

## **Commercial Garbage and Recycling Services Rate Changes Frequently Asked Questions**

**The City of San José has an exclusive franchise agreement with Republic Services to provide solid waste services to all businesses in San José.**

### **Why are my rates changing?**

Under the Municipal Code, the commercial collection franchisee may apply for an adjustment once per year and any adjustment shall be done in accordance with the application process, methodology, and other factors specific in the franchise agreement. The City Council may conduct a public hearing to confirm that the proposed maximum service rates are consistent with the terms of the franchise for fiscal year 2020-2021. Republic submitted a rate adjustment request to increase commercial garbage and recycling service rates due to the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increases in wages, cost of operation, and cost of processing of garbage and recyclable materials in San José. The change in the COLA is calculated annually based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) data.

The City Council establishes the annual rate changes at a regular meeting.

### **Why increase rates now?**

Rate increases are needed to make garbage and recycling services self-sustaining, so that taxpayer funds will not be diverted from other important programs. A rate increase would support contractual cost increases, including annual COLA for expenses such as fuel and labor.

### **What is the proposed rate change?**

The proposed rate increase for commercial garbage and recycling services provided by Republic is 4.90 percent (pending City Council approval) and would be effective on July 1, 2020.

### **How much have rates changed in previous years?**

In the past five years, rate changes varied from 1.85 percent to 4 percent as displayed below for two common service levels.

Fiscal Year (Rate Change)	3 Yards (1 Collection/Week)	40 Yards (1 Collection/Week)
2015-2016 (4%)	\$232.60	\$822.74
2016-2017 (3.16%)	\$239.95	\$848.74
2017-2018 (1.79%)	\$244.25	\$863.93

2018-2019 (2.79%)	\$251.06	\$888.04
2019-2020 (1.85%)	\$255.71	\$904.47
Pending 2020-21 (4.90%)	\$268.23	\$948.78

### How do San José rates compare to the other cities?

Currently, San José commercial garbage and recycling services rates are among the lowest in Santa Clara County. The table below provides a comparison of two common service levels, 3 cubic yard and 40 cubic yards, to other cities in the county and Bay Area.

City	3 Cubic Yard Container Collected Once Per Week (monthly rate)	City	40 Cubic Yard Container (per collection rate)
San José Current†	\$204.39	Los Altos‡	\$782.90
<b>San José Proposed†</b>	<b>\$214.40</b>	San José Current†	\$828.45
Fremont	\$246.39	Morgan Hill	\$845.61
Santa Clara	\$261.60	<b>San José Proposed†</b>	<b>\$869.04</b>
Cupertino	\$268.88	Campbell	\$920.78
Milpitas	\$279.14	Monte Sereno	\$925.90
Campbell	\$287.54	Gilroy	\$932.82
Mountain View	\$320.25	Saratoga	\$939.76
Gilroy‡‡	\$331.39	Fremont***††	\$953.54
Average (non-San Jose)	\$340.49	Los Gatos	\$1,001.37
Los Gatos	\$346.49	Cupertino	\$1,036.59
Morgan Hill‡‡	\$367.30	Average (non-San Jose)	\$1,036.62
Monte Sereno	\$382.39	Milpitas‡	\$1,197.84
Saratoga	\$405.64	Santa Clara	\$1,206.80
Sunnyvale*	\$411.06	Palo Alto**	\$1,227.59
Los Altos	\$421.55	Mountain View	\$1,266.45
Palo Alto*	\$437.20	Sunnyvale*	\$1,274.74

\* Bin rental fee plus hauling

\*\*Includes delivery fee

\*\*\*††From 1/1/2020 to 12/31/2020

† Average of the north and south district rates and average of both wet/dry

‡ Additional disposal charges exist, but not shown

‡‡ Includes optional lock/unlock and push/pull service to remove and return containers to trash enclosures. These services are extra charges in all other jurisdictions including San José.

### **Would all wet, dry, and customized service fees change?**

Yes, a price increase will be applied to all services provided as well as push pull service, container locks, overage charge, demurrage charge, delivery, return, bin cleaning, and organics contamination.

### **Will there be another rate change next year?**

Possibly. The need for rate adjustments is evaluated each year and depends on a number of factors including contractual cost increases.

### **What if I want to downsize my current garbage service to save money?**

Right size your containers to match the amount and type of waste you produce. Schedule a FREE waste audit to evaluate your business needs. Contact [Republic Services](#) at 408-432-1234. You can also donate edible food to local food banks instead of throwing it away in your wet container. Contact [Second Harvest of Silicon Valley](#) at 408-266-8866, extension 102. Visit [the Santa Clara County Donation Food Resources](#) to learn more about the food donations centers in the county.

### **May I share a cart with my neighboring businesses to save on costs?**

Yes, you can share containers, if possible, with your neighboring businesses. Work with Republic on identifying ways to share and reduce your costs.

### **How can I reduce my waste?**

[Republic Services](#) has several zero waste tips:

#### *Reduce*

- Order items with minimal packaging.

- Print, copy, and write on both sides of a sheet of paper when possible.
- Use dry-erase boards and overhead projectors for presentations instead of handing out copies.
- Make training manuals and company information available electronically, instead of in printed books and binders.
- Encourage your staff to use reusable coffee mugs, dishes, and utensils.
- Adopt an environmentally preferable purchasing policy.

#### *Reuse*

- Use refillable toner cartridges for printers. Non-refillable cartridges contain between two and three pounds of plastic and metal!
- Send documents between offices and departments in reusable envelopes.
- Reuse corrugated boxes for shipping supplies between offices.
- Buy refillable pens and mechanical pencils. Pencils and the outer casings of pens can come in a variety of reclaimed materials, such as recycled newspaper, plastic, rubber, and even recycled dollar bills.
- Use the blank side of printouts as scratch paper or to take notes.

#### *Donate*

- Donate unwanted office supplies to nonprofit organizations, charities, schools or used materials exchanges.
- Give excess building materials and supplies from renovations to low-income housing developers or non-profits such as Habitat for Humanity.
- Donate cafeteria leftovers.

You can also visit the [City website](#) for more tips on waste reduction, zero waste, and best practices to recycle and reuse materials.

#### **How are rates calculated?**

Rates are calculated by reviewing the CPI and by evaluating Republic's cost of operations including labor, vehicle, fuel, transfer and transport. The City also evaluates the cost of sorting and processing at the recycling and the organics processing facilities.

#### **How can I cancel or reduce my pickup services with Republic?**

Contact Republic Services at 408-432-1234 to request a change or to cancel service.