



Legislation Text

File #: 2010-0483, **Version:** 2

Clerk 09/07/2010

A MOTION requiring a study by the solid waste division of the department of natural resources and parks of the availability and utility of portable truck scales for county vehicles carrying solid waste from waste transfer stations to the Cedar Hills landfill.

WHEREAS, the ombudsman's office has completed and forwarded to council a report dated August 19, 2010, confirming the historical practice whereby solid waste has been conveyed from solid waste transfer stations to the Cedar Hills landfill in trucks under the management of the county's solid waste division that are sometimes loaded beyond the allowed vehicle weight standard established by the state, and

WHEREAS, such a practice may carry with it the potential to adversely impact roads and bridges of the region, designed to a specified load capacity, and might additionally represent a risk to public safety, in light of the effect that overweight loads can have on handling characteristics of vehicles, as described by the ombudsman's report, and

WHEREAS, the ombudsman's report notes that there has been significant progress by the division in its efforts to minimize the numbers of trucks that are dispatched in an overweight status, and that drivers confirm this progress, and

WHEREAS, in order to efficiently manage the transfer of waste by minimizing the number of conveyance trips, yet assure that trucks remain within appropriate weight limits, it is necessary to determine the weight of the trucks before leaving a transfer station en route to the landfill, and

WHEREAS, the ombudsman's report recommends that installing scales at all transfer stations should be

completed as soon as reasonably possible, and

WHEREAS, a number of the transfer stations that were built decades ago, are not currently equipped with weighing scales necessary to confirm that the trucks are within weight limits before departure, and

WHEREAS, the transfer station system is undergoing a system-wide upgrade, with stations to be upgraded or replaced over the next five years, with new or upgraded stations to be equipped with installed weigh scales, and

WHEREAS, the ombudsman's report notes that the division evaluated placement of a portable scale at the Houghton transfer station over a decade ago, and that the scale did not perform adequately, causing the division to decline to move forward on placement of similar scales, and

WHEREAS, since that time, there may have been improvements in the construction and operation of portable scales; and

WHEREAS, other county agencies use portable scales, which may be appropriate for transfer stations currently not served by scales, and

WHEREAS, a review by the division of the market availability of such scales could provide a reasonable short term alternative to awaiting the completion of new or upgraded transfer stations that will be equipped with permanent scales;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. The solid waste division is directed to undertake a study on the availability of portable weight scales that could be used for weighing trucks that carry solid waste from transfer stations to the Cedar Hills landfill. The study shall address the cost, reliability, accuracy and utility of such scales for that purpose. The study shall also address the potential for surplus scales when station upgrades or replacements are completed. Among the scales considered should be portable scales currently in use by other agencies of county government.

B. By November 10, 2010, the solid waste division shall file a report, summarizing the results of the study, in the form of a paper original and an electronic

copy with the clerk of the council, who shall distribute electronic copies to all councilmembers.