



Indiana Office of Utility  
Consumer Counselor

**For Immediate Release**

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## **White Oak Wastewater Division rate case: Consumer comments invited**

If you would like to comment on Aqua Indiana's proposed rate increase for customers in its Crawford County service territory, you have the chance to do so.

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 the utility's request and expects to file testimony on Jan. 16, 2020.

Along with its legal and technical review, the OUCC is inviting written consumer comments through Jan. 9, 2020.

Aqua Indiana's White Oak Wastewater Division includes 44 residential and commercial customers in Crawford County's Liberty Township. Rates and charges for Aqua Indiana's other service territories throughout the state are not at issue in this case.

Under its request, the utility's flat, monthly residential sewer rate would rise in two phases, increasing from \$45.00 to \$54.00 in 2020, and then to \$61.00 in 2021. The utility cites increases in operating and maintenance costs in its filing with the Commission, along with multiple infrastructure improvements including line repairs, GIS mapping, and treatment plant upgrades, among others. Aqua Indiana, Inc. purchased the former White Oak Sewage Treatment, LLC in March 2017.

The utility is seeking the rate increase through the state's Small Utility Filing Procedure, which is available to certain utilities and is designed to reduce the time and expense involved with regulatory filings. Savings are gained by allowing utility staff to use standardized forms resulting in utilities needing less assistance from rate consultants or attorneys, leading to fewer expenses that would be passed on to customers.

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.

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](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm), by email at [uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov), or by mail at:

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The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than Jan. 9, 2020 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 "**IURC Cause No. 45308-U**." Please do not include account numbers and other sensitive information. Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

Updates on this case are being posted on the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2805.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2805.htm). Case updates are also available through the agency's monthly electronic newsletter. Consumers can subscribe at [www.in.gov/oucc/2877.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2877.htm).

(IURC Cause No. 45308-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. Visit us at [www.IN.gov/OUCC](http://www.IN.gov/OUCC), [www.twitter.com/IndianaOUCC](https://www.twitter.com/IndianaOUCC), or [www.facebook.com/IndianaOUCC](https://www.facebook.com/IndianaOUCC).