

**From:** [PUC Consumer Comments](#)  
**To:** [Jan Noriyuki](#)  
**Subject:** Notice: A comment was submitted to PUCWeb  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 25, 2020 7:00:08 AM

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The following comment was submitted via PUCWeb:

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Submission Time: Nov 25 2020 2:54AM  
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Name of Utility Company: Suez Water

Case ID: SUZ-W-20-02

Comment: "Dear Public Utilities Commission, We are writing in regard to the request by Suez Water to increase the rates paid by its customers. We are adamantly opposed to the rate increase, for several reasons. First, the application states the average increase will be 22.3%. That amount is very high, considering we are in the midst of the worldwide Covid crisis, with many people losing their jobs, battling with employment status uncertainty, quarantine stress, etc. Why would Suez raise their rates for a basic life necessity (clean water) at such a time? The rate hike of 22.3% is too high, especially given our current pandemic circumstances. Second, the rate increase is being paid for upgrades, investments, etc. that have already been done. It seems strange that such a huge, comprehensive upgrade would have been completed without securing their funding prior to starting. Additionally, many such upgrades should be considered part of their cost for doing business and not a reason to charge more from current customers. Finally, the Suez Water application states their proposed changes are "just and reasonable." They state, "The expected rate of return under the revised rates and charges will be 7.46%, which is a fair rate of return on SUEZ Water's investment in property used and useful in rendering water service." The current rate of return they list is 4.09%. They are seeking "additional revenues to recover increased operating expenses and costs associated with plant additions, and to produce a fair rate of return, thereby enabling it to continue to provide adequate and reliable service to its customers" (bold and underlining added). Two points—One, 7.46% is a “fair rate of return”?! We checked our bank today, and the interest rate on our personal checking and savings accounts are 0.01%. That can go up to a whopping 0.03% if the balance stays above \$50,000! The rate of return for \$1,000 to \$9,999 CDs currently is 0.02%. That percentage goes up to 0.05% for \$10,000 and any amount above. The current rate of return Suez currently receives, 4.09%, sounds phenomenal compared to what their average consumer is able to get for our money!! Second point, Suez is seeking their huge increase in rates to recover their costs, but also to earn a “fair” rate of return, and assure us they will continue to provide “adequate” service to their customers. Suez is already earning a fair rate of return at 4.09% and we shouldn’t have to pay more for addi"

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