

## Services

### Can the company skip a pickup due to poor weather conditions?

Yes. A pickup may be missed due to hazardous weather or road conditions. You can set the missed garbage, plus your regular garbage or recycling, out for the next scheduled pick up at no extra cost.

### Can a garbage company refuse service?

Yes. A company may refuse to provide service for any of the following reasons:

- Noncompliance with state, county or municipal laws concerning solid waste services, i.e., not using a proper container.
- Conditions are hazardous or impractical to provide service due to inclement weather, or rough roads.
- A payment is overdue for the same type of service.
- Someone else living at your address has an overdue bill with the company; has not made satisfactory arrangements for payment of the overdue bill; and the company has objective evidence that you are helping customer to avoid payment.
- Garbage containers are not accessible from the street, alley, or road.
- Garbage cans exceed capacity or weight limits set forth in the company's tariff.
- You deceptively obtained service.

NOTE: A company cannot refuse service if the former occupant has an unpaid bill.

### How can I dispose of hazardous waste?

Do not put hazardous waste in your regular garbage. There are special handling standards for the collection and disposal of these materials in federal, state, and local rules. Contact your county for assistance.

## About the UTC

The UTC regulates the rates and services of private or investor-owned utility and transportation companies.

### If you need help with:

- Electric Utilities
- Natural Gas Utilities
- Water Services
- Garbage and Recycling
- Telephone Companies
- Movers
- Utility Locates

### Call the Commission

1-888-333-WUTC (9882)  
consumer@utc.wa.gov

### General Information

[www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov)

360-664-1160

PO BOX 47250  
1300 S Evergreen Park Drive SW  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250



## Consumer Guide

## Residential Garbage and Recycling



## Billing and Rates

### How can I learn more about my company's rates?

UTC-approved rates are published in a company's tariff. A tariff outlines the rates, services, terms and conditions of service. The commission's website, [www.utc.wa.gov](http://www.utc.wa.gov), has companies' tariffs online or contact your company for a copy.

### How is my garbage rate determined?

Many factors contribute to the cost of garbage services, including: disposal fees; equipment costs; drivers' wages; taxes; compliance with local regulations; and administrative expenses. If any of these costs change, your company must seek approval from the UTC to change rates. You will receive a notice of the company's intent to increase rates and be asked to comment on the proposed increase. This is your chance to be involved in the UTC's decision-making process.

### What information should be on my bill?

All solid waste bills must show:

- Account information – customer name, service address, billing address;
- The billing period;
- The mailing date and due date.
- The company name, address and telephone number;
- Rate information - the amount and percentage of each tax or fee;
- Each service listed as a separate line item;
- The total amount due; and
- A late payment fee, if applicable.

### Can the company assess a late payment charge?

Yes, if the company has a late payment charge in its tariff.

### How can I lower my garbage bill?

Contact your company to determine what service options are available. By recycling and composting, you may be able to reduce your garbage amount and move to a smaller container. To find out more, contact your company or call the Washington State Department of Ecology at 1-800-RECYCLE (1-800-732-9253) or visit [www.ecology.wa.gov](http://www.ecology.wa.gov).

## Complaints

### How do I file a complaint against my company?

Contact the company first and attempt to resolve the complaint, ask to speak with a supervisor.

If, after speaking with the supervisor, you are still dissatisfied; call the commission.

File a complaint by:

- calling the commission's toll-free Consumer Help Line at 1-888-333-WUTC (9882),
- emailing [consumer@utc.wa.gov](mailto:consumer@utc.wa.gov), or
- visiting [www.utc.wa.gov/fileacomplaint](http://www.utc.wa.gov/fileacomplaint).

UTC Consumer Protection staff will contact the company on your behalf and attempt to resolve your dispute.

## More Information

Visit [www.utc.wa.gov/garbage](http://www.utc.wa.gov/garbage) for more information on regulated garbage and recycling services.

## Deposits

### Do I have to pay a deposit for garbage service?

Customers might be required to pay a deposit before service begins. The following examples are conditions that may require a deposit:

- Your service was cancelled for non-payment in the last 12 months.
- You owe an unpaid, overdue balance to another garbage collection company.
- You received two or more delinquent notices from your prior company in the previous twelve months.
- Another occupant at your address has an overdue bill owed to the company.
- You lost garbage service within the last 12 months for failure to pay.

### How much will the deposit be?

The amount of deposit depends on the type of service you have and whether the company bills monthly, every other month, or quarterly.

Example: You sign up for one-can weekly service. If the company's monthly rate for service is \$10, your deposit will be \$20.

### When will I get my deposit back?

If you pay your bill on time for a year, a company must refund the deposit, plus accrued interest, with a check or a credit to your account within 15 days when:

- You terminate your service; or
- You have not received more than two delinquent notices in the past 12 months.

### What if I am unable to pay a deposit?

The company must allow you to make payment arrangements for a deposit by paying one-half of the deposit prior to receiving service, and paying the remaining balance in two equal payments over two months.