waste Division

Jeff Gaisford, Recycling & Environmental Services Manager, Department of Natural Resources & Parks

Andrea Lai, Project/Program Manager III, Department of Natural Resources & Parks