



PUC staff to conduct public workshop in Rathdrum for customers of Diamond Bar Estates water utility

Case No. DIA-W-15-01, Order No. 33452

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BOISE (March 17, 2016) – Staff from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission will conduct a workshop for customers of Diamond Bar Estates Water Company on Tuesday, April 19, at 7 p.m. at the Rathdrum Senior Citizens Center, 8037 W. Montana St.

Diamond Bar Estates serves about 44 households in Kootenai County. The water utility is seeking to increase its monthly minimum rate from \$29 for the first 5,500 gallons per month to \$52. It also proposes to increase its commodity rate from 80 cents per 1,000 gallons above 5,500 gallons per month to \$1.44. The last rate increase for Diamond Bar customers was in October 2007.

The company asked for the new rate to be effective Feb. 1, 2016. The commission suspended the company's request for up to six months to allow time for commission staff to review the company's application.

The purpose of the April 19 workshop is to provide an overview of the company's application and to receive input and questions from customers. After the commission staff has thoroughly reviewed the company's application it will submit its comments by no later than May 18. That is also the deadline for public comments. Diamond Bar will submit reply comments by June 1.

Diamond Bar claims it has been operating at a loss. An increase in its annual revenue of \$20,910 will allow it to be able to recover various expenses, including those incurred from multiple pump failures during 2015. The company also seeks an increase for meter installation for new customers from \$310 to \$475.

The commission has the authority to accept, deny or modify the company's proposal. State statute requires that regulated utilities be allowed to recover all prudently incurred expenses needed to provide adequate and reliable service at rates that are just and reasonable for customers. The burden of proof is on the utility to show that its expenses were needed to serve customers, were prudently incurred and are in the best interest of customers. All

commission decisions can be appealed to the state Supreme Court by either the company, its customers or any other interested party.

The commission has been taking public comments in this case and will continue to do so through May 18. Comments are accepted via e-mail by accessing the commission's Website at www.puc.idaho.gov and clicking on "Case Comment Form," under the "Consumers" heading. Fill in the case number (DIA-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.

The company's application is available on the commission's website. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Water" heading and scroll down to Case No. DIA-W-15-01. All future documents related to the case including company, staff and customer comments will be posted at the same location.

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