



Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

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## Van Buren Water Rate Case: Consumer Comments Invited

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is inviting public comments on Van Buren Water, Inc.'s request for a rate increase.

Van Buren Water is a not-for-profit utility serving more than 2,300 customers in Monroe County. If approved, its pending proposal before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) would raise the monthly water bill for a residential customer using 5,000 gallons from \$28.05 to \$36.75. Van Buren Water's current base rates were approved in March 2011.

According to its filing with the IURC, Van Buren Water is seeking the rate increase due to higher operating and maintenance costs, and to pay for more than \$1.9 million in capital improvements from 2015 through 2019. Specific projects listed in the utility's filing include a new 150,000 gallon elevated water tank, replacements of existing meters with advanced metering devices, backup power for booster stations, and line extensions and replacements.

The OUCC – the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the IURC – currently anticipates filing its report and recommendations in this case on February 19, 2015.

More information on this case is available online at [www.in.gov/oucc/2636.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2636.htm).

Consumers who wish to submit written comments may do so via the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm), or by mail, email or fax:

- **Mail:** Consumer Services Staff  
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- **email:** [uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov)
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Written comments the OUCC receives before the close of business on February 12, 2015 will be filed with the Commission and included in the case's formal evidentiary record. Comments should include the consumer's **name**, **mailing address**, and a reference to "IURC Cause No. 44566-U."

(Continued)

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

Van Buren Water is seeking the rate increase through the state's Small Utility Filing Procedure, which is available to utilities with fewer than 5,000 customers and is designed to reduce the time and expense involved with regulatory filings. Savings are gained by allowing utility staff to use standardized forms and the utility's resulting need for less assistance from rate consultants or attorneys.

The standard for OUCC and IURC reviews on small utility filings is the same that applies to traditional utility filings. The OUCC conducts its review on behalf of all utility consumers while the IURC's review is conducted on behalf of the public interest (a balancing of utility and customer interests). A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding; such an agreement, if reached, would require IURC approval.

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(IURC Cause No. 44566-U)

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.

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