

**WSR 22-10-046**  
**PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY**  
**UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION**  
**COMMISSION**

[Filed April 28, 2022, 9:25 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: This rule making concerns potential changes to current rules in chapter 480-70 WAC applicable to the provision of solid waste collection service, including revising customer notice requirements, allowing electronic tariff filings and electronic billing, exploring the possibility of implementing a mandatory low-income residential rate program, clarifying the time for making up missed service, eliminating residential deposits and fees, customer notice requirements, tariff filing processes, free and reduced rates, refusal of service, cancellation of service, complaints, billing, establishing credit and deposits, and other related topics.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 81.04.160, 81.77.030, and 80.01.040.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: RCW 80.01.040 and 81.77.020 task the utilities and transportation commission (commission) with regulating the provision of solid waste collection service. The commission has enacted rules regarding the provision of solid waste collection service in chapter 480-70 WAC.

On March 2, 2022, the commission received a petition for rule making requesting changes to solid waste collection rules related to missed pickups. The proposed changes clarify the timeline for providing make up service for missed pickups, which protects consumers.

The commission finds that making additional changes to solid waste rules to strengthen consumer protections and create efficiencies for regulated companies is warranted. For example, authorizing electronic billing could streamline billing and reduce administrative costs for regulated companies; authorizing solid waste companies to file tariffs electronically and eliminating paper filing requirements supports the commission's transition to a paperless environment and provides customers additional options for payment.

Additionally, certain solid waste notice requirements contained in current rules, and application of low-income rates contained in current rules, may conflict with statutory authority. The commission intends to address those potential conflicts in this rule making so that our rules do not result in companies violating the statute.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges, especially for customers struggling to pay bills during a global crisis. Utility companies, in support of and in compliance with the governor's moratorium on utility disconnections, changed fee, disconnection, and reconnection practices by suspending them through September 30, 2021. Having seen the impact of changed practices on electric and natural gas customers and the utilities that serve them, the commission is currently considering permanently eliminating fees and deposits for regulated utility companies. Similarly, the commission finds it in the public interest to consider if longer term changes to solid waste collection service related to late fees and deposits are warranted, and should be incorporated into chapter 480-70 WAC.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: Counties and cities that have not asserted their own jurisdiction over solid waste collection.

Process for Developing New Rule: The commission uses a collaborative rule-making process that includes stakeholder workshops, formal comments, and draft rules.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Amanda Maxwell, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, WA 98504-7250, phone 360-664-1234, TTY 711 or 1-800-833-6384, email [records@utc.wa.gov](mailto:records@utc.wa.gov), website [www.utc.wa.gov/e-filing](http://www.utc.wa.gov/e-filing).

April 28, 2022

Amanda Maxwell

Executive Director and Secretary