



# Columbus City Utilities Water Rate Case IURC Cause No. 45427

The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission's (IURC's) public field hearing is an opportunity for consumers to speak on the record to the judge and commissioners. No final decision will be made during the hearing, and an IURC order will be issued on a future date.

The IURC is the state agency that has jurisdiction over the Columbus water utility's rates and charges. State law requires the IURC to balance utility and ratepayer interests, and to base its decision in each case on the evidence in the record.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is the separate state agency that represents the interests of all ratepayers in IURC cases.

**The Dec. 2 field hearing has one purpose: To give consumers the chance to speak.**

- **An IURC public field hearing is a formal, legal proceeding.** An Administrative Law Judge presides with at least one IURC Commissioner present.
- **You may speak, provide written comments, or do both.**
  - An OUCC attorney will call on speakers during the hearing. All speakers will be sworn in and asked to spell their names for the court reporter, who will record comments made under oath for the case record.
  - If you prefer to submit written comments, the OUCC needs to receive them by the close of business on Tuesday, Dec. 8.
- Field hearings do not include presentations by utilities. Columbus filed its testimony and evidence in August.

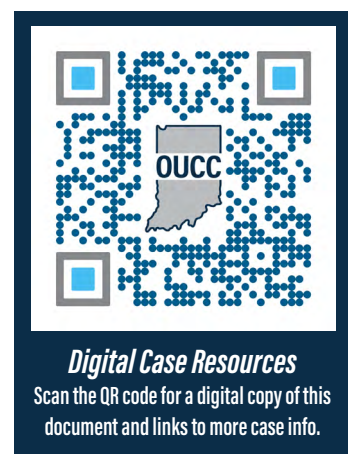
## Agencies & Roles:

### Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC)

- State agency
- Represents the interests of all Indiana utility consumers, including residential, commercial, and industrial, in cases before the IURC and federal utility regulatory commissions
- Staff of attorneys, accountants, engineers, economists, consumer services, and support personnel

### Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC)

- State agency
- Regulates rates, financing, etc. for many, but not all, Indiana utilities.
- Conducts public hearings including the Dec. 2 field hearing
- Required by law to make decisions that balance the interests of utilities and consumers



## The Case & Process:

- **Columbus City Utilities' (CCU's) request is pending under IURC Cause No. 45427.** If approved, the utility's request would raise rates in three phases. Current charges of \$11.43 for 5,000 gallons per month would rise to \$16.60 in August 2021. Charges for the same usage would later increase to \$19.41 in January 2023 and \$20.65 in January 2024.
  - In its testimony, the utility cites increases in operating and maintenance costs as reasons for its request, along with infrastructure improvements for which it seeks IURC approval to issue up to \$22.2 million in bonds. Specific improvements include the construction of new wells, a new storage tank and improvements to four others, new transmission and distribution mains, laboratory and treatment plant improvements, upgraded software, and new meters, among additional projects.
  - CCU's current water rates were approved in 1992.
  - Only the city's *water* rates are at issue in this case. State law does not give the IURC jurisdiction over municipal *sewer* utilities, with their rates set by locally elected city and town councils.
- **The OUCC has until Dec. 11, 2020 to take a formal position.**
  - Under Indiana law, the OUCC represents the interests of all consumers (residential, commercial, and industrial) in cases before the IURC and federal utility commissions.
  - Our attorneys, accountants, and economists are reviewing the utility's request.
  - We will file testimony with the IURC based on our review. Our testimony will be available online at [www.in.gov/oucc/2781.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2781.htm) after it is filed. We will be posting case updates on the same page.
- Southwestern Bartholomew Water Corp. has intervened in this case. Any testimony it may file is due by Dec. 11, 2020.
- CCU will have until Jan. 6, 2021 to file rebuttal testimony.
- An IURC evidentiary hearing is currently scheduled to start on Jan. 27, 2021. Evidentiary hearings are open to the public, but participation is typically limited to attorney and Commission questioning of technical witnesses.
- Closing briefs are expected in February and March.
- The final order in this case is expected in the summer of 2021. Final orders are issued at the IURC's weekly conferences, typically on Wednesdays. Agendas are posted 48 hours in advance at [www.in.gov/iurc/2428.htm](http://www.in.gov/iurc/2428.htm).
- A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding. All dates are subject to change.

## For More Information:

The OUCC is posting case updates at [www.in.gov/oucc/2781.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2781.htm). Updates are also available through the agency's monthly newsletter; to subscribe, visit [www.in.gov/oucc/news](http://www.in.gov/oucc/news).

All publicly filed documents are available online. To view the IURC's public case file:

- Visit <https://iurc.portal.in.gov/advanced-search/>.
- Enter 45427 in the "Cause Number" field, check the "I'm not a robot" box, and click "Search."
- The Cause Number, 45427, will then appear near the bottom of the page. Click the blue cause number and you will be directed to the file.

## Indiana Office Of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC)

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Visit us online: [www.in.gov/oucc](http://www.in.gov/oucc) • Subscribe to our newsletter: [www.in.gov/oucc/news](http://www.in.gov/oucc/news)

*Our Mission:* 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.