



Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

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Apple Valley Utilities rate case: Consumer comments invited

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is inviting written comments from Apple Valley Utilities, Inc. customers on the utility's pending rate case.

The OUCC – the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) – is reviewing the utility's request and has not yet taken a position in this case. The OUCC is scheduled to complete its review and file its report with the Commission on January 22, 2015.

Apple Valley Utilities, a privately owned utility providing water and sewer service to approximately 270 customers in Lake County, is seeking rate increases for the first time since 1995. According to its filing, the utility is requesting the changes due to increases in operating and maintenance costs.

A flat, monthly residential water bill would rise from \$21.02 to \$28.37 under the utility's request, while the flat, monthly residential sewer bill would increase from \$48.58 to \$70.30.

Apple Valley Utilities is seeking the rate increases 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 consumers and presents its written report and recommendations to the IURC with regard to the utility's request. The IURC then reviews the evidence and determines what is in the public interest regarding the filing (a balancing of utility and customer interests). A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding; such an agreement would require IURC approval. The OUCC attempts to reach a compromise where possible in each IURC case on behalf of ratepayers.

More information on this case, including the utility's filing, is available online at www.IN.gov/oucc/2809.htm.

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Consumers who wish to submit written comments 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

Written comments the OUCC receives by January 15, 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. 44551-U.**"

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

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(IURC Cause No. 44551-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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