



Snohomish County

Public Works

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Snohomish County to Close Solid Waste Transfer Stations and Drop Boxes on Sunday, Sept. 18 and 25

Solid Waste facilities temporarily not accepting green waste and wood debris

EVERETT, Wash., September 15, 2022 – Due to ongoing regional railway transportation issues, Snohomish County will close all Solid Waste transfer stations and drop boxes Sunday, September 18 and 25, as well as temporarily not accept green waste and wood debris. The scheduled closures will allow staff to remove excess garbage, which is reaching hazard levels.

“Even though on the national level a tentative agreement has been reached to avoid a railway workers strike, we continue to have railway transportation issues from our county facilities to regional landfills. The railway slowdown is causing the garbage to pile up at our transfer stations,” Snohomish County Public Works Director Kelly Snyder said. “Safety remains our number one concern and we have to take action.”

The excess garbage is prompting health, safety and environmental concerns for customers and staff similar to the challenges experienced during May 2022 when the county closed transfer stations for two consecutive days to clear out excess garbage. Piles of refuse pose a risk of fire and other dangers to staff and customers.

“These two Sunday closures will allow our crews to relieve the system stress by clearing some of the backlog that is building up,” Solid Waste Director Dave Schonhard said. “By closing on two Sundays, we hope to minimize the impact on commercial curbside pickup for county residents.”

Additionally, effective September 21, Snohomish County will temporarily stop accepting yard debris at all facilities. Due to the amount of refuse on the floor, green waste and wood debris is being contaminated at Snohomish County facilities and must be disposed of as solid waste. This is also contributing to the backlog of waste in the facilities and uses valuable space in containers being transported for disposal in a landfill. The county is encouraging residents to take green waste and wood debris to alternate locations. A list of those local businesses is located at the end of the release.

Snohomish County continues to work closely with Republic Services, Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF), Waste Management, and local solid waste haulers, to find an immediate resolution to these ongoing issues.

Many of these issues continue to affect local Solid Waste facilities throughout the Puget Sound area and into Western Canada. Skagit and Island County Solid Waste facilities have also had temporary closures during spring and summer of this year due to these ongoing rail issues.

Adding to the uncertainty is the possible nationwide strike by more than 100,000 railway workers. On July 15, 2022, President Joe Biden stepped in and delayed a railway workers' strike, since it impacts essential services nationwide. The action named an emergency board of arbitrators which provided negotiators a 60-day window to find a solution which ends September 15, 2022. A railway strike impacts more than just the transportation of refuse, as many goods and commerce utilize railway transportation.

It appears that the rail worker unions have reached a tentative agreement with the class 1 railroads, however, the unions must still vote and ratify these agreements. A strike would mean a complete closure of Solid Waste transfer stations and drop boxes because no refuse could be moved to regional landfills. This would impact the weekly curbside pick-up of garbage, recycle and green waste for households and businesses.

County officials are urging residents to seek reduce, reuse, recycling options for reusable items. Donating household items, books or clothing that are reusable to thrift stores or other outlets such as selling on community classifieds or market-place community groups online are always a better alternative than throwing them away.

In early January 2022, Solid Waste transfer stations began experiencing the lack of needed containers via rail from BNSF, and during the next five months, garbage was piling up at the facilities. In April, the Snohomish County Council approved an emergency contract with Waste Management Inc. to aid Snohomish County Solid Waste in the removal of excess refuse at local transfer stations. The \$2 million short-term waste transportation and disposal agreement gives county Solid Waste workers the ability to transport more garbage out of county facilities through the end of October. A railroad strike would also likely affect the Union Pacific Railroad, which Waste Management uses to transport waste-by-rail to its regional landfill in Oregon.

Refuse has been at sustainable levels throughout the summer, but recently began to build up again due to railway staffing issues along with intermodal container shortages. The lack of a daily required number of intermodal containers to haul garbage have impacted the county for the last eight months and continues to cause garbage piles and heightens the risk fires at county transfer stations. For disruption of services and updates about the Solid Waste facilities, visit:

- www.snohomishcountywa.gov/207/Solid-Waste
- www.twitter.com/SnoCoPW
- www.facebook.com/SnoCoPW

County residents who plan to visit Solid Waste facilities should check the lines on the county website: www.snohomishcountywa.gov/5431/Check-the-Lines

Here is a list of alternate locations to take green waste and wood debris:

Bailey Compost

- baileycompost.com
- Snohomish (360-568-8826)
- Yard waste only. No sod, dirt, or rocks.

Cedar Grove Composting

- cedar-grove.com
- Everett, Woodinville, Kenmore (877-764-5748)
- No wood or limbs greater than 4 inches in diameter; no noxious weeds

Lenz Enterprises

- lenz-enterprises.com
- Stanwood (360-629-2933)
- No mixed loads, treated lumber, dirt, or rocks

Pacific Topsoils

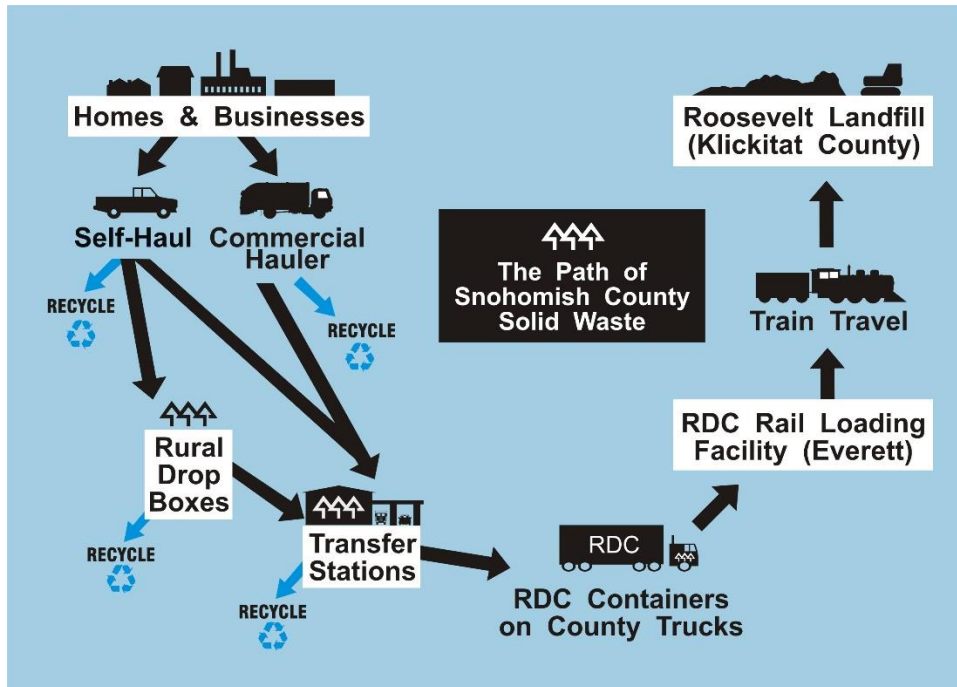
- pacifictopsoils.com
- Woodinville, Everett, Kenmore (425-337-2700)
- No mixed loads, plywood, or treated lumber

Reece Aggregates and Recycling

- reeceaggregatesandrecycling.com
- Arlington (360-403-7520)
- No treated lumber or garbage

Riverside Topsoils

- riversidetopsoils.com
- Snohomish (425-379-9933)
- No treated wood or pallets



About Snohomish County Public Works

Snohomish County Public Works is responsible for approximately 1,600 miles of county roads, more than 200 bridges and manages about 200 traffic control signals. The department also processes nearly 600,000 tons of garbage per year. Its mission is to focus on safety and mobility while practicing fiscal responsibility and preserving the environment. Public Works has won numerous state and national honors for its work and is the largest department within Snohomish County government with approximately 500 employees plus seasonal staff. Its main office is located at 3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett, WA 98201. Visit www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks or follow the department on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more information about Snohomish County Public Works.

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