

Name: William McNamara
Submission Time: Aug 11 2022 11:34AM
Email: KipperKipper88@gmail.com
Telephone: 208-819-5105
Address: 32435 N Newman Dr
Spirit Lake, ID 83869

Name of Utility Company: Gem State Water

Case ID: GSW-W-22-01

Comment: "The information provided by Gem State Water in their mailing is not correct. The base amount paid by the local subscribers here in Spirit Lake East is \$25.55. The proposed rate increase is unreasonable. I strongly oppose the proposed increase at its current rate. I am asking the Commission to turn this proposal down. Thank you."

From: [PUCWeb Notification](#)
To: [Jan Noriyuki](#)
Subject: Notice: A comment was submitted to PUCWeb
Date: Thursday, August 11, 2022 9:00:14 AM

Name: Koral Conboy
Submission Time: Aug 11 2022 8:41AM
Email: dkcoco@roadrunner.com
Telephone: 208-215-5741
Address: 26744 Silvermeadows Loop
Athol, ID 83801

Name of Utility Company: Bitterroot Water Co

Case ID: GSW-W-22-01

Comment: "The proposed rate increase for our water company is 135 percent!!!! Where does anyone get to increase their income at that rate? Inflation is already killing our dollar value and such an extreme jump in rates is greed and bodes Negative interest with ALL customers. A gradual and moderate increase is only to be expected and understood. Please cap this rate raise at a level customers can afford to pay. The proposed hike will effect livestock, fire control uses with green areas surrounding the home and quality of life by grabbing more dollars for basic life needs. Thank you Koral Collins Conboy"

Name: Shane Crist
Submission Time: Aug 11 2022 12:42PM
Email: TimberlakeJrTFL@aol.com
Telephone: 208-640-1132
Address: PO Box 815
Spirit Lake, ID 83869

Name of Utility Company: Gem State Water

Case ID: GSW-W-22-01

Comment: "My reason for contacting the IPUD is in regards to the noted Case# regarding raising water rates in Spirit Lake East. I am not in favor of raising the rates. I purchased this property in 1997 and the rates since being purchased by SLEWCO (no Gem State Water) have been steadily increasing. As a business owner, I can tell you that no business remains in business by raising rates 70%. The difference also being that generally customers can decide whether or not to patronize any business which would make such an egregious move, however, in the case of the basic essential as water, there are no options. Drill our own well? Try to get that past the "powers that be" to attempt to even "ask permission" to provide for ourselves. How is it that approximately 7 years ago this area was re-categorized from Agricultural to Municipal when all properties are 10 to 15 acre lots? We never even received notice of this change before or after aside from the bill. "Municipal" according to Oxford Dictionary is "a city or town or it's governing body". We live on acreage, gravel roads, we all are on septic sewer systems - there is nothing municipal about our properties. "Agriculture" is "the practice of farming, including cultivation of the soil for growing crops and rearing of animals". THAT is what this property owner does, as do many others living in Spirit Lake East. I received a water bill for \$2,000.00 dollars for the month of July. This has never before been even a passing thought of a possibility in all the years my family has lived here. Instead of Gem State Water contacting to inform me of an unusual water usage amount, we simply received the bill. How in the world am I going to pay a bill like that? Didn't GOD himself provide the water for the inhabitants of the world only to have it monetized and turned into a "commodity"? Certainly, there is an expectation to help pay for the mechanical functionality of running the system to bring water to the homes. This is understood (we previously paid \$36.00 per quarter for any amount of water), but to think that it costs more in resources to provide for an increased amount of water when the infrastructure is already in place is beyond comprehension and reeks more of a railroading. It is without saying that a monthly cap (as they already have a "monthly minimum" could easily be offered and still be able to cover all maintenance costs as well as realizing a profit from the endeavor that the owners have embarked upon by purchasing the water company. In the meantime, my family will be dealing with how to afford to pay for the \$400.00 to \$500.00 per month standard monthly bill, and NOW, this out of the blue \$2,000.00 water bill as we are now not only having to loose the use of a \$10k fodder system that we had to take off line (due to water bill being \$700.00 per month previously), to now having to sell livestock, try to decide which gardens and orchard will be left to die-off because these rates are unsustainable... With all of this, we are now facing a 70% INCREASE in RATES? This is simply UN-THINKABLE! How is it that a man and his family is able to stand against such clear injustices when on one hand, the people are prevented from providing for themselves because we are unable to receive "permission" to put in a well, as well as being now unable to provide for them due to not being able to afford to raise livestock and crops to feed them because we are slaves to a system that disallows such freedom to farm? Is this the actual intent, one must wonder, with all of the outside pressures from the state of the Nation, the economy, inflation, food shortages, etc...? Thank you for your time."

From: [Janet Shepherd](#)
To: [Jan Noriyuki](#)
Subject: Case No. GSW-W-22-01 Rickel Community Well
Date: Thursday, August 11, 2022 3:06:04 PM

Good morning Jan Noriyuki,

I am writing this email in regards to the current request for a rate increase on our community well. I would like my comments considered before an increase has been put in place.

We purchased our water rights from the Jerry & Cathy Rickel, 4 years ago. During the time The Rickel's had this well under their control, the hookup fees were \$6,000, which was the highest in our area for many years. The Rickel's were not completing the potable water tests monthly during this time. This held up our water rights until these tests were done. During their possession we believe they were pocketing all fees from property owners for their own personal use. They did not have any reserve funds for proper maintenance, (ie; pump replacement if needed, testing, line breakage, etc.). One day I caught Jerry Rickel digging holes on my property and confronted him as to why, he was full of lies and deceit. Then all of the sudden we get notice that Gem State was taking over the accounting, billing, etc. Now we have new homes being added to the water system, and upon exploration of new homes being built in our area, I contacted Gem State Water to see what they were charging the new properties. I was told they were \$750, per home, not \$6,000 per home as what we paid. This is a significant decrease \$5,250 per home. Just across from my house are 12 homes being built. If charged at the rate the rest of us paid, we would have \$63,000 in reserve just for the hookup fees. That's a lot of money, I am sure there are more homes being built in our area that will be requesting water from our well too.

I, not sure what else this request of increase includes, and I am asking for a copy of this request for Rickel Community Well. The only thing I see from Gem State Water is the letter recently sent to property owners as such.

Please consider these facts upon making any decision for rate increases. The requested increase from \$30.00 per month to \$49.25 is a 64% increase, which feels wrong. Our economy of inflation doesn't mean more gouging from every aspect of life. Wages, taxes, fuel, food, trucking shipping, etc.. We are a small community, and I ask that this rate increase be denied. We ask that Gem State Water be required to bring their hookup fees back to what they were to cover the shortage they have incurred by reducing the hookup fees to new property owners to cover maintenance of our current well. Why should this burden be placed on those who have already paid an exorbitant amount when we hooked up to this well.

Thank you for reviewing my request,
Jerome and Janet Shepherd
25151 N Old US Highway 95
Athol, ID 83801
208-691-7198

From: [PUCWeb Notification](#)
To: [Jan Noriyuki](#)
Subject: Notice: A comment was submitted to PUCWeb
Date: Thursday, August 11, 2022 7:00:07 AM

The following comments were submitted via PUCWeb:

Name: Samantha Felbinger
Submission Time: Aug 10 2022 7:38PM
Email: samantha.felbinger@hotmail.com
Telephone: 630-746-6996
Address: 27457 N Silver Meadows loop
Athol, ID 83801

Name of Utility Company: Gem State Water

Case ID: GSW-W-22-01

Comment: "Comment: "I object to the 135% increase proposed by Gem State Water to my water rate for Bitter Root Silver Meadows Loop Neighborhood. Gem State Water has to my knowledge, made NO "system improvements" or "recent investments to replacing aging infrastructure." A 135% increase is not justified, not even suggested, given they have done nothing to improve our system. Unfortunately, the Utility Commission allowed an out-of-state company, Gem State, to purchase our system. You now fail to regulate critical water services. This increase could cause our neighborhood great harm with families like mine struggling in this inflation economy. I cannot imagine you would now approve a 69.9% increase to their total revenue across the board with all of the small neighborhoods being affected by the rate hikes they want for all. We do not understand why you would approve such a request and plead with you to think about the families. Samantha Felbinger"

Name: Jamie Wise
Submission Time: Aug 10 2022 5:40PM
Telephone: 208-317-4454
Address: 26226 N Silver Meadows Loop
Athol, ID 83801

Name of Utility Company: Gem State Water

Case ID: GFW-W-22-01

Comment: "Regarding case GFW-W-22-01 I find this request to raise rates over 135% absolutely ridiculous and overage rates being increased over 160% is highway robbery. When in the winter they don't even come out to read the meter. Which I have never gone over in the winter months, where is my credit for not using 15,000 gallons in the winter months. Then them also wanting to lower the gallons from 15,000 to 10,000, is also wrong, the system is only in full use in the summer months, not winter months. I understand a little increase but not over 100%. Increase the monthly by \$5 to \$15 and leave everything else the same. I Strongly oppose this increase. Jamie Wise"

Name: Suzanne Collins
Submission Time: Aug 10 2022 7:22PM
Email: suzeq1969@gmail.com
Telephone: 360-319-9461
Address: 27408 N Silver Meadows Loop
Athol, ID 83801

Name of Utility Company: Gem State Water

Case ID: GSW-W-22-01

Comment: "My husband and I received notice of Gem State's application under this case number. We note that the Bitterroot system, of which we are a part, could see an increased monthly rate of 135% if approved, which is the highest increase of all the other systems operated by Gem State. We are strongly opposed to this increase, which will cause our monthly rate to more than double during this time of record high inflation. While we understand that there are increased operating and maintenance costs, we do not believe that these costs amount to a 135% increase. We strongly urge you to deny Gem State's request for a 135% rate increase to the Bitterroot system. Thank you for your consideration of our request.
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