

MEMORANDUM

May 28, 1991

**ORIGINAL
FILE COPY**

TO: DIVISION OF RECORDS AND REPORTING

FROM: DIVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES (DAVIS) *Rad*

RE: DOCKET NO. 900966-WS - APPLICATION OF THE
WOODS, A DIVISION OF HOMOSASSA UTILITIES, INC.
FOR A STAFF-ASSISTED RATE CASE IN SUMTER
COUNTY

Please place the following documents in the above-referenced docket file. These were presented by customer Maynard at the customer meeting. Thank you.

NSD/sc

	ACK _____	ACK _____
	AFA <u>1</u>	AFA _____
	APP _____	APP _____
	CAF _____	CAF _____
	CMU _____	CMU _____
	CTR _____	CTR _____
	EAG _____	EAG _____
ACK _____	LEG <u>1</u>	LEG _____
AFA _____	LIN <u>6</u>	LIN _____
APP _____	OPC _____	OPC _____
CAF _____	RCH _____	RCH _____
CMU _____	SEC <u>1</u>	SEC <u>1</u>
CTR _____	WAS <u>1</u>	WAS <u>1</u>
EAG _____	OTH _____	OTH _____
LEG _____		
LIN _____		
OPC _____		
RCH _____		
SEC <u>1</u>		
WAS _____		
OTH _____		

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

05326 MAY 28 1991

FPSC-RECORDS/REPORTING



STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

May 22, 1991

To Whom It May Concern:

The attached listing reflects the complaints (some valid/some invalid) filed with this office against The Woods S/D Water and/or Sewage Disposal Systems from 1984 to present. Case records are available for review for each of the complaints at our office located in Room 219 County Court House, Bushnell.

Sincerely,

Warren R. Maddox
Environmental Supervisor II

WRM/jc

THE WOODS S/D

<u>Complaint No.</u>	<u>Date Reported</u>	<u>Type of Complaint</u>
V83-84	10-22-84	Possible break in water & sewer lines.
V91-84	11-29-84	Water problems (This file misplaced).
V21-85	3-1-85	Sewage from lift station on ground.
V26-85	4-4-85	Sand in water/shutting off water with no notice.
V54-87	8-4-87	Sewage.
V10-88	2-24-88	Water - Central Utilities Co.
V67-89	8-15-89	Lift Station not operating properly.
V83-89	12-6-89	Water Quality Problem/yellow & bad taste.
V94-90	11-5-90	Sewage on ground (Leonard Fickeisen, Owner)
V4-91	1-8-91	No water for 2 days at 3639 Chestnut Lane.

SUMTER COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION
POST OFFICE BOX 98
BUSHNELL, FLORIDA 33513
(904) 793-6710
SC 665-0478

LAWTON CHILES, GOVERNOR

USA UTILITIES INC.

5500 S. SUNSHINE BLVD
HOMOSASSA, FL 32066
TELEPHONE (904) 678-0666

ACCOUNT NUMBER
50809.0

PERIOD ENDING
3/31/99

CODE	PREV READING	PRES READING	USAGE	AMOUNT
WA	767	772	5	8.40
SW				8.37
CU				3.1

TOTAL CURRENT DUES \$20.87

PREV. AMT. DUE OR CREDIT \$0.00

AMOUNT DUE \$20.87

PLEASE CONSERVE WATER

WOODS RESIDENT MEMO
AUGUST 12, 1985
PAGE 2

of Leesburg which is closer than the previous contracted operator who had come out of Polk County; so if it is any consolation to you, the Leesburg contractor is getting to you quicker and has closer access to parts and materials.

The sewer plant expansion has now been completed and approved by the Sumter County authorities, as well as the state authorities who have jurisdiction over waste water. I would invite you when you take your daily walks to walk back to the area of the sewer plant and see what has been done to better activate and control waste water for the park. Given the increased population of the Woods within the last year and anticipated further increase it, was necessary for us to expand the plant and upgrade the present material and parts that were there. This total project over two years cost Central Utilities \$55,000. On Saturday, August 11, a subcontractor began to repair the water system. A new sand filter system is being installed, it will be somewhat of a timely process, but when completed should improve the water coming to your taps. We have been aware of the fact that there has been a tracable element of iron in our water, which we hope to resolve by changing the filter system. When this is completed, it will have cost \$8,000. A new 3,500 gallon water tank will arrive the week of August 12, to be installed at the water plant for storage purposes to allow everyone to have plenty of water, especially at peak times on Saturdays and Sundays when most of you are at home and bathe and do laundry. The current tank that is in place is not big enough to handle the demand. The total cost of the water plant expansion when completed will be around \$22,000.

I bring these figures and general information before you to give you the complete knowledge of what is going on behind the scenes. Given what we paid Mr. Prilliman for the water and sewer plants and inground service lines, along with the money that we have spent within the last three years on both of these plants and lines goes to strengthen your property value, as well as, enables us to strive to provide the type of service to you that is beneficial to all parties concerned.

BH/lm
cc: The Woods General Correspondence

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.

113 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33801

813 / 688-6592

TO: Residents of the WOODS MOBILE HOME PARK
From: Bill Hall, Central Utilities, Ltd.
Re: Information- Update
Date: February 5, 1985

A couple of the new residents in the park have been experiencing water(hot) heater problems; especially when water service is down as it has been on some occasions more recently. Each of your mobile homes should be equipped with a back-flow or check valve. This valve prevents water from running out of the mobile home when the water pressure goes down. New residents who have purchased their homes from Village Mobile Homes in Brooksville should call the dealer and inquire about this valve. It should have been a part of your package when you made your purchase. Another alternative is to contact Morris Plumbing, the plumber who made your hook-ups and see why he didn't put this valve in as I believe it is required by the county codes. In any case, each of you should have this safety feature as to not burn up your hot water heater. Central Utilities is not responsible for any damages done to your hot water heaters/tanks.

In an effort to provide better service to you, please allow us to make a change in the emergency reporting procedure. Sometimes we do not receive word about a water main break for several hours and then we'll get eight or nine calls in a row. Effective with the date of this memo; please begin reporting all problems directly to Mr. Alvin Gonzales(793-7342). He lives in your park, the call is local and he will act as our contact person between the park residents and Mr. McSwain, our service operator. This procedure will alleviate several duplicated collect calls to our offices. Any complaint calls or areas of concern should be directed to Mr. Gonzales.

Most of you are aware that the water and sewer lines have been difficult to locate. The plumber and backhoe operator have broken lines which has resulted in loss of service trying to find a line to hook in to. We apologize for any inconvenience this has been and assure you it has not been intentional. It is our utmost desire to provide you with good service as efficiently as possible.

THE WOODS
page two---

We are also trying to keep our rates at a minimal level. The main lift station pump (for the sewer system) went down last week and has been a costly repair. The total bill came to \$1,400.00 because the pump was burned up and about 9,000 gallons of water had to be pumped out of the lift station in order for the service operator to get down to the pump. He found a pair of silk shorts caught up in the pump which caused the damage and the pump to burn up. I would caution each of you to be careful of what enters your commode. These shorts passed through the sewer lines and got into the pump more than likely by getting flushed down the commode. Central Utilities cannot afford many repair bills like this one. In most instances the utility company passes these expenses on to the customers by rate increases. Normal useage and repairs are expected and we allocate and budget for them in our annual cash flow; however we do not allocate such funds for careless errors on the part of the users. We trust that all of you will exercise care.

/bh

c/c The Woods Correspondence
 Copy to all residents
 Tropical Env. Control Services (Carroll McSwain)

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.

**113 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33801**

813 / 688-6592

September 17, 1984

Lot 9, Block N

Dear Lot Owner at The Woods:

In March, 1982, the water and sewer system at The Woods Mobile Home Subdivision was sold to a private utility company, Central Utilities of Lakeland, Florida. That's who we are.

The water system is now going through some changes and will soon have a new filter system. In the future, everyone will have a water meter. The sewer system presented the greatest problems. It was a "homemade" system, that was not approved by the Department of Environmental Regulation. It has a imum capacity of 5,000 gallons. That's only large enough to handle eight more taps. This is a problem for everyone. Without DER approval on a sewer system, they have the right to "shut down" the system. This means no one could live at The Woods. Septic tanks are not permitted.

Therefore, the only solution is to put in a new system. That costs money. The approximate value of a new plant is \$30,000. That's what we are going to do. We are certain this is a decision you will agree with.

The new rules and regulations of Central Utilities, and the rate schedules, are attached. They must be strictly enforced, so there is no reoccurrence of these sewer problems in the future.

The rates are effective November 1, 1984. The monthly minimum charge is \$15. This charge must stand, whether anyone is living in the dwelling or not. It cost the same to run the system, even in the absence of certain people during the summer months.

Assessments of \$100 will be billed to each lot owner within a few weeks. This assessment is charged to all 130 lot owners, even if the lot is not being used. These funds will be used to offset some of the new sewer facility, which inturn, make all lots more valuable.

Lot Owner at The Woods
September 18, 1984
Page Two

Many lot owners have owned their lots for years. It would be beneficial, for all involved, if bonafide efforts were made to use the lots. Vacant lots, over long periods of time, do nothing to enhance the value of the park and puts greater burdens on those who do live in the park to support water and sewer systems. Considerations should be given to this problem, by vacant lot owners.

If I may be of any assistance to you or can answer any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.



William E. Hall
Chief Executive Officer

WEH:lhs
Attachment

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.

TO: ALL RESIDENTS/HOMEOWNERS AT THE WOODS MOBILE HOME PARK
FROM: BILL HALL - CENTRAL UTILITIES *BH*
RE: CHANGE IN BILLING PROCEDURES, GENERAL INFORMATION
DATE: MARCH 31, 1985

Water meters have now been installed at all lots where mobile homes are located. Please allow me to thank each one of you for your assistance and cooperation in getting the meters placed properly.

Effective with your April billing, the rate will reflect actual useage. The meters will all be read around April 1, 1985 and then again on the 30th of each month. This procedure will be followed on a monthly basis. (First and last days of the month). Your bill will be calculated in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of Central Utilities (see #5). If you do not have a copy of these Rules, please see Mr. Gonzales for one. I would encourage each of you to learn how to read the meter and keep a record for yourself; this will keep you posted on your useage.

This new procedure changes our method of billing from the advanced payment to a payment after actual useage. Your first bill will come in May for April's useage. Bills are due by the 15th of the month. A \$10.00 late charge will be accessed after the 15th and after the 25th of the month, service will be disconnected. There is a \$25.00 reconnection charge during regular business hours Monday through Friday; \$50.00 after hours and on week-ends. This policy will be enforced with no exceptions. It is a felony in the State of Florida to tamper with a public utility's equipment (meters).

In most cases, the meters and some new water lines have been placed in the easement areas just off the roads. I would ask that you please exercise caution driving down the narrow streets in your park and try to stay on the road. Central Utilities will make every effort to stop unnecessary heavy equipment and trucks from coming into the park in an effort to protect our lines and equipment. I have seen truck tracks in some areas (off the street) and we had a \$800.00 repair bill of a broken water main that someone drove over last month. If this continues, our rates will have to increase to cover these costs unless we have positive identification of the person(s) driving over these lines.

The sewer plant expansion should be completed by April 30th. Our next project (already under bid) is the expansion and new filtration of the water plant. The sewer plant when completed will have cost Central Utilities \$44,500. We anticipate the cost of the water treatment improvements to be in the neighborhood of \$25,000. This gives you an idea of the amount of money we are putting into your park to better improve our service to you.

The Woods continue to grow. Ten new families have moved in since the first of the year. We welcome them and strive to provide good service at reasonable rates to all of our users.

BH/cb

cc: The Woods General Correspondence
The Woods Rules/Regulations
The Woods Meter Deposits

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.

P.O. Box 6426 - Lakeland, Florida 33807

August 17, 1987

Dear Residents of The Woods;

Attached is a copy of the Utility Rules and Regulations as instituted November 1, 1984. These rules still apply, and have not been changed. Please note Item Number 5. There is a \$15.00 minimum fee each month, even if you are gone and the property is unoccupied for a time period.

Some people have been under the impression they do not have to pay if they are not here, but that is not correct. The services are being provided for you whether you choose to make use of them or not. The cost of operating the plant remains the same each month. Any delinquency needs to be corrected this month in order to avoid conflicts in billing and services.

Central Utilities will be sending out Final Billings in September for services supplied through August 31, 1987. Effective September 1, 1987, Homosassa Utilities, Inc. will be the new owners of the Water and Sewer System. This new company has stated they plan to carry on the same policies that have been in effect since November 1, 1984. They will be in communication with you.

We look forward to a smooth transition and appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jay D. Morrow
Central Utilities, Ltd.

incl.

cc: C.U. General Corr.
Homosassa Utilities, Inc.

JDM/bf

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS

In July of 1980, the Florida Legislature adopted provisions permitting water and sewer utilities to adjust, twice a year, the rates it charges to its customers without those customers bearing the additional expense of a public hearing. These adjustments in rates would depend on increases or decreases in noncontrollable expenses subject to inflationary pressures such as chemicals, and other general operation and maintenance costs.

On May 15, 1989, The Woods a division of Homosassa Utilities, Inc
(date) (name of company)

filed its notice of intention with the Florida Public Service Commission to increase water and sewer rates in Sumter County as a result of this legislation. If acknowledged by the Commission, water rates will increase by approximately 3.14 % and sewer rates by 4.24 %. These rates should be reflected on your August bill.
(date)

If you should have any questions, please contact your local utility office. Be sure to have your account number handy for quick reference.

USA UTILITIES INC.

CLEARWATER
P.O. Box 17203
Clearwater, Florida 33520-7203
6608 WALTON WAY
TAMPA FL 33610

HOMOSASSA SPRINGS
P.O. Box 2629
Homosassa Springs, Florida 32647-2629

DEAR CUSTERMER :

THE ENCLOSED BILL IS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER. WE REGRET THE LATENESS. WE HAVE ARRANGED TO HAVE IT DUE BY FEBRUARY 5TH AFTER WHICH THE BILLS FOR JANUARY WILL BE SENT. PAYMENTS NOT MADE BY FEBRUARY 5 WILL SHOW AS "ARREARS" ON THE NEXT BILL.

HOMOSASSA UTILITIES, INC. NOW OWNS YOUR WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM. THEY HAVE RETAINED USA UTILITIES TO OPERATE THE SYSTEM FOR THEM. WE HAVE REGISTERED THE UTILITY SYSTEM WITH THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION. THIS ACTION PROTECTS YOU IN TWO WAYS. FUTURE RATE ADJUSTMENTS MUST HAVE PSC APPROVAL AND WILL REQUIRE PUBLIC HEARINGS. ALSO, THE PSC HAS SOME CONTROL OVER THE LEVEL OF SERVICE YOU ARE PROVIDED. THIS DOES NOT EFFECT THE PAST REGULATORY CONTROL PROVIDED BY THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION, COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT OR THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT.

WE HAVE OPERATED THE WATER AND WASTEWATER UTILITY SYSTEM FOR OVER THREE MONTHS. THE OPERATING COSTS FOR JUST ELECTRICITY AND MAINTENANCE HAS EXCEEDED THE REVENUES BY OVER \$200 PER MONTH. THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE COSTS FOR BILLING, COLLECTION, OFFICE EXPENSE, OFFICE LABOR, DEPERECAITION, AND PROFIT. A \$3.00 CUSTERMER CHARGE HAS BEEN ADDED (CU ON THE BILL) TO HELP OFFSET THE OPERATING LOSS. SINCE THERE ARE ABOUT 40 ACTIVE CUSTOMERS, THAT SHOULD REDUCE THE LOSS BY \$ 120 PER MONTH.

OUR OFFICE IS LOCATED IN TAMPA AT 6608 WALTON WAY (813-626-2321). AFTER HOURS CALLS OR EMERGENCY CALLS SHPULD BE DIRECTED TO 904-328-3848 IN HOMOSASSA SPRINGS.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO IMPROVING YOUR SERVICE AND BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR.

YOURS TRULY

USA UTILITIES

May

628-1066
Emergency
344-7085

CENTRAL UTILITIES, LTD.

113 S. Florida Ave.
Lakeland, FL 33801

813 / 688-6592

CENTRAL UTILITIES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THE WOODS MOBILE HOME SUBDIVISION EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 1, 1984

Central Utilities, Ltd. is a private company based at 111 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida, 33801. Bill Hall is the Chief Executive Officer. Central Utilities owns water and sewer systems at various locations within the State of Florida. The following policies, rules, and rates are effective November 1, 1984, for the Woods Subdivision.

1) Tap Fee

The owner of each lot shall pay \$1,000 for a tap fee charge when the tap is desired, usually in harmony with the installation of a mobile home. All tap fees must be paid by October 1, 1988, whether or not a mobile home is installed.

If the owner of the lot is a multiple lot owner, but he wishes to buy only one tap to the system, he will pay an additional \$500 for the second lot owned and \$250 for each additional lot owned, at the time the first tap is purchased. The additional charges will be deducted when the taps are purchased for the additional lots.

2) Connection Charges

Once a lot owner has paid in his (or her) tap fee, he must pay a contractor to physically connect the water and sewer lines to the mobile home unit. Specific drawings are provided by Central Utilities for the connections. Central Utilities must approve work and connection before water/sewage is activated. These charges will vary, depending upon the location of the lot, the placement of the mobile home on the lot, and the location of the main lines. This work can take a week to ten days to complete, and the new owner should be prepared for this time frame.

Property owners are responsible for any damage done to any other underground utilities (gas, electric, television, etc.) as a result of water or sewer connections.

3) Inspection Fee

This fee of \$25.00 is charged at the time the initial tap fee is paid, It is payable to Central Utilities, Ltd., for Central Utilities personnel to inspect the connection work and meter setting of the new home being installed. Central Utilities requires a twenty-four (24) hour notice to do this inspection.

4) Water Meter Fee

This fee of \$75.00 is paid to Central Utilities, Ltd. for the installation of a water meter, and is due at the same time the tap fee is paid. In the event of sale of homes or property in The Woods, the new buyer will be required by Central Utilities, Ltd. to pay this meter fee when they purchase the property. When the fee is received by Central Utilities, a refund of \$75.00 will be issued to the old property owner.

5) Maintenance of Your Property Lines

Any maintenance or repair problems that occur in the lines or equipment on the owner's property are the liability of the owner and not Central Utilities. Central Utilities will maintain and repair all main lines, lift stations, pumps, etc. belonging to Central Utilities, Ltd. Property owners are also responsible for the repair bills of any TV lines, gas lines, or other damage that may occur from time to time as a result of property owners' building activity.

6) Monthly Rates

Until a minimal number of meters are installed (30) at The Woods, all customers will be charged the minimum rate each month of \$15.00. When the 30 meter minimum is in place, justifying a meter reader, the usage charges will be as follows:

For the first 5,000 gallons	\$15.00/month
Each additional 1,000 gallons	.75/month

These charges are for both sewer and water service. \$15.00 will be a minimum charge each month for each customer.

Delinquent payments (more than ten days late) will result in service cut-off, which will impose a \$25.00 reconnection fee. This must be paid to Central Utilities prior to service being restored. All future rate increases will be imposed only after a 30-day notice to all customers.

- 7) In the event of emergencies or service interruptions (other than for non-payment of bills), please contact Mr. Carroll McSwain at (813) 293-3677 in Auburndale, Florida, or our office in Lakeland at (813) 688-6592. All customers billing inquiries should be directed to Bill Hall, Central Utilities, Ltd., 111 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, Florida 33801.
- 8) Central Utilities has the right to a special assessment to all lot owners in The Woods Multi-Housing Subdivision, in the amount of not more than \$100 per lot, and not more than once in each 36 month period, for the purposes of extraordinary replacement of main lines, plant or equipment.

State of Florida

T

Commissioners:
THOMAS M. BEARD, CHAIRMAN
J. TERRY DEASON
BETTY EASLEY
MICHAEL WILSON



DIVISION OF WATER & SEWER
CHARLES H. HILL,
DIRECTOR
(904) 488-8482

Public Service Commission

RECEIVED
JUN 28 1991

June 27, 1991

FPSC-RECORDS / REPORTING

Mr. Gary Bartell
County Commissioner
Board of County Commissioners
New Citrus County Courthouse
110 North Apopka Avenue, Room 251
Inverness, Florida 32650

Re: Docket No. 900966-SU, Application of Homosassa Utilities, Inc. for a staff-assisted rate case

Dear Commissioner Bartell:

Thank you for your May 28, 1991 letter to the Commission concerning the above mentioned utility. At this time, staff is preparing its recommendation to the Commission concerning the resolution of the currently docketed rate case. Your letter will be placed in the Commission's official file to that docket for their consideration.

Staff's recommendation will be considered by the Commission during the upcoming July 30, 1991 agenda. If you prefer, you are welcome to attend that agenda to speak before the Commission.

Please contact me if you have any additional questions or comments.

Sincerely,
Stanley D. Rieger
Stanley D. Rieger
Engineer

cc: ~~Division of Records and Reporting~~
Division of Water and Sewer (Hill)
Division of Communication (Marsh)
Division of Legal Services (Feil)
Division of Consumer Affairs (Maloy)



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CITRUS COUNTY
EXECUTIVE OFFICES
NEW CITRUS COUNTY COURTHOUSE
110 North Apopka Avenue - Room 251
Inverness, Florida 32650**

(904) 726-8500 Ext. 284



May 28, 1991

Florida Public Service Commission
Fletcher Building
101 East Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0870

Re: Homosassa Utilities, Inc./Rate Increase Request

Gentlemen:

As a County Commissioner from the district in which the Riverhaven Wastewater Plant is located, I find it quite disturbing that Homosassa Utilities, Inc. is seeking an additional rate increase in order to operate this trouble-plagued wastewater treatment plant. It is, as of this date, operating without a valid operating permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and must comply with a Consent Order issued January 4, 1991, in order to obtain an operating permit in the near future. It would also appear that this plant is currently over capacity and the likelihood of it being expanded seems doubtful in view of its history of operation.

I have learned from residents served by this wastewater plant that there have been many irregularities in the past with respect to the financial operations of this organization, including but not limited to loans from the utility corporation to corporate officers. There was also a substantial loan made from the mortgagee to the utility for purposes of expansion of the plant for which all funds have been depleted, however, no expansion has taken place and the expansion permit expired on October 30, 1990.

I would, therefore, request that prior to any rate increase being granted to Homosassa Utilities, Inc. for the Riverhaven Wastewater Plant that a full investigation of the financial affairs of this utility be undertaken by the Public Service Commission. Should the Commission in its wisdom deem a rate increase justified in order for this utility to bring itself up to the standards of

Florida Public Service Commission
May 28, 1991
Page Two

the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation, all funds as a result of the rate increase should be held in escrow so that the customers of this system will be assured that the funds are going for their intended purpose and are not being squandered as they have been in the past.

Thank you in advance for your consideration in this matter.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Bartell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Gary Bartell
Commissioner - District 2

GB:cac