



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Auburn municipal water rate case: Consumer comments invited**

If you would like to comment on the City of Auburn's proposed water rate increase, 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 the city's request and is scheduled to file testimony on January 17, 2018.

Along with its legal and technical review, the OUCC is inviting written consumer comments through January 10, 2018.

Current rates for Auburn's municipal water utility received IURC approval in 1999. The city's pending request would raise the monthly water rate for a residential customer using 5,000 gallons from \$22.31 to \$33.49, if the customer lives within the city limits. If the customer is outside city limits, the monthly rate at the same usage would rise from \$22.31 to \$38.51.

Auburn is also seeking IURC approval to issue up to \$3.36 million in long-term debt. According to its testimony, the utility is seeking the changes due to higher operating and maintenance costs along with the need for capital improvements. Specific projects include water tower rehabilitation and cleaning, new meters, and replacement of aging water mains, some of which are more than 120 years old. Additional improvements include a leak audit throughout the utility's distribution system, treatment plant improvements, fire hydrant replacements, and new wells, along with new vehicles and equipment.

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), 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](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov)
- Fax: (317) 232-5923

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than January 10, 2018 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.

**(Continued)**

Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to **"IURC Cause No. 44985."** Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

Only the city's water rates are at issue in this case. State law does not give the IURC jurisdiction over municipal sewer utility rates, which are approved by elected city and town councils.

An IURC evidentiary hearing will be held February 27, 2018 at the PNC Center (101 W. Washington St.) in Indianapolis. While evidentiary hearings are open to the public, participation is typically limited to attorney and Commission questioning of technical witnesses. A final decision in the case is expected later in 2018.

Updates on this case are being posted on the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2777.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2777.htm).

(IURC Cause No. 44985)

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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