

2019 Fee Changes for Surcharge Customers

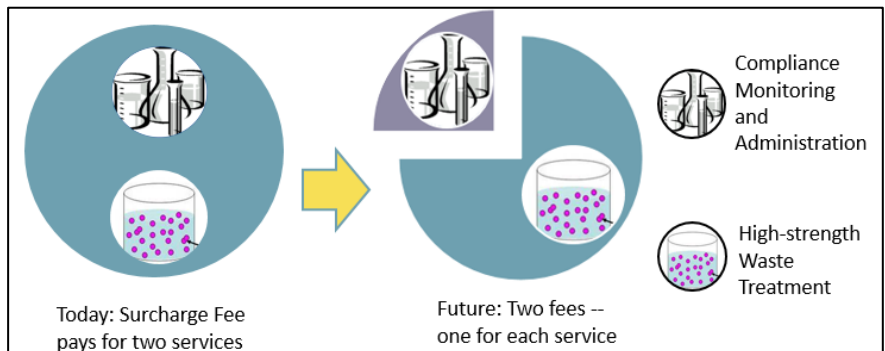
Businesses that send high-strength waste to the sewer pay an extra fee, called a surcharge fee, based on the amount of organic material above domestic levels in their wastewater. It costs more to treat high-strength waste because the treatment process has to use more energy to reduce organic pollutants to acceptable levels.

The King County Industrial Waste (KCIW) Program typically uses the facility’s wastewater concentrations and flow rates to determine the surcharge treatment cost. High-strength waste contains a higher concentration of “total suspended solids” (TSS) and “biochemical oxygen demand” (BOD) than typical wastewater. BOD is a measure of organic material in wastewater and is defined by the amount of oxygen used by microorganisms in consuming the organic matter.

Beginning July 1, 2019, surcharge fees are separated

Until recently, KCIW’s surcharge fee was combined in a single formula in King County Code and included the cost of treating concentrated high-strength waste at a treatment plant and the cost of KCIW compliance monitoring and administration (CM&A) of the permit or authorization. Under a new structure that goes into effect July 1, 2019, these fees are split, and surcharge facilities will pay separately for:

- surcharge treatment costs for treating concentrated waste at the plants (based on flow) and
- the CM&A fee for KCIW staff to monitor and administer permits (based on tiers).



The change was initiated because the amount of flow discharged to the sewer system did not necessarily reflect the level of effort to monitor and administer permits by KCIW staff.

Two fees means more transparency, not necessarily higher costs

For surcharge facilities, creating separate fees for these two services will make it more clear what customers are paying for. It will also make it possible for KCIW to more accurately adjust each of these two types of fees if costs change for treating the high-strength waste or for changes to a company’s CM&A tier assignment. In some cases, separating the fees may lower the overall costs that would have been charged previously as a single, combined fee.

Beginning July 1, 2019, the unit costs for BOD and TSS will no longer include the CM&A costs:

	Jan. 1–June 30, 2019*	July 1–Dec. 31, 2019	Jan. 1, 2020–Dec. 31, 2020
BOD	\$0.3861/pound	\$0.3503/pound	\$0.3896/pound
TSS	\$0.4635/pound	\$0.4277/pound	\$0.4326/pound

* For this time period, BOD and TSS unit costs include surcharge treatment and CM&A costs.

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Surcharge fee allocation increases unaffected by switch to two fees

Separating the cost of CM&A from the surcharge fee will not affect changes to the surcharge fee allocation that are already underway.

KCIW is phasing in new surcharge fees based on an updated cost allocation that reflects current treatment systems and recent data. To limit impacts to businesses, KCIW decided to take four and a half years to roll out increases that resulted from the allocation change. Beginning January 1, 2020, we will be in the last year of the four and a half year cycle to update to the way surcharge fees are calculated.

For Quarter 3 2019, KCIW will send bills to the local sewer agencies that include the following:

- Surcharge treatment fee
- CM&A fee

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