

## Updating Industrial Waste Fee Structure: Next Steps

The King County Industrial Waste (KCIW) program has been working on a proposal to update the structure of its fee system. Changes require a two-step decision-making process. First the King County Council considers updating the King County Code. Pending Council approval, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks develops a Public Rule.

### Thirty-year old fee structure is out of date

KCIW is funded by fees paid by regulated facilities, and the range of facilities we regulate has changed over the last 30 years. These changes follow national and global trends and new federal and state rules that require KCIW to focus on new industry sectors. Our current fee structure needs to be revised to reflect these changes. The current structure is primarily based on volume of water discharged for two pollutant classes (heavy metals and fats-oil-grease). Since different industries use different amounts of water, fees based primarily on water volume do not necessarily reflect the amount of work it takes for KCIW to monitor each facility.



### The proposed changes affect two fees

- **Issuance Fees** for reviewing applications and issuing permits or other types of authorizations.
- **Compliance Monitoring and Administration Fees** for inspections, sampling, laboratory analyses, data review, and permit management.

The allocation of the **Surcharge Fees** for treating “high-strength” waste (i.e. food and beverage processors) will not be affected. But there will be changes for surcharge customers. (See [separate fact sheet](#).)

# KCIW Fee Structure Update

## Proposed fees based on cost of service

Under the new fee structure facilities would pay fees that are based on how much it costs KCIW to serve them.

**Issuance Fees** – A range of fee levels would replace the current one-size fits all system. Simple permits will cost less than complex ones. Control documents for renewals and revisions will cost less than permits and authorizations for new facilities.

**Compliance Monitoring and Administration Fees** – Fee tiers would replace fees based on water volume. KCIW would use criteria to place facilities into fee tiers. All facilities in the same tier will pay the same amount. Criteria could include facility type, size, risk to the system, and monitoring complexity. Some facilities would pay higher fees than they do now and some would pay lower fees than they currently do. Any fee increase would be phased in over three to four years.

## Input from customers

In summer 2017, KCIW customers gave general support for this approach. They had questions and ideas about tier placement. Several businesses mentioned it would help them to have more predictable fees from one year to the next. KCIW provided updates in newsletters throughout 2018.

## Two-step decision making process

1. First, the King County Council considers an update to the King County Code. If the Council approves the changes, the Code would no longer contain detailed fee formulas.
  - The Council lists the dates of hearings on proposed ordinances on their website at: [https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/ordinances\\_advertised.aspx](https://www.kingcounty.gov/council/clerk/ordinances_advertised.aspx).
2. Pending Council approval of the recommended Code changes, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks will develop a Public Rule to implement the Code. The Public Rule will outline the general criteria to place facilities in fee tiers and the process for setting the fees in each tier.
  - KCIW will inform customers about the Public Rule process. There will be a public hearing, 45-day comment period, and a “Response to Comments”.

Customers: Thanks for the input in 2017. Stay tuned for opportunities to participate in the Public Rule process.

Anticipated changes to customer bills could go into effect as early as summer 2019.

If you have comments about the fee structure, please contact Mark Henley Program Manager, at 206-263-6994 or [MHenley@kingcounty.gov](mailto:MHenley@kingcounty.gov)