

Billionaire increases investment in Republic Services

Feb. 17 -- Warren Buffett likes trash.

The well-known investor, whose every financial move is watched closely by Wall Street, has substantially increased his investment in Republic Services Inc., the nation's No. 2 solid waste management company.

In a new filing with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc. says it held 8,290,500 shares of the company's stock as of the end of 2009.

That compares with 3,625,000 shares at the end of last year's third quarter.

Buffett joins billionaire buddy Bill Gates with substantial holdings in Republic Services. Gates has been a long-time investor in the company, and Buffett only started buying stock within recent months. Berkshire Hathaway, a publicly traded company, owns stock in about 40 other firms.

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