

February 22, 2021

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
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2021 MAR -1 AM 10:21

IDAHO PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

RE: SUEZ Water Idaho - Proposed Rate Increase

I would like to address the proposal SUEZ Water Idaho has submitted to the Idaho Public Utilities Commission.

As someone who has lived in Boise for well over 50 years and is now a senior citizen, I am extremely frustrated that I will be required to pay a substantial amount more for water. A 22.3% increase to my bill with no increase in usage is appalling and extremely unfair.

SUEZ's five-year comprehensive effort to add approximately \$115 million in customer improvements is no doubt necessary due to the massive amount of construction, both residential and commercial, that has taken place in the past five years. Everywhere you look, there are huge apartment complexes and subdivisions being built, and a substantial number of commercial buildings, too. I can only imagine the vast increase in water and infrastructure all of this has required.

SUEZ states, on the one hand, that new neighborhoods or other service areas are not paid by existing customers - they are funded by fees paid by the developers. But, at the same time, SUEZ says the \$115 million is for customer improvements, including new pipes, new pumping stations, and new treatment technologies. They have added 65 miles of new water mains to provide more water to growing areas of the community, and it is their responsibility to build and maintain water systems that align with the needs of the local area. So, the cost is still being passed on to the customer. That is not fair. Those of us who have lived in Boise, or the surrounding areas, for years should not have to bear such a significant increase in what we pay for water to offset the unmanaged growth that has overtaken this area due to lack of planning and foresight by our elected officials.

I would like to know why SUEZ waited five years and then hit its customers with this huge increase? If they've been working on the improvements for that long, wouldn't it have been more reasonable to have slowly increased their rates instead of waiting until completion and now expect their customers to pay such a substantial amount more?

Times are extremely hard for so many people right now, and this proposed increase could not have been submitted at a worse time. I am very disappointing in how SUEZ Water Idaho has handled this matter. I hope the PUC will take into consideration the hardship SUEZ's request is going to place on so many of its residential customers.

But with an increase in rates SUEZ customers will no doubt have to incur, can one thing be required of SUEZ? For years, the billing from Boise City Utility Billing for sewer and trash is sent out one month, and

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then on the offset month would be the one from SUEZ Water Idaho for water (both billings are on a bi-monthly basis). In November 2019, SUEZ updated its meter reading schedule to "help them operate more efficiently and provide better customer service." By doing that, their billing date is now in the same month as the one for sewer/trash, and customers have been getting, and having to pay, both bills at the same time. I have to question how updating the meter reading schedule, which then changed the billing date, provides better customer service? As the PUC works on a decision that will affect so many people going forward, may I ask that you require SUEZ to adjust its billing date and go back to the one that was previously in place for years? It would greatly help those of who are on a fixed income to receive SUEZ's billing on the alternating month once again.

I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express my concerns.

Sincerely,



Beth Browen
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