

SWD Director McLaughlin provided an update regarding impacts on SWD of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SWD is in full operations, with no change in services or operating hours. He and Deputy Director Steiner have been visiting SWD facilities to keep staff informed and to show appreciation for their continuing to provide essential services to the public.

The Division has cancelled or postponed several events through March and into April. These include tours and community events such as recycling events.

The news media have expressed interest in whether SWD is handling garbage from medical facilities. Member Kassover had also inquired about this matter. SWD does not take medical waste, only non-medical refuse from medical facilities. We have confirmed that our personal protective equipment (PPE) and practices conform to CDC recommendations. The SWD relies on medical facilities to separate medical waste and they appear to be doing that well.

[Clarification: SWD does take medical waste at its transfer facilities but does not take *biomedical* waste except by permit at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill via a Waste Clearance Decision].

The Cedar Hills Landfill neighbors meeting scheduled for April may need to be postponed or changed to a virtual format.

Some good news: Amazon has come to the table to set up collection points for plastic bags, and we're encouraged that they want to be part of the solution.

The division was also been notified that it is a finalist in the Executive's annual Performance Excellence Awards for innovation, with changes in recyclables processing at two transfer stations that will result in a savings of more than \$50,000 per year. The division is grateful for this recognition.

Legislative Updates

Jeff Gaisford walked the group through the update provided in their attachments.

The 67th session of the Washington State Legislature is a "short" 60-day session that began Monday, January 13, 2020 and runs through March 12, 2020. The following bills have made it out of the opposite house.

ESSB 5323 Reducing pollution from plastic bags by establishing minimum state standards for the use of bags at retail establishments

Overview: Beginning January 1, 2021, a retail establishment may not provide single-use plastic carryout bags. Paper carryout bags or reusable carryout bags made of film plastic must meet recycled content requirements.

Beginning January 1, 2026, retail stores may not provide reusable carryout bags made of film plastic with a thickness of less than four mils. Until December 31, 2025, retail stores must charge an \$.08 pass through charge for recycled content paper bags and beginning Jan 1, 2026, must charge \$.12 for reusable plastic for \$.08 for recycle paper bags. The legislature will reassess the pass-through charge in 2025. The store can keep the revenue and it is a taxable item.

Bags used for produce, newspapers, dry cleaning, small hardware items, prescription drugs, unwrapped prepared foods or bakery goods, and frozen foods, meat, fish, flowers, and potted plants and other items where dampness or sanitation might be a problem are exempted.

Until June 1, 2025, Ecology is directed to expedite processing of applications for permits related to the expansion or reconfiguration of an existing pulp and paper mills for the purpose of manufacturing paper bags or raw materials used to manufacture paper bags.

Cities, towns, municipal corporation etc. that have enacted ordinances as of April 1, 2020, with pass-through charge of \$.10 cents is not preempted with respect to the amount of the pass-through charge until January 1, 2026.

Status: March 9; Senate concurred in House amendments. Passed final passage; yeas, 33; nays, 15; absent, 0; excused, 1. The final bill is here [5323-S.E AMH CHAP H5413.1](#)

SHB 2645 Concerning the photovoltaic module stewardship and takeback program

Overview: Amends the existing solar photovoltaic stewardship law (RCW 70.355) that passed in 2017 to fix several issues. One issue was an oversight in the definitions which did not specify that the "Photovoltaic module" could be part of a system connected to the grid or utility service (this would have exempted the 82,000 solar panels that have been installed in Adam's county's solar farm). Requires a work group be formed by WSU to study options. Delays implementation of program by 2 years.

STATUS: March 10, House concurred, and bill has passed both houses.

SHB 2713 – Encouraging Compost and Procurement Use

Overview: Encourages state agencies and local governments to use compost products in government-funded projects, subject to certain exceptions. Encourages local governments that provide residential compost services to enter into a purchasing agreement with their compost processor to buy back finished compost products for use in government projects or on government land. Creates a three-year compost reimbursement pilot program for farming operations to receive reimbursement for 50 percent of its purchase, transportation, equipment, spreading, and labor costs up to \$50,000 per year. Requires the Department of Agriculture to manage the reimbursement pilot program.

Status: Passed out of the Senate with a minor amendment on March 5th. The House concurred with the amended version March 9th. The Speaker of the House signed the Bill March 11th.

Recycled content (ESHB 2722/SB6645 – Relating to minimum recycled content requirements)

Overview: Requires that beverage containers sold into Washington State have minimum post-consumer recycled plastic content, tiered up each 5 years at these levels:

January 2022 – 10% minimum content

January 2025 - 25% minimum content

January 2030 - 50% minimum content

This bill applies to almost all beverages for human and animal consumption.

STATUS: Referred to the House for concurrence: House and Senate have concurred, bill passed both houses on March 11, 2020. Passed final passage; yeas, 57; nays, 40; absent, 0; excused, 1.

Plastic food service products (HB 2656 / SB 6627 (Previously SHB 1632) – Reducing waste associated with single-use food service products)

Overview: Requires food service products including plates, cups, clamshells, deli rounds, etc, to be recyclable or compostable and ultimately compostable-only by 2030. Requires utensils, straws and condiment packages be offered on demand. Adds a tax.

STATUS: Senate bill did not move forward. House bill: Heard in the Appropriations committee at 1:30 on February 10, 2020 (possibly not subject to fiscal cutoff).

There were no questions on the legislative update. Heather Trim commented that none of these bills has yet been signed by the Governor. She expressed excitement about the recycled-content bill; it is in line with what the industry has been pledging but is nevertheless innovative. California's similar legislation was hung on a bottle bill and did not pass. The Washington bill covers many containers not included in California's legislation, including containers used for both human and animal products.

Gaisford summarized news on plastic bag takeback. There were 86 takeback sites in January, now increased to 98 sites in March. Volume data have been difficult to obtain from Trex. MRFs have not seen a big change in volume, which is disappointing. SWD staff are working with the American Chemistry Council to find new markets (beyond Trex) for new stores that we add to the retail take-back program.

The plasticfilmrecycling.org website has seen a 300% increase in hits.

A survey of 500 King County residents found that 50% were aware that plastic bags and film are no longer allowed in curbside bins, while 50% thought they were allowed okay. Also, 67% knew that some plastic products should not go into the bin.

Chair Kelly was asked about his MRF. They have been tracking the impact of film for a long time and recently even more; it's too early to tell how big the reduction has been. Anecdotally, they are still seeing a high volume of plastic bags and film at their facility.

The agenda was re-ordered due to technical difficulties with the HWMP update.

Regional System Planning

Regional system planning, includes Zero Waste of Resources Plan, rate restructure, Comp Plan Update and long-term disposal decision, and ILA extensions.

Zero Waste of Resources Plan (ZWORP) will identify options for diverting specific parts of the waste stream (e.g., plastics, paper, food) and business models to support this diversion.

Rate Restructure. With some 90% of our revenues coming from garbage disposal, we need to move away from the variable, tonnage-based disposal rate to one based more on fixed rates.

Comp Plan must be updated every five years and must include the long-term disposal plan.

Inter-local Agreements (ILAs) with the cities must be extended out to 2060. Notably, bond capability is much greater with the ILAs in hand.

The work must be staggered because these are such big projects and our opportunities to engage with SWAC are limited. The rate restructure is parallel to this work because ZWORP cuts into our revenue; we need to be working on a new structure at the same time. Also, the Comp Plan work may reveal some possibilities for future disposal.

Atwood asked about the timeline for ZWORP and its potential to provide new data to inform long-term decisions.

Walsh responded that the first part of ZWORP should bring forth some ideas, specifically around food waste, yard waste, and lumber, the materials we most need to tackle. In 2021, the long-term disposal effort will begin with research into options.

The division would like to know how SWAC wishes to be engaged. The three possible options are proposed:

- A.** Commit time at advisory committee meetings; this is similar to how the Comp Plan was approached.
- B.** Create a new Joint Task Force like the Responsible Recycling Task Force.
- C.** Create Joint Subcommittees for each component

McLaughlin asked members to vote on the approach they would prefer. The vote was as follows:

Option A: 3

Option B: 6

Option C: 3 (Trim's vote was added later in the meeting via Chat).

Walsh commented that the MSWAC had voted in favor of Option B. The Joint Committee would be comprised of SWAC, MSWAC, possibly Amazon, and others.

Walsh will be able to provide more details on the Joint Task Force at the next meeting.

Trim remarked that she is concerned that because of the virus, we should pause the use of reusable plastic bags and the ban on plastic bags.

McLaughlin agreed it would be prudent; some retailers are not allowing customers to bring in their own bags.

Trim said Zero Waste Washington would be supportive of a pause in the plastic-bag ban.

Hazardous Waste Management Program (HWMP)

The presentation started with Joy Carpine-Cazzanti providing an overview of HWMP.

HWMP is a unified program covering all jurisdictions in King County, including 38 cities, two tribes, and unincorporated King County. Staff of about 70 is embedded in four partner agencies. Lines of Business are carried out by multi-agency teams and budget, and partner agencies receive funding from the program.

Oversight is by a five-member board representing coalition partners—Public Health-Seattle & King County, KC Solid Waste, Sound Cities, other cities and tribes; Seattle Public Utilities; and KC Water and Land Resources Division. The five-member board that oversees the program consists of staff from these entities. Krystal Marx, Deputy Mayor of the City of Burien, is the newest member of the board.

The current grant cycle (2019-2020) includes funds to 36 cities and one tribe, with grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$90,000. They also support additional education and collections events. In 2019, 27,188 residents and businesses delivered a total of 132,920 pounds of hazardous waste to city- and tribal-sponsored events. Note: most events for March and April have been suspended. However, they are staying in contact with their partners and helping during this crisis. They have provided posters for them to help them inform their constituents where to take hazardous waste.

The program will utilize a social media and ethnic news marketing campaign to promote Haz Waste disposal services to residents and small businesses; Provide outreach materials and resources to city staff, tribes and recycling coordinators for local outreach; Promote a new website by summer with more user-friendly features and in-language support; and target work with community organizations to provide services around lead poisoning prevention and household chemical exposure to low income and ethnic families. They have found many families with children that have elevated lead levels.

Chair Kelly expressed his thanks for the work of the program, which is so important for public safety.

Joy added that all HWMP facilities remain open.

Rate Development: Proposed Rate

The presentation started with an overview regarding the rate process to include long periods between rate increases. In recent times, cities have been asking for smaller, more frequent rate increases. This reduces some of the sticker shock to residents. Historic increases were on the order of 10 to 15 percent; planned increases are for 5% in the next three biennia.

Eighty-five percent of our revenues come from tonnage. In looking at forecast versus actual tonnage, for most years between 2015 and 2020, the actuals met or exceeded the tonnage forecast.

As the 2019-2020 rate was developed, only the forecast numbers were available. That forecast did not factor in the construction and demolition waste (C&D) ban, which was implemented in 2018. The C&D ban has been very successful in diverting resources away from the landfill. It also resulted in about 7% fewer tons than were forecast. The division was expecting about 190,000 tons less in 2019-2020 than our forecast, resulting in about \$27 million less in revenue.

The division has updated its 2020 forecast to include incorporated effects of C&D ban at stations (8% drop); added more tonnage from material recovery facilities (MRFs) sending in residuals (was 17K, assuming 20K in 2020, and 25K in 2021+); reduced tonnage based on improved recycling at transfer stations (2,000 from Sort It Out improvement starting in 2021; 4,000 in 2024 due to SCRTS opening); Smoothed out 2023 and 2025 because the model showed a dip in tons due to a high tipping fee; but this does not typically happen. The tipping fee input is good to depress the tonnage forecast (otherwise it would be very high) but it can have the adverse effect of creating a dip in the forecast which is not likely because of a high tipping fee.

The forecast now shows 1.4 million fewer tons over the 2018-2026 period compared to the 2018 forecast. The division is monitoring the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The division is already seeing a reduction in tonnage and know that tonnage is affected by the level of economic activity. Staff will keep SWAC informed regarding tonnage impacts.

Trim asked whether the impact was felt when the Seattle North Transfer Station went back online. Honaker said yes, it affected Shoreline, would need to get the data.

About 90 percent of revenues come from disposing of garbage, yet the SWD vision is to achieve zero waste of resources by 2030. According to the last waste-characterization study, about 70 percent of what is sent to the landfill has value, including food waste, lumber, paper, and plastics. As actions are implemented to achieve this vision, the division will cut into disposal revenue and will see rate hikes in the future.

The division used the low-tonnage scenario because it saw an additional drop in tonnage in 2019 due to "Snowmageddon" and to not receiving residuals from our MRFs for a few months. SWD convened a Rates Task Force across the division, with a representative from each section who worked with their sections to generate ideas.

The division looked at ideas not just from a financial impact perspective but also whether they were feasible and aligned with our goals such as Zero Waste of Resources and Climate Change. Over 200 staff participated in 35 meetings and generated 194 ideas.

Some issues to consider regarding a new rate includes the_base budget has largely remained flat; continued investment in Zero Waste of Resources and Climate Change; moving away from over-reliance on tipping fees; and investing in capital projects identified in the Comp Plan.

Both Asset Management and Safety Planning should yield long-term financial benefits for the department. It is difficult to forecast the timing and exact impact, but the division will monitor performance and adjust spending the next biennium.

By 2030, the region will need to ensure that through reduction, reuse, and recycling, 70 percent of what was disposed of at the landfill in 2015 is not sent to the landfill. Materials with value entering the landfill include organics; plastic/paper/packaging/glass; fabrics/textile/mattresses; and small-volume miscellaneous materials.

Increased revenues from the Regional System Fee (discussed below) and reinvestment of revenues from the sale of landfill gas will be put towards funding ZWORP and Climate Change actions.

The division is at the beginning of the ZWORP process so it has not precisely identified the actions we will take, but we have an idea. Of the 70 percent of recyclable materials now going to the landfill, the majority is food, dimensional lumber, yard waste, and paper. These are the materials we want to focus on first. At least \$5 million will be invested in targeting materials.

Up to \$2 million will be invested in climate change, including purchase of electric vehicle and charging stations and green diesel. This will include electric tractors at the transfer stations to move materials around; we are currently still unable to haul waste with electric vehicles.

Non-tipping-fee revenue increases will reduce the need to raise the tipping fee to include the sale of Eastgate (\$26m), the regional system fee (\$8m) and increased yard waste/wood waste fees (\$112 per).

Strader asked if LIFT customers would get a break on mattresses; Walsh said that they will receive a \$12 discount.

The rate proposal package will go to the King County Executive in May. At that time, the division would send the advisory committees a letter. Legislation is expected to go to the King County Council in July. By October 1, cities and haulers will begin communicating to customers about the new rate.

Walsh said that at the next meeting SWD will bring a draft letter for the SWAC to send to the Council and Executive.

Member Comment

Trim expressed concern that the virus is adhering to surfaces of garbage and recycling materials.

Chair Kelly said that volumes seem to be changing in terms of materials. There have been no recommendations from the CDC regarding how we handle things. We are in the public health business and need to continue our work. When you see a hauler, smile and thank them for their work, they cannot telecommute.

McLaughlin said SWD is following CDC and Public Health-Seattle & King County guidance as to how we handle material and PPE.

Weiker echoed Kelly's comments, regarding business as usual. We have 30-60-90-day billing. HUD has not yet called MRFs essential services.

Kelly commented that California has shut down some MRFs.

Borsum said that haulers are concerned about the virus adhering to materials. He recommended an article in wastedive.com about risk to workers. He asked what PPE King County is using. Haulers are mainly using gloves, goggles, and bleach.

McLaughlin responded that SWD is using standard PPE, including goggles and gloves, and has added messaging regarding cleaning work surfaces and hands. Scale Operators have gloves available, and are reminded not to touch their faces, especially after taking cash from customers. The weigh cards are being bleached between uses.

Freeman said that they are taking similar measures, plus conducting huddles in larger rooms; maintaining maximum possible space between sorters in MRFs and distributing hand sanitizer to truck drivers.

Trim asked McLaughlin if anyone had gotten sick. He replied that SWD had heard of one member of KC staff who tested positive, but he is not sure what Division they were from.

Vice-chair Atwood reported that Trim had registered her vote through the video chat mechanism, choosing Option C for the regional system planning engagement approach.

Chair Kelly closed the meeting by thanking SWD and Executive Constantine for their leadership and remarked that the silver lining in these circumstances is that people are adapting. He reminded people to wave and smile when they see a commercial hauler.

McLaughlin requested that attendees take the satisfaction poll for the Zoom video conferencing.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 11:20am.