

## Deschutes solid waste disposal fees increase

*by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources*

Tipping fees charged at Knott Landfill and other Deschutes County solid waste disposal facilities (Negus, Northwest, Alfalfa and Southwest transfer stations) will increase on September 1st. The funds generated by the increase will be used to preserve Deschutes County Roads.

The tipping fee for solid waste disposal will increase from \$40 to \$45 per ton on September 1. The minimum disposal fee (for up to 400 pounds of waste) will increase from \$19 to \$20.

The increase may affect the rates charged by commercial garbage haulers. For a typical residential, garbage customer in Deschutes County or in one of the cities in the County, the fee increase could translate to an increase in the monthly garbage bill of 50 to 75 cents.

The tipping fee increase is expected to generate approximately \$772,000 in the coming fiscal year and more than \$900,000 annually thereafter. The money will be transferred to the County Road Department and used for preservation and overlay projects such as the recently completed overlay project on Cline Falls Highway.

The new revenue would primarily be used to replace future Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000 (PL 106-393) funds that expired last September. Secure Rural county payments significantly support Deschutes County public safety, emergency medical, Search and Rescue and Road services. County payments total \$3 million annually for road maintenance, equaling 27 percent of the County's road maintenance budget. These funds have been renewed by Congress for fiscal year 2007-08, but are expected to be dramatically reduced or discontinued the following year.

If Secure Rural Schools funding is not replaced by federal or local sources, the County's Road Department will be forced to make budget cuts and severe reducing preservation and overlay projects.

As another funding option to replace Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act dollars, the County is also working on creating a systems development charge (SDC). The new fee would be charged to new development to help pay for road construction projects that benefit those developments. A citizen/stakeholder committee is working with the Road Department and a hired consultant on the creation of the SDC ordinance.

For more information about the increased tipping fees or to learn more about services provided by the Deschutes County Road or Solid Waste Departments, please call 388-6581 and 317-3163, respectively.

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