



For Immediate Release

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Westfield gas & sewer rate cases: Consumer comments invited

If you would like to comment on Citizens Energy Group's proposed rate increases for its natural gas and sewer utilities in Westfield, here's your chance.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) – the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) – is reviewing both requests and is inviting written consumer comments.

Citizens Gas of Westfield – IURC Cause No. 44731

The OUCC is inviting comments through September 21, 2016 and is scheduled to file testimony on September 28, 2016.

Citizens Gas of Westfield's proposal would raise its monthly customer service charge from \$5.79 to \$12.00 for residential customers and from \$5.79 to \$37.00 for commercial customers. The proposal would also increase the base rate's volumetric portion, increasing the utility's annual operating revenues by approximately 16.2 percent (not including natural gas commodity costs that are recovered on a dollar-for-dollar basis). According to its testimony and exhibits, the utility is seeking the rate increase due to rises in operating and maintenance costs, as well as new infrastructure investments. Its request would raise a total average monthly residential bill from \$65.93 to \$71.37.

The proposed increase in this case would only apply to the utility's base distribution rate, which comprises approximately 58 percent of a typical Westfield residential customer's monthly heating bill. Base distribution rates cover "non-gas" costs such as operating and maintenance expenses, and capital infrastructure improvements.

Citizens Wastewater of Westfield – IURC Cause No. 44835

The OUCC is inviting comments through November 10, 2016 and anticipates filing testimony on November 18, 2016.

Minimum monthly sewer charges for 5,000 gallons would rise from \$51.10 to \$64.09 under Citizens Wastewater of Westfield's request. Monthly minimum commercial customer charges would be set at \$64.09 for customers using 5/8 and 3/4 inch meters, and at \$155.81 for commercial customers using larger meter sizes.

Citizens' proposal would increase annual sewer utility revenues by nearly 25.3 percent. According to its testimony and exhibits, the utility is seeking the sewer rate increase due to capital improvements including the 156th Street Interceptor and Downtown Lift Station projects.

(Continued)

Consumer Comments

Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the case record may do so via the OUCC's Website at www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm, or by mail, email or fax:

- Mail: Consumer Services Staff
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 South
Indianapolis, IN 46204
- email: uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov
- Fax: (317) 232-5923

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments at least one week before its testimonial deadline in each case so that it can: 1) Consider them in preparing its testimony and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal evidentiary record. Comments should include the consumer's name, mailing address, and a reference to the specific case.

Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

The requested rate changes are limited to service in Westfield. Rates and charges for Citizens customers in Marion County are not at issue in these cases.

All filing dates are subject to change. Updates on these cases will be posted on the OUCC's website including gas case updates at www.in.gov/oucc/2479.htm and sewer case updates at www.in.gov/oucc/2865.htm.

(IURC Cause Nos. 44731, 44835)

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) represents Indiana consumer interests before state and federal bodies that regulate utilities. As a state agency, the OUCC's mission is to represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, and creative problem solving. Visit us at www.IN.gov/OUCC, www.twitter.com/IndianaOUCC, or www.facebook.com/IndianaOUCC.