



## Idaho Public Utilities Commission

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Paul Kjellander, Commissioner  
Mack A. Redford, Commissioner  
Kristine Raper, Commissioner

*Case No. UWI-W-15-01, Order No. 33344*  
*Notice of Public Workshop, Technical Hearing*  
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[www.puc.idaho.gov](http://www.puc.idaho.gov)

### **Workshop, technical hearing set in United Water Idaho case**

**BOISE (July 23, 2015)** – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission has set dates for a public workshop and technical hearing regarding United Water Idaho’s application to increase rates. The commission also set deadlines for parties and staff to submit their direct testimony and rebuttal testimony.

The public workshop will be Wednesday, August 19, at 7 p.m. in the commission hearing room at 472 W. Washington St. in Boise.

During the workshop, commission staff will present an overview of the company’s application and explain how customers may further participate in the proceeding. There will also be time for customers to ask questions. Representatives of the company may also be available.

United Water Idaho, which provides water to about 90,000 customers in Boise, parts of Eagle and unincorporated areas of Ada County, is asking the commission for an increase to rates that would increase an average residential bill by about \$4.22 per month, or 13.2 percent. The average \$4.22 per month proposed increase is based on the average residential customer’s monthly consumption of 9,500 gallons.

A technical hearing in the case will be Thursday, November 19, at 9:30 a.m. also in the commission hearing room. During this hearing, testimony from the company, commission staff and intervening parties is presented. Attorneys for the parties may cross-examine each party regarding their testimony and exhibits. The technical hearing is open to the public, but public comment is not taken. The date and time for a hearing to take public comment will be announced later. Public comments can also be submitted in writing.

Other parties to the case, which include commission staff and the Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho, will pre-file direct testimony by Oct. 9. Rebuttal testimony from United Water is due by Nov. 6. That testimony will be available on the commission’s website.

United Water applied for the increase on May 21. The commission suspended the company's application for six months to allow time for its staff of auditors, engineers, technical analysts and attorneys to review the case. The commission cannot, by state law, arbitrarily refuse to consider rate increase requests without first considering the evidence presented by the utility, intervening parties and customers. The burden of proof is on the utility to justify the expenses it seeks to recover as 1) necessary to serve customers and 2) prudently incurred. The commission may accept, reject or modify the company's request. All commission decisions can be appealed to the state Supreme Court by the utility, intervenors or customers.

As part of the proposed 13.2 percent increase, United Water seeks an increase in the bi-monthly customer service charge to \$23.55, up from \$20.08 for small-service customers. For larger customers using a 1-inch service line, the basic charge would increase from \$26.60 to \$30.10. The company proposes to increase its volumetric charge to about \$1.66 per 100 cubic feet (748 gallons), up from \$1.46. If use exceeds 3 CCF during the summer months, the proposed increase is to \$2.07 from \$1.83. If the commission were to approve the full requested amount, annual revenues to United Water would increase by \$5.88 million. United Water is seeking an 8.45 percent overall rate of return and 10.4 percent return on equity. It claims its current rate structure results in a 6.43 percent rate of return.

United Water claims the increase is needed to recoup more than \$39 million of investment in its water system since the last rate case in 2011. The capital improvements include \$17.2 million to replace aging water mains and meters, \$3.5 million to replace treatment facilities, \$900,000 for a replacement storage tank in the Bogus Basin Road area and \$500,000 for auxiliary power equipment to ensure uninterrupted water supply during electric outages.

The company also seeks to make changes to its customer service rules, including one that would allow United Water to terminate service without prior notice if a customer fails to install, maintain or annually test a backflow prevention device and a dangerous condition is present.

Comments are accepted via e-mail at [www.puc.idaho.gov](http://www.puc.idaho.gov) and clicking on "Case Comment Form," under the "Consumers" heading. Fill in the case number (UWI-W-15-01) and enter your comments. Comments can also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074 or faxed to (208) 334-3762.

Consumers may track the case from the commission website. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Water" heading and scroll down to the above case number. Included are the company's application, testimony and customer comments received to date. Testimony from commission staff and other parties will be available by Oct. 9.

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