

Solid Waste Services Contract FAQs

The Thurston Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) has scheduled a public hearing at 3 p.m. on March 22, 2022 to receive comments on a proposed new contract for solid waste operations, maintenance, transport and disposal services.

Why is a new contract needed?

The current service agreements are outdated and expire in 2023. A more comprehensive contract is also needed to fully address garbage and recycling, account for population growth, and provide for necessary facility improvements.

What does the new contract cover?

The new contract includes operation and maintenance of the county's three solid waste facilities including the Waste and Recovery Center (WARC) and drop-box locations in Rainier and Rochester.

It also covers the transport and disposal of garbage, processing of recycling, and handling of compostable organics collected at county solid waste facilities.

Will the new contract cost more?

No. In fact, the new contract is expected to save the County about \$1 million per year.

Will disposal fees at county facilities increase?

Cost savings from the new contract will help limit future disposal fee increases.

Will the cost of curbside garbage and recycling services increase?

The county does not provide curbside service. In most areas, it is provided by an independent waste hauler. For Olympia residents, the service is provided by the city.

The fees charged to these curbside waste haulers when they bring their garbage trucks to county facilities for unloading is not expected to increase.

When will the new contract begin?

If approved, the new contract will begin May 1, 2023.

Where will our garbage go?

Garbage from Thurston County will continue to go to the Roosevelt Regional Landfill in Southeast Washington. The landfill is a state-of-the-art facility with an on-site power plant that turns methane produced by garbage into electricity, generating enough power for 30,000 homes each year.

Where will our recycling go?

Recyclables will be transported to a regional Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where they are sorted and prepared for recycling. Organics will also continue to be processed and transported for composting to reduce carbon emissions and improve soil quality.

How was the new contractor chosen?

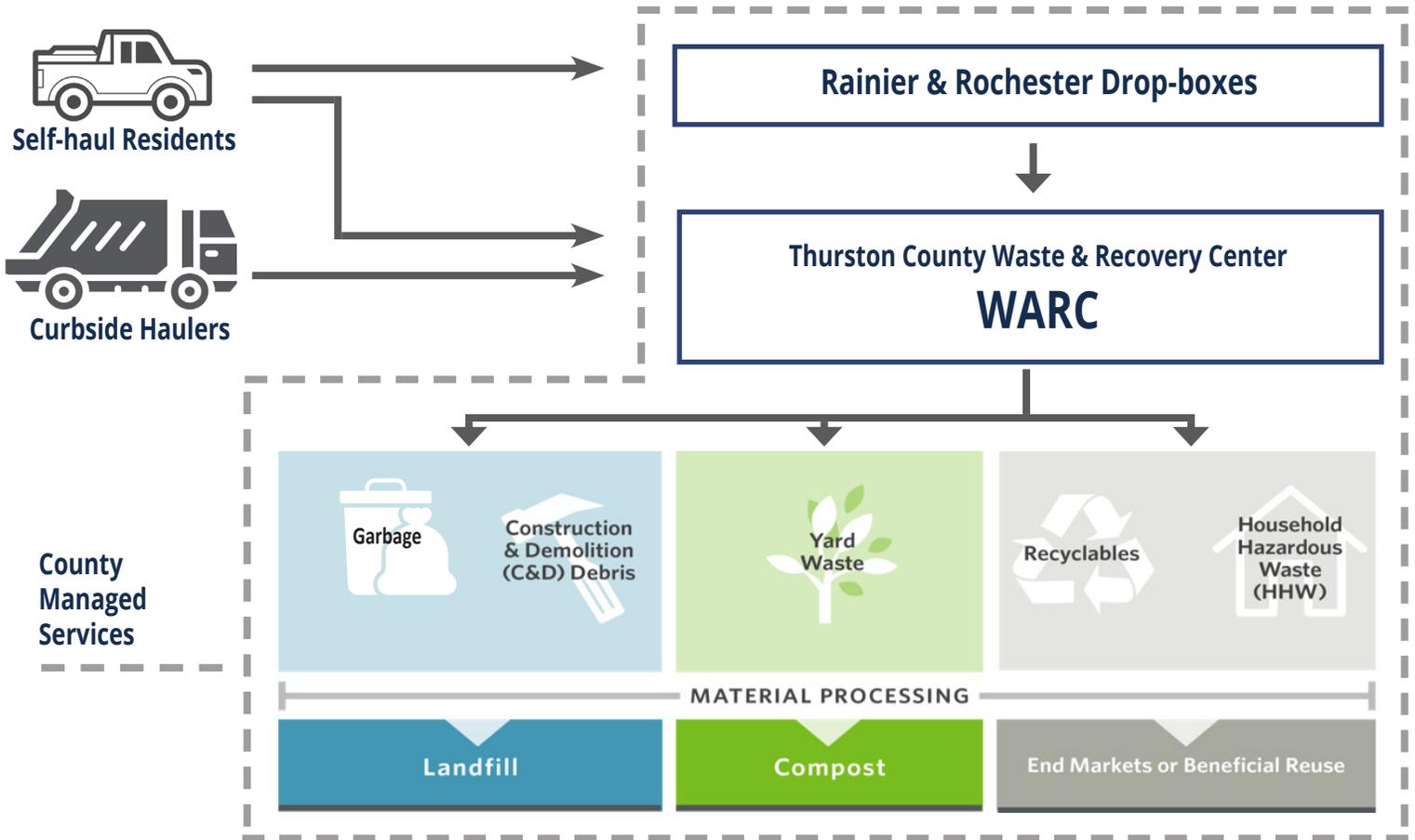
The contractor was chosen through a competitive proposal process designed to:

- Meet the county's needs and provide the best value to residents
- Allow for future growth and change
- Promote competition
- Provide transparency
- Be environmentally sound
- Meet county sustainability initiatives
- Align with the Thurston County Solid Waste Management Plan

Is there anything different in the new contract?

The new contract provides for additional capacity at county facilities, increases staffing levels for contracted operations, and includes \$50,000 in equipment maintenance/replacement costs each year. The contractor will also pay all utilities necessary for WARC operations and provide new equipment with improved fuel standards.

Garbage & Recycling in Thurston County



Garbage

- Step 1** A garbage hauler picks up garbage from the curb, loads it into a garbage truck, and takes it to a county facility. Some people also haul their own garbage.
- Step 2** Haulers pay a tipping fee to unload their garbage for processing by the county.
- Step 3** County facilities at the WARC are used to compact and load the garbage into shipping containers.
- Step 4** The containers are trucked to Centralia, WA where they are put on a train and carried by rail 200 miles to Roosevelt, WA located in Southwest Washington.
- Step 5** The garbage-filled containers are removed from the train, loaded onto trucks and taken to the nearby Roosevelt Regional Landfill for disposal.

Recycling & Organics

- Step 1** Recyclables from county facilities are transported to a regional Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where they are sorted and prepared for recycling.
- Step 2** Organics are processed and transported for composting to reduce carbon emissions and improve soil quality.

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