



For Immediate Release

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Ellettsville Municipal Water Rate Case: Consumer Comments Invited

If you would like to comment on the Ellettsville municipal water utility's proposed rate increase, you are invited to do so.

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 town's request and anticipates filing its report on Aug. 29, 2023.

Current base rates for Ellettsville's water utility received IURC approval in 2016. Rates have since been adjusted to account for changes in wholesale water costs.

According to its filing, the utility is seeking the rate change due to increased operating and maintenance costs, and for upcoming infrastructure improvements. Monthly water charges for a residential customer using 5,000 gallons would increase from \$31.92 to \$42.60 under the town's request, including the fire protection surcharge.

Ellettsville has filed this case through the IURC's Small Utility Filing Procedure, which is designed to reduce the time and expense involved with regulatory filings for utilities with fewer than 8,000 customers. Savings are gained by allowing utility staff to use standardized forms and forego a technical evidentiary hearing. This is designed to result in utilities needing less assistance from rate consultants or attorneys, leading to fewer expenses to be passed on to customers.

The OUCC uses the same standard to review a utility's operations and records whether it seeks a rate increase through the Small Utility Filing Procedure or a traditional case. Conducting its analysis on behalf of all utility consumers, the OUCC will present the results of its review through a report to the IURC, including formal testimony. The IURC's review is conducted on behalf of the public interest (a balancing of utility and customer interests); it is responsible for resolving any factual disputes that may arise and issuing a final order establishing new rates.

Only the town's water rates are at issue in this case. The IURC does not have jurisdiction over municipal sewer utility rates, which are set by locally elected city and town councils throughout the state.

A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding; such an agreement, if reached, would require IURC approval.

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, by email at uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov, or by mail at:

Public Comments
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC)
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 SOUTH
Indianapolis, IN 46204

(Continued)

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments **no later than Aug. 22, 2023**, 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 either "**IURC Cause No. 45900-U**" or **Ellettsville Municipal Water**. Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

The OUCC is posting case updates online at www.in.gov/oucc/featured-topics/ellettsville-municipal-water-rate-case/. Case updates are also available through the agency's monthly electronic newsletter. Consumers can subscribe at www.in.gov/oucc/news/.

(IURC Cause No. 45900-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.