

# Monmouth council OKs 8 percent garbage increase

Brandt's Sanitary Service requests first rate adjustment since 2012 in both Monmouth and Independence

By Emily Mentzer  
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Starting Jan. 1, residents of Monmouth will see an 8 percent increase in garbage collection from Brandt's Sanitary Service.

The Monmouth City Council approved the increase after much discussion at its Dec. 1 meeting.

Before unanimously ap-

proving the rate adjustment, councilors had questions about recycling, costs and how the 8 percent was determined.

Councilor Jesse Shafer asked what Brandt's was doing to increase recycling efforts.

"We're selling the materials that have been separated," said Estle Harlan, solid waste management consultant for Brandt's. "It only cov-

ers about 10 percent of the cost of picking it up."

She said when Oregon adopted the Opportunity Recycle Act in 1983, state officials knew it would cost a premium to recycle.

"We know it will not cover the costs," Harlan said. "Some jurisdictions are looking to plug in a 30 percent loss over last year on material sales."

Prices are going up at

every level of the garbage collection business, except for the price of fuel, Harlan said.

Councilor Jon Carey asked why, as people recycle more, the tipping costs at the landfill are so relevant.

"That would be true if people were not now disposing more," Harlan said. "We're recycling more, but we're still disposing more, so we don't see the tons going

down on the solid waste side dramatically. We're a throw-away society."

The company is working with a 0.03 percent operating margin, Harlan said, and would like to be closer to 8 percent. Rates have not been raised since 2012.

Carey said he would like to do what was necessary to keep Brandt's in business.

"I think it's in our best in-

terest to keep Brandt's viable ... to do everything we can to assist the profitability and viability of Brandt's Sanitary Service," he said.

The increase will mean \$1.64 more per month for an average residential customer with a 35-gallon cart.

The Independence City Council heard a request for the same increase at its Tuesday meeting, which was after press time.



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www.FaithLutheranMonmouth.org

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Children's Christmas Program will be held Sunday, Dec. 20 during the 10:30 am service.

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