

## Amy Johnson

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**From:** Kim Davis <k.mdavis@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 09, 2019 2:14 PM  
**To:** citycouncil  
**Cc:** CityRecorder  
**Subject:** Testimony re Establishing New Solid Waste Management Service Rates

Dear City Council,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed rate increase for trash collection. As a single person who lives in a duplex, I have been paying ridiculously high and unfair rates ever since moving to Salem. Every other town in Oregon I have lived in provided superior service with greater choices regarding services. I have been conscientiously striving to reduce my waste, as should all citizens. However, because our trash is hauled to the Covanta Marion incinerator, which profits from more, not less trash, there are no incentives offered to citizens of Salem to do the same.

I am writing this in my second week of suffering the consequences of an 'air stagnation' weather condition which is limiting my ability to be outdoors. Knowing that the toxic pollution generated by that incinerator is being trapped in the air causes me great alarm. Knowing that money is being made to do this, by both Marion County and Covanta Marion, is disturbing to say the least.

In communities that rely on landfill management, I witnessed firsthand excellent collaboration between hauling companies and citizens in efforts to reduce waste, not generate more for profit. It is illusionary to think all that trash in Salem just disappears at the incinerator -- it is transformed, into toxic air pollution and ash.

Global waste reduction programs and zero waste communities have found the most transformative approach to change waste production is by charging customers per pound rates, not a flat fee. In these successful communities, individuals are able to enjoy having their food waste collected weekly and distributed to composting programs (and/or biofuel production industries). Non recyclable garbage production shrinks considerably when individuals are charged per pound and requires less frequent collection. This reduces the costs and greenhouse gas emissions associated with all those trash trucks running up and down the streets. And folks like me, who really do care about reducing waste, benefit from lower monthly costs, because they produce so little trash.

Additional hikes in our solid waste management service rates is another example of business as usual. I believe the City of Salem can start doing better than that.

Thank you.  
Kim M. Davis

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**From:** Jim Scheppke <[jscheppke@comcast.net](mailto:jscheppke@comcast.net)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 09, 2019 3:01 AM  
**To:** citycouncil  
**Cc:** CityRecorder  
**Subject:** Testimony on Agenda Item 4a

Dear Salem City Council:

The "Comparative Rate Analysis" that is included in your Council packet shows that if you approve the proposed garbage rates for 2020, Salem will likely have the highest rates of any of the cities shown except for Silverton. This can't go on. Garbage rates are regressive. A wealthy resident of Salem pays as much as a poor family or a senior on a fixed income. Paying \$30.75 a month for garbage service many not seem like a lot to some, but for a poor household struggling to pay their bills it is a hardship. You can no longer ignore this.

You should ask yourself why people in Albany, just down the road, pay \$22.56 cents for garbage service, including *every week* recycling service! The haulers there are dealing with the same issues around recycling that our haulers are. One thing that makes a big difference, I suspect, is that they are able to take their garbage to a state-of-the-art landfill, the Coffin Butte landfill near Corvallis that charges lower tipping fees. We in Salem/Marion County are forced to haul our garbage to an aging incinerator that is polluting our water and our air with greenhouse gases and toxic chemicals like lead, mercury, cadmium, and dioxin, all to profit a giant multinational corporation. Out of all the greenhouse gas emitting facilities in the state, our garbage burner ranks 20th in the entire state and 1st in Marion County, according to the DEQ.

This can't go on. The Salem City Council cannot simply rubber-stamp every rate increase that comes before you. You must act to try to protect the struggling ratepayers and end the pollution of our air and water. At a minimum you should only approve one year of the two year rate proposal, and then spend the next year seriously looking at alternatives that will freeze or even reduce our rates to be comparable to those of other cities.

At present garbage rate-payers in Salem/Marion County are being victimized by our County Commissioners and by a multinational corporation. I implore you to begin to put a stop to this.

Sincerely,

Jim Scheppke  
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