

For the second time in four months the operating hours of the County transfer stations will be reduced. On October 3rd the County transfer stations on Orcas Island and San Juan Island were closed on Saturdays until further notice. Now those two transfer stations will also be closed on Fridays. Beginning February 19, 2010 the transfer stations will be open on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The closure is expected to reduce operational costs by \$40,000 per year.

In 2009 the amount of solid waste brought to County solid waste facilities dropped dramatically. This resulted in a corresponding sharp reduction in revenue from solid waste fees of more than 20%. With the decline in solid waste, disposal and transportation costs fell but the cost of keeping the transfer stations open remained. The closures will bring the operational cost back in line with the amount of revenue that is being generated.

In addition to the transfer station closures, the separate recycling system on Lopez Island will be merged with the commingled system that serves the rest of the County. Operating a single system for the entire County-wide, is expected to reduce operating costs by \$30,000 per year.

Upcoming changes include:

San Juan Island Transfer Station: Will be closed on Friday and Saturday beginning February 19th.

Orcas Island Transfer Station : Will be closed on Friday and Saturday beginning February 19th.

Lopez Drop Box Site: Will discontinue baling of recyclables and manage recycle materials through the commingled system used on the other islands. This change will begin on February 24th.

The additional day of closure will certainly affect customers that normally use the facility on that day as well as increase use during the days we are open. At the same time, converting the Lopez Island facility recycling system to the same system used at the Orcas Island and San Juan Island facilities will reduce costs while continuing to provide recycling services at all County solid waste facilities.

While these changes will balance our short term operating costs and expenses our long term and regulatory compliance costs will remain the same. We continue to repay loans that were used to construct our current facilities and to close the Orcas landfill. We continue to monitor the impact of the closed landfill on the environment. We continue to maintain compliance with solid waste, safety and stormwater regulations by

implementing legally required planning, pollution prevention practices, and reconstruction and repair of some facilities.

These are the efforts that had historically been underfunded through the garbage fees and are the focus of current efforts by the County Council to create a more stable revenue structure. This is the challenge that still exists for the solid waste program and the County as a whole. There will be more discussion and more changes in solid waste funding to ensure that regulatory requirements are met and vital public services are maintained.