

Application for increase in water and wastewater rates in Charlotte, Highlands, Lake, Lee,
Marion, Orange, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Seminole Counties by

Utilities, Inc. of Florida

DOCKET NO. 160101-WS

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CONSUMER COMMENTS

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Pennbrooke Fairways

I moved into Pennbrooke in Dec. 2003

In March 2004 I inquired about separating my Irrigation water from my Household water due to the high cost & usage rate of the waste water charge. I was told it could not be done.

I told them a simple flow meter or check valve installed at the waste water outlet from the house could do it and would give you a true reading of waste water discharge.

I was then told it would cost too much to install it. I inquired twice more about the above and was told there was not a way to separate the waste water from the rest of the water usage.

I talked to my neighbor about it and because I was leaving to go back to Wisconsin she said she would continue to inquire about it.

When I returned in December to my home in Pennbrooke I saw that in part of my front yard a large hole had been dug. My neighbor told me that after numerous inquiries that Utilities Inc. was putting a separate line & meter for a separate irrigation line. It was up to the homeowner to finish installing the line from the new meter to the irrigation line.

I then called Utilities Inc. to have the same done at my home. I talked to both my neighbors beside me and they also called

to have their homes done also. When I had talked to Utilites Inc. I was told they did not like to do this as it cuts down on the waste water discharge and therefore lowers the amount of income they derive from the waste water discharge. When I received my first water bill after the irrigation line & meter was installed I called Utilites Inc. and inquired about my irrigation bill. I was told then, not before when I had the separate line & meter put in that there was a \$5⁰⁰ charge each month for the separate water meter. I have been paying that extra \$5⁰⁰ a month charge since Dec. 2004. That is 12 years. At \$5⁰⁰ per month that comes

to \$20⁰⁰ per year. In 14 years that comes to \$280⁰⁰ and there is not an end in site.

Now I know there is a cost for a water meter but for how long until the cost is covered. Just for my 3 neighbors and myself we have paid \$3360⁰⁰.

I do not have any idea how many others in Pennbrook have separated their drinking water from their irrigation water but there are quite a few. Utilites Inc is making quite a profit on these meters that should have been paid off for some time.

Now I am wondering if all the residents are paying a \$5⁰⁰ monthly meter charge for the water going into their houses also?

ON a side note: When Utilities Inc. came back and dug up my yard again I asked why they were doing it the way they were to install a separate line and meter for the irrigation. They dug down to the main water line and installed a strap (saddle) and water line on the main water line. There were (2) two or (3) three men there working plus a supervisor, a small Bob Cat and trailer. I was told that was the way it was done. I talked to the supervisor and suggested instead if they tapped the water line before the existing meter going into the house very little, if any, water pressure would be lost and they would save the following: 1, Manpower (one less

person needed. 2) Time - the time needed to dig that large hole and then refill it. Also time to put the large strap saddle around the large main water line. 3) Less sod to replace 4) Bob cat and trailer not needed 5) Less water pipe needed. I was told this was the way they did it and would continue to do so. I did not argue about it as it was just a suggestion and it not really matter to me. A month latter Utilites INC was installing a irrigation line at another house behind me and I could not but notice they were installing it the way I had suggested to their supervisor.

Pennbrooke Fairways

Water Study

Due to Pennbrooke residents complaints about their water the Pennbrooke Board of Directors requested that Utilities due a water quality study and also a water pressure study.

The water quality study showed that the iron content in Pennbrooke's water was quite high and just barely were within the State of Florida's requirements.

It was brought out that when Utilities Inc. brought the previous Water Co. they removed (2) two water filters they (Utilities Inc.) claimed were too small for our community. IN it's place they now put in a chemical

in the water to keep the iron "floating".
and be within the State of Florida water
standards. So now instead of the residents
just drinking water high in iron we are now
consuming an additional chemical in our
drinking water. that surely we do not need!
Has there been any long range or recent studies
done on how this chemical affects the human
being?

Many residents complain about the rings
around their toilets, having to replace faucets,
and the stains in their sinks and the outside
of their homes.

Before the study was undertaken

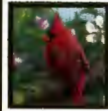
Pennbrooke was told by Utilities Inc. that it would cost X (don't have the record) amount of Dollars to improve the water system, quality and pressure. Instead after the study was completed there was a huge increase in was originally told to the Board of Directors. Because of the huge increase in estimated cost and 1) this cost would have been passed to the residents, 2) Approximately 20% or more of our residents have water filters of some type the Board elected not to go any further with the water quality program.

The Board, not Utilities Inc. went to the

residents, explained that if we (the residents) changed the days that some of the neighborhoods changed the dates of watering the lawns trees etc. it could help with the water pressure. Sections P.O.R and S volunteered to change their dates to water and it has helped resolve some of our water pressure problems. Again Utilities Inc did nothing to help or resolve our water pressure problems.

At the Florida Public Service Commission held February 2, 2017 at Pennbrooke Fairways

51 I stated that Pennbrook Fair initiated and paid for the Water Study that Utilities Inc. stated they were proud of but did not know if Pennbrook- was completely or partially reimbursed.



Utilities Inc - Being a Good Neighbor.

A number of years ago (10 plus) a bridge across a drainage ditch on our road through our RV storage area was damaged (collapsed) by a Utilities heavy truck. They repaired the bridge. It was pointed out to Utilities Inc. that they were also creating ruts in our Road when they used heavy trucks, (They do have an easement to use our roads by the storage lot.) We pointed out to them there is a County Rd that runs along side their fenced property they use to come thru our back gate and then use storage lot roads. The fence between the County Road and their property they could easily put in a gate

to accomodate their heavy trucks. They indicated to us they would do so, but never did. This gate would have been used only by their heavy truck. Their pickup trucks would still use our roads on a daily basis and would not create any damage to our roads. Utilities Inc. still after many years have not installed a gate in their fence to accomodate their heavy trucks.

Why a rate increase at all?

There have been the following:

A. No increase in services

B. No Dollars spent to improve water quality

C. Last increase tried to put their administration cost to justify their rate increase.

(The Public Service Commission saw through that)

D. Since last rate increase Business and Consumer Cost have gone up from 0 to 190 per year.

E. Retirement Community. Since the last Utilities Inc. rate increase Social Security have not increase but fractionally.

F. Average cost of materials have gone up marginally

G. Fla State workers have not seen large wage increases as Utilities Inc has proposed.

H Utilities Inc. wants to combine their Waste/Water System

1. Purpose to increase their revenue

2 Allows them to buy additional Systems that are inefficient combine them and then justify rate increases for all systems

3 If you combine Systems you do it to be Cost effective it should not cost more to operate

4. Combining does not give Utilities Inc.

an incentive to be cost effective.

In other words, 'if one of their systems

is small or inefficient they will just

combine the cost. State they are not making

a "fair" profit and ask for an increase.

I. Utilities Inc is really a monopoly that tries

to justify their request for increase by

A. Ask for large increases hoping that they will get a lower increase but higher than could be justified by their actual cost. (Past Practices)

B. Combine their out of state cost with their cost in Fla. (Past Practices)

C. Maintains but does not improve their water quality

If you look at the CPI and the material cost

in the past 8 years a raise is not justified!!




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