



For Immediate Release

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Aqua Indiana rate case: Public Hearing May 17 in Fort Wayne

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) encourages Aqua Indiana Aboite Wastewater Division customers to comment on the utility's pending sewer rate request. Consumers may do either or both of two things:

1. Speak at the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission's (IURC's) Tuesday, May 17, 2016 public field hearing, or
2. Submit written comments to the OUCC by the close of business on Friday, June 17, 2016.

The IURC's May 17 public field hearing will be held in the Summit Middle School Cafeteria (4509 Homestead Road in Fort Wayne) at 6:00 p.m. An OUCC informational meeting on field hearing procedures and the regulatory process will start at 5:30 p.m.

During the public field hearing:

- Consumers will be able to speak directly to the Commission, under oath and on the record.
- Consumers will also be able to submit written comments for the case record.
- Comments will carry equal weight whether they are oral or written.
- Commissioners are not allowed to answer questions about the case. However, OUCC staff will be available before, during, and after the hearing to address questions about the process.

Consumers who are unable to attend the field hearing can submit written comments 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 no later than June 17, 2016 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. 44752.**"

Current rates for Aqua Indiana's Aboite Wastewater Division, which includes more than 13,000 customers in Allen, Huntington, and Whitley Counties, were approved in 2011.

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The utility is proposing a two-phase increase in this case. Its exhibits show that a monthly sewer bill for a metered residential customer using 5,000 gallons of water per month would rise from \$46.98 to \$56.29 when a Commission order is issued and to \$60.96 approximately a year later. This would include an increase in the monthly service charge – the portion of the bill that does not vary with usage – from \$26.97 to \$32.32 in the case’s first phase, and to \$35.00 in Phase Two. A residential customer who pays a flat, monthly unmetered rate would see his or her sewer bill rise from \$59.21 to \$70.96 when an order is issued and to \$76.83 approximately a year later.

Aqua Indiana’s testimony and exhibits cite increases in operating and maintenance costs while describing proposed capital improvements. Projects include doubling the Midwest Wastewater Treatment Plant’s capacity, constructing a new office and field services building, and completing a series of infrastructure improvements aimed at addressing sanitary sewer overflow violations, manhole safety, capacity issues for current and future growth, and other matters.

The utility is also requesting approval of a \$1,300 system development charge for new customers or builders. The one-time fee would apply only when a new, first-time connection is made to a home or business. It would not apply to current customers.

Case updates will be posted on the OUCC’s website at www.in.gov/oucc/2616.htm.

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(IURC Cause No. 44752)

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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