

King County | Wastewater Treatment

Finance and Administration

King Street Center, KSC-NR-6200
201 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104-3854

October 22, 2025

TO: Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD)

FM: Courtney Black, Chief Financial Officer, WTD

RE: Proposed Septage Fee for 2026

King County Code 28.84.050 Part L authorizes the Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD) Director to determine and adjust a “per gallon fee” for discharge of materials from cesspools, septic tanks, chemical toilets, and privies into the King County Metropolitan Sewage System.

In 2023, a private septage treatment facility opened in Sumner, and anecdotal evidence suggests significant amounts of septage that have historically been treated by WTD have been diverted to the new facility. Septage flows at WTD’s South Treatment Plant decreased from 30.8 million gallons in 2022 to 21.7 million gallons in 2023 and 21.5 million gallons in 2024, but they are on track to increase to nearly 24 million gallons in 2025.

WTD’s operating and maintenance costs have been increasing quickly in recent years, driven by increasing treatment costs of electricity and chemicals, increased regulatory obligations, inflation, and the challenges of an aging system. As a result, the recommended cost of service rate for septage is an increase of 15.1%, from the existing \$0.1429 per gallon to \$0.1645.

A one cent per gallon surcharge will continue in 2026 to provide funds for Public Health - Seattle and King County to respond to failing on-site sewage systems (OSS), provide technical support to property owners with OSS, identify and repair prioritized OSS failures, continue “what not to flush” education and outreach, and improve industry reporting. This surcharge resulted in an effective 2025 septage treatment rate of \$0.1529 per gallon.


The recommended septage fee of \$0.1745 per gallon for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2026, includes the surcharge of \$0.01 per gallon.

Kamuron Gurol
October 22, 2025
Page 2

Two other agencies in the region that accept septage include the Cities of Everett and Tacoma. The existing 2025 Everett rate is \$0.3300 cents per gallon. In 2025, Tacoma charged \$0.1526 per gallon to inside city customers, and \$0.1679 per gallon to outside city customers. Everett has adopted \$0.05 increases every year through 2028, when the rate will be \$0.4800 per gallon. Tacoma has not yet published its 2026 rate.

Your signature below approves the recommended rate per gallon as described herein effective January 1, 2026.

Approved:

Signed by:

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Kamuron Gurol, Division Director
Wastewater Treatment Division

10/23/2025

Date

- cc: Tom Bauer, Operations Manager, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD), Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
- Mike Wohlfert, Plant Manager, South Treatment Plant (STP), WTD, DNRP
- Rachael Dyda, Process Control Supervisor, STP, WTD, DNRP
- Chris Tinnin, Septage Coordinator, STP, WTD, DNRP
- Andrés Bas Moore, Rates & Financial Planning Supervisor, WTD, DNRP
- Luke Slaughterbeck, Rates & Financial Planning Senior Analyst, WTD, DNRP