



For Immediate Release

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Citizens Sewer rate case: Consumer comments invited Public hearing set for January 12

Marion County residents have the opportunity to comment on the sewer rate increase proposed by Citizens Energy Group.

Consumers may either:

1. Send written comments to the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) by January 15, 2016, or
2. Speak at the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission's (IURC's) public field hearing on Tuesday, January 12, 2015.

The IURC's January 12 public field hearing will be held in the auditorium at Emmerich Manual High School (2405 Madison Ave. in Indianapolis) 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 during the field hearing. However, OUCC staff will be available before, during, and after the hearing to address questions about the process.

Citizens Energy Group – whose sewer utility does business as CWA Authority, Inc. – is proposing a two-phase increase in its rates for sewage disposal service. According to the utility's testimony and exhibits, the additional revenues would pay for the continuation of major capital projects (most of which are required under a federal consent decree), the continuation of the utility's septic tank elimination program, and proposed extensions and replacements to the sewage disposal collection system.

The utility's proposal would generate about \$87 million in new annual operating revenues when fully implemented, with the impact varying among the residential, commercial and industrial customer classes. Under the proposal, total sewer revenues would rise by about 37.3 percent in July 2016, and another 3.8 percent in July 2017. The utility's exhibits show that a monthly sewer bill for a residential customer using 5,000 gallons of water per month would rise from \$38.35 to \$57.99 in July 2016 and to \$61.58 in July 2017. The monthly minimum residential and commercial sewer charge, under Citizens' proposal, would rise from \$28.54 to \$44.00 in July 2016 and to \$46.80 in July 2017.

The OUCC – the state agency representing consumer interests in all cases before the IURC – has not yet taken a position on the proposed sewer rate changes. After completing its review, the OUCC is scheduled to file testimony on January 22, 2016.

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A group of industrial customers (including Ingredion, Inc., Rolls-Royce Corporation, and Vertellus Agriculture & Nutrition Specialties, Inc.) has intervened in the case – as allowed by state law – and is also scheduled to file testimony on January 22, 2016.

Current sewer rates for Citizens were approved in April 2014. Citizens' request for a water rate increase is pending in a separate docket, in which the OUCC, Citizens, and intervening parties have reached a settlement agreement. For more information on both cases, please visit www.in.gov/oucc/2738.htm. Rates for other Citizens utilities, including natural gas and steam, are not at issue in this case. In addition, stormwater fees and charges are not at issue in this case as they are regulated at the local government level.

Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the sewer rate case record 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

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than January 15, 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. 44685.**"

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. 44685)

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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