

ORIGINAL

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May 20, 1998

Director, Div. Of Records & Reporting
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Fl. 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 971663-WS

Gentlemen:

I have received notice from Florida Cities Water Co. that FCWC has applied to the Florida Public Service Commission for a rate increase to recover expenses from a successful legal defense. This is an outrage! As a property owner in Lee County who is not always in residence, FCWC is already collecting money from me for no services at all. Let me explain.

During the months when we are not in residence, FCWC sends us a bill for a "water base facility charge" of \$5.69. This is a basic monthly charge, which is perfectly acceptable. However, they also include a "Lee Co. sewer charge" for \$15.67. This is nearly **three times** the basic monthly charge, and **not a drop of anything goes through the pipes** since no one is there! When I called to inquire about this, FCWC basically told me to shut up and pay the bill.

I feel I am already being ripped off by this company. If you approve a rate increase to recover legal expenses I will be ripped off again. Where does the cost of doing business enter into the picture? And when have I ever received a rebate when their expenses were less than they projected? And they certainly have never distributed any profits to me in the more than ten years I have been a property owner in Lee Co.

Please do not approve this rate increase. I believe it will set a precedent which will allow FCWC and others to take advantage of the consumer in ways it is not intended. Remember, we consumers have no one to pass our expenses on to. Costs of everything just keep going up and it becomes increasingly difficult to find the money to pay increases when we're living on a fixed income.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Barbara Lallo
Barbara Lallo

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