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BEFORE  
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the )  
Application of Ohio American ) CASE NO.  
Water Company to Increase its ) 06-433-WS-AIR  
Rates for Water and Sewer )  
Services Provided to its )  
Entire Service Area. )

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BE IT REMEMBERED, that upon the hearing of  
the above-entitled matter, held at Ravenna City  
Council Chambers, 210 Park Way, Ravenna, Ohio,  
before Dick Bulgrin, Attorney Examiner; and  
commencing on Thursday, the 4th day of January,  
2007, at 6:03 o'clock p.m., at which time the  
following proceedings were had.

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ORIGINAL

## 1 APPEARANCES:

2 On Behalf of the Public Utilities Commission  
3 Of Ohio:

4 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

5 BY: Dick Bulgrin, Attorney Examiner

6 180 East Broad Street

7 Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793

8 614/466-0112

9 On Behalf of Ohio Consumers' Counsel:

10 OFFICE OF THE OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL

11 BY: Melissa Yost

12 Assistant Consumers' Counsel

13 10 West Broad Street, Suite 1800

14 Columbus, Ohio 43215-3485

15 614/466-8574

16 On Behalf of Ohio American Water Company:

17 BRICKER & ECKLER, LLP

18 BY: Thomas J. O'Brien, Attorney at Law

19 100 South Third Street

20 Columbus, Ohio 43215-4291

21 614/227-2300

22 ALSO PRESENT: David Hardman, Kathleen Chandler,

23 Sue Fields, Bill Kerns, Doug McCullough,

24 Margaret Stickel, Leo Weill, Sharon Mueller,

25 Bill Sagaser, William Camp and Chris Silas

1                   MR. BULGRIN:           Okay. Let's get  
2 started. Good evening. This is the  
3 continuation of the public hearing in Case  
4 Number 06-433-WS-AIR, being "The Matter of the  
5 Application of the Ohio American Water Company  
6 to Increase its Rates for Water and Sewer  
7 Services Provided to its Entire Service Area."

8                   This is the hearing in Ravenna, Ohio.  
9 My name is Dick Bulgrin. I'm the Attorney  
10 Examiner -- one of the Attorney Examiners  
11 assigned to this case. Let's start with  
12 appearances for the Company.

13                   MR. O'BRIEN:           Thank you. Your  
14 Honor. On behalf of Ohio American Water  
15 Company, Bricker & Eckler, LLP, by Thomas J.  
16 O'Brien and Sally W. Bloomfield, 100 South Third  
17 Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

18                   MR. BULGRIN:           Thank you. And for  
19 the Consumers' Counsel?

20                   MS. YOST:               On behalf of the  
21 residential customers of the Ohio American Water  
22 Company, the Office of the Ohio Consumers'  
23 Counsel, Janine L. Migden-Ostrander, 10 West  
24 Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio. 43215.

25                   MR. BULGRIN:           Thank you. Are

1    there any other parties?  I think that's it.

2                   Okay.  I apologize.  Hopefully we can  
3    all speak loudly enough that we won't need any  
4    amplification, but if you're having trouble  
5    hearing, just raise your hand and I'll try to  
6    make it a little louder.

7                   Ohio American Water filed an  
8    application with the PUCO to increase its rates  
9    for water and wastewater service on April 17th,  
10   2006.  And as part of the rate case proceeding,  
11   the Staff of the PUCO inspected portions of the  
12   Company's plant and equipment and interviewed  
13   Company personnel and government officials,  
14   reviewed Company records and performed analysis  
15   of data including financial information  
16   collected from the company.  Staff then prepared  
17   and filed its report on September 25th, 2006.

18                  According to Ohio law, public  
19   utilities are entitled to recover from their  
20   customers the expenses associated with operating  
21   the public utility plus a reasonable return on  
22   their plant investments.  Ohio American  
23   requested a rate increase of approximately 5.1  
24   million.  The Commission's Staff recommended  
25   that the rate increase be in the range of 3.4 to

1 3.8 million. Staff also identified service  
2 quality issues and concerns with the Company's  
3 ability to meet previously agreed upon service  
4 commitments.

5 Ohio American, the Consumers'  
6 Counsel, the cities of Tiffin and Marion and  
7 Dragoo Management filed objections to the Staff  
8 Report. The Commission is not bound by the  
9 Company's application in the case or the  
10 recommendations of the Staff Report or any  
11 interveners. Instead, the Commission will make  
12 its decisions based on everything in the record  
13 including the public testimony from tonight's  
14 hearing.

15 I believe everybody has -- that's  
16 interested has signed up to testify. If not,  
17 I'll ask again at the end. But we'll just go in  
18 the order that you signed up here, and I just  
19 ask that you speak loudly and clearly so the  
20 court reporter can take your testimony.

21 And we'll begin with William --  
22 what's the last name here?

23 MR. CAMP: Camp.

24 MR. BULGRIN: Camp?

25 MR. CAMP: Yeah. I'm going to

1 pass. I thought it was just signing in.

2 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

3 MR. CAMP: I haven't followed  
4 this.

5 MR. BULGRIN: David Shulman, is  
6 that it?

7 MR. HARDMAN: Hardman.

8 MR. BULGRIN: Okay. Come on up  
9 and have a seat here.

10 MR. HARDMAN: I get a chair?  
11 Okay. I got one more thing.

12 MR. BULGRIN: Would you raise  
13 your right hand?

14 (Thereupon, Mr. Hardman was sworn.)

15 MR. BULGRIN: Okay. Why don't  
16 you have a seat. State your name and spell your  
17 last name and give us your address for the  
18 record.

19 MR. HARDMAN: Okay. David  
20 Hardman, H-a-r-d-m-a-n. I live at 3848 Morley  
21 Drive, Brimfield, Kent, Ohio 44240.

22 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

23 MR. HARDMAN: Okay. There has  
24 been quite a few problems with the water system  
25 in our area. We do not have sewers, so you

1 don't have to worry about that. We're in a  
2 situation of -- I would say probably 90 percent  
3 of the residents in the area have extra water in  
4 their house in gallon jugs because we're  
5 constantly running out of water. The system has  
6 not been maintained.

7 To the best of my knowledge, it went  
8 in in about 1954 and it's been running on hard  
9 water since 1954, which is not good for  
10 equipment, it's not good for piping, it's not  
11 good for anything. I would guesstimate there's  
12 probably one inch of hardness, calcium, mineral  
13 deposits and whatever inside the piping because  
14 it hasn't been maintained.

15 The system runs off of a water tower  
16 which recently has sprung quite a few leaks,  
17 which I guess has been repaired, but again  
18 that's because it wasn't maintained correctly.

19 We recently had a problem with  
20 building a new high school in the area -- or,  
21 excuse me, elementary school, and recently had a  
22 problem with the water for the sprinkler system  
23 at the new school, which has to come up to state  
24 current standards. And when they simulated the  
25 water flow as per the sprinkler system coming

1 on. the water pressure dropped 18 pounds. The  
2 state minimum is 40. Now, evidently that  
3 problem was solved. I don't know how or what,  
4 but it kind of concerns me.

5 We have educators in our school  
6 system that are telling kids to bring water to  
7 school because the water in the school is so  
8 terrible. I have a gallon of water back there.  
9 If anyone would like a drink of it, they can be  
10 my guest.

11 I wrote to the Trustees with this.  
12 They were very concerned about it. They wrote a  
13 letter to Ohio American Water, which you have a  
14 copy of, concerning the water problems with the  
15 school, and again I'm assuming that problem is  
16 solved. I'm still a little leery of it, but --  
17 doing some research on the computer I've come to  
18 find out there is Ohio American Water in  
19 Kentucky, Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, clear out  
20 to California. As a matter of fact, they even  
21 have an Argentina.

22 They own water systems all over the  
23 world, and this company is basically a holding  
24 company in Germany that owns all these little  
25 conglomerates for each state and they just name



1 it by the state its in. In Argentina they had  
2 riots in the streets because of the water  
3 problems they've had and had to call out riot  
4 police to break up the riots just because of the  
5 water problems.

6 I'm not sure -- I don't remember  
7 right offhand. it's either Illinois or Indiana  
8 legislature passed laws governing what water  
9 companies have to do because they had so many  
10 problems with American Water over there.

11 The company itself I'm very  
12 displeased with. I've been communicating with  
13 our State Senator Zurz, and the Company sent her  
14 a letter, which you have a copy of, telling her  
15 they're doing this, they're doing this and  
16 they've done this and they've done that, and one  
17 example was we lost water one day and they said  
18 that due to the fact that ODOT is repairing --  
19 or redoing the road on Route 18, that caused the  
20 water to be shut off. You have a copy of the  
21 e-mail from ODOT saying it's got nothing to do  
22 with it. Why would a company tell a Senator  
23 that ODOT was responsible when they're not?

24 There's been numerous things written  
25 to the Senator which are very questionable.

1 They own the company. They just recently bought  
2 the company. My cancelled checks, which I sent  
3 a copy to the Senator, said they've owned it for  
4 five years. They said they've done numerous  
5 maintenance on the system, and according to  
6 their newsletter I got off the web, they spent  
7 thousands of dollars doing maintenance on the  
8 system. I don't know where.

9 My original complaint with the PUCO  
10 was I live in an allotment, there's eight fire  
11 hydrants. Four of them, last spring they came  
12 through, put red bags over them and said, "Out  
13 of Service," walked away. It ended up I had to  
14 call my State Senator to get somebody to work on  
15 the fire hydrants and get them back in service,  
16 which I don't know if they're back in service or  
17 not. The bags are gone. The fire hydrants are  
18 still leaking. If that's what you call  
19 maintenance. I don't like it because I'm paying  
20 for a leak.

21 Another question that was brought up  
22 to me was due to the fact that their water tower  
23 sprung leaks they had to go on the County water  
24 system, which was great. We're still having  
25 hard water, but at least we get a little more

1 pressure. which is fine and dandy. So now I'm  
2 paying the regular water rate, plus I'm paying a  
3 fee because they had to go on the County water  
4 system. Does this have to be approved by the  
5 PUCO, or was it approved by the PUCO?

6 MR. BULGRIN: I don't know the  
7 answer to that.

8 MR. HARDMAN: I don't either, but  
9 I live in a community that is roughly -- well,  
10 it borders Kent which is a community that has  
11 won awards for water quality for ten years. I  
12 mean, national awards. I'm on hard water. I  
13 lose water constantly. At least three, four  
14 times a year I'm without water.

15 Now, that's fine and dandy. What  
16 does that mean? It means if you don't want to  
17 lose all the fixtures in your house from hard  
18 water eating them up, you put in a water  
19 softener. Now, you can get somewhere between a  
20 thousand dollars to \$3,000 invested in that  
21 system depending on what you want to put in.

22 But again, I've got to invest in --  
23 when I bought my house there was no water  
24 system -- water softener. All my spigots got  
25 eaten up and I'm wondering why. Found out; hard

1 water. So I had to go out and buy a water  
2 softener. And that's an additional expense to  
3 buy it, and then you constantly have to keep  
4 buying salt to put in it to keep the water  
5 quality up in your house.

6 There's been numerous, numerous  
7 occasions where we've lost water and I got on  
8 our local representative and said, "Hey, I  
9 turned my spigot on and all I hear is air  
10 rushing in the pipe. Why don't we ever have  
11 boil-your-water alerts?" Well, the last time we  
12 had a water outage, guess what, we had a  
13 boil-your-water alert.

14 I have to commend him, he did a great  
15 job. But we've -- as I said, three four times a  
16 year, no water. We've yet to have a  
17 boil-your-water alert until somebody says  
18 something. To me, that would be standard  
19 procedure.

20 We've lived in Akron and Akron's had  
21 a lot of problems with their water and constant  
22 boil-your-water alerts. We never had one. Now,  
23 if you're going to manage a company, let's do it  
24 right. You're putting people in jeopardy here.

25 As I said, they said they bought the

1 company just recently. Well, five years ago my  
2 cancelled checks said they bought the company.  
3 They told the Senator when they bought the  
4 company they checked everything in the entire  
5 system, so in other words, my fire hydrants  
6 weren't working since the time they bought the  
7 company and until I complained they weren't  
8 going to fix them.

9 Okay. What does that mean? Fine and  
10 dandy. I get a discount on my insurance because  
11 I have a hydrant across the street. And my  
12 insurance rate's going to go up when they find  
13 out the fire hydrants don't work, so Citizens  
14 Utilities -- so Ohio American Water is going to  
15 cost me some additional money.

16 Now, my question here to you at the  
17 PUCO is: Why do I have to call my Senator to  
18 get a fire hydrant fixed? Why do I have to call  
19 my State Representative to get a fire hydrant  
20 fixed? This is not a company I want to deal  
21 with. If they're going to run things this way,  
22 I don't want anything to do with them. They've  
23 got a bad reputation all over the country and  
24 the world. States are passing legislation to  
25 protect the consumers.

1           They want a 24 percent water rate  
2   increase. I'm paying a lot more money than  
3   they're paying in the next city, Kent, that  
4   borders us right now and you want a 24 percent  
5   rate increase? That doesn't make sense. They  
6   came in, dug up the fire hydrants. Six months  
7   later, no fire hydrants, nobody did anything.

8           Now, fine. "We went out and we  
9   rented a tractor," and said, "We're going to fix  
10  the fire hydrants." I went down and I looked at  
11  the tractor and there's a sticker on it that  
12  says, "Rented From Akron Tractor Sales."

13           They drove it up, they parked it in  
14  the street where it sat for a week and a half.  
15  Never saw anybody, no one touched it. Who's  
16  paying for that? Okay. They dug a hole and put  
17  a new fire hydrant in. Now we're going to go  
18  down to the next one. Took the tractor down  
19  there, it sat for a week and a half. I don't  
20  know if it's fixed or not. They used it one  
21  day, day and a half, it disappeared. Who's  
22  paying for all of that?

23           It seems to me that what they're  
24  doing is going to you folks and saying, "We  
25  spent all of this money to do this and we need a

1 rate increase." Well, yeah. I'll go rent a  
2 tractor, park it in the street for a week and a  
3 half and then I'll go to you and say, "I need a  
4 rate increase."

5 It just -- you know, we got a water  
6 tower that was built in 19 -- about 1954  
7 approximately that is drastically, drastically  
8 undersized for the amount of people they have on  
9 the water tower. So logic tells me what you  
10 should do is put a new water tower in. No,  
11 we're going to fix the old water tower. Well,  
12 we're right back where we started. We don't  
13 have any pressure. Everything's went right back  
14 to where it is.

15 They fixed a piece of machinery that  
16 actually is no good, is not serviceable, but  
17 they went to the PUCO and said, "Hey, we spent  
18 all of this money fixing the water tower." Now  
19 what? "We need a rate increase." It doesn't  
20 make sense to me.

21 I just -- I've been communicating  
22 with our Senator and my State Representative  
23 over here -- by the way, Mrs. Zurz over here is  
24 our State -- or --

25 MS. CHANDLER: Kathleen Chandler.

1                   MR. HARDMAN:           -- Kathleen  
2   Chandler is our State Representative. I have  
3   numerous letters from the State Senator, one of  
4   which, if you care to read it, says this rate  
5   increase is absolutely ridiculous for the  
6   service the people have been getting. They  
7   should not have any rate increase. And that's  
8   from our Senator. She is hopping mad because a  
9   lot of the information that she was given by  
10   Ohio American Water was incorrect, totally  
11   incorrect. You've got a copy of the letter that  
12   I wrote to Senator Zurz. She copied everything  
13   they sent to her to me.

14                   And I'm not going to go through the  
15   whole letter because it's quite lengthy, but  
16   it's just -- incorrect information given to a  
17   Senator is not a company I want to deal with.

18                   MR. BULGRIN:           Okay.

19                   MR. HARDMAN:           So basically that's  
20   all I've got. I'm quite concerned about our  
21   school system. I don't know what's going to  
22   happen. We've already got one problem with it.  
23   Evidently it's solved: I don't know. I haven't  
24   been involved in it, but I hope it is.

25                   When I bought my house, and I do feel



1 I was kind of jilted, because I was told I was  
2 on a community water system. Well, when I  
3 bought the house I found out that the next thing  
4 I'm going to buy was a water softener, which I  
5 didn't really plan on when I bought the house,  
6 but then I find out that, you know, we're having  
7 all of these problems with water outages and  
8 whatever.

9           You being in the Columbus area,  
10 they've got some holdings down there, and I know  
11 you've heard the whole story, but my question  
12 is -- what I was told was they've even got a  
13 reverse osmosis system down there. Well, that's  
14 fine and dandy. And I mean no disrespect to  
15 anybody, but they evidently got a softening  
16 system, a reverse osmosis system and all of this  
17 good stuff; we get hard water and they want a  
18 rate increase from us.

19           Now, they're going to tell you, "We  
20 got a plant." Well, yeah, they got a plant.  
21 Maybe if you put two out houses together with a  
22 moon on the doors, that's the size of their  
23 plant. If you want to call that a plant, that's  
24 a plant. But I just don't understand it.

25           Then I had another problem recently

1 which was back in '0 -- back in January -- or,  
2 excuse me, September I got a water bill for  
3 \$50.01. Well, okay. I paid my water bill.  
4 Then the next month I get a water bill for  
5 \$34.67. Well, that's better. I like that.  
6 Then I got a water bill for \$11 -- or for \$5.31.  
7 Well, I'm retired. I'm on a fixed income and  
8 it's kind of hard to budget something like that  
9 when you get a 50 -- \$45 difference.

10 So I called our local service guy, he  
11 come out and he checked everything -- well,  
12 excuse me. They were working on the fire  
13 hydrant and they had to shut the water off and  
14 he wanted to take a chlorine reading, which I  
15 very much appreciated. He called me and said,  
16 "Can I take a reading at your house?" I said,  
17 "Sure."

18 He come over and took the reading and  
19 everything was coming out the way it should. I  
20 said, "While you're here, will you check my  
21 meter? There's something wrong here. I got a  
22 \$5 water bill." He checked and said, "There's  
23 nothing wrong with it." Fine. I like that.

24 Next month, in December, I get a  
25 \$7.95 water bill. I can handle this. No

1 problem. Guess what my water bill was this  
2 month. \$49. Is there a problem here? I don't  
3 want to deal with this company.

4 I've talked to people recently that  
5 have had \$90-plus water bills. Explain that to  
6 me. You read the literature from American Water  
7 on the computer and the average water bill is  
8 \$23. Huh? Why are people getting \$90 water  
9 bills? I don't understand it.

10 I'm not an accountant. I have no clue  
11 what's going on, but two and two always made  
12 four to me. That's basically what I've got.

13 MR. BULGRIN: Mr. O'Brien,  
14 anything?

15 MR. O'BRIEN: I have no  
16 questions. Your Honor.

17 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

18 MR. HARDMAN: Thank you.

19 MR. BULGRIN: Kathleen Chandler?

20 MS. CHANDLER: I'll pass.

21 MR. BULGRIN: Sue Fields? Raise  
22 your right hand. please.

23 (Thereupon, Ms. Fields was sworn.)

24 MR. BULGRIN: Be seated. please.

25 MS. FIELDS: Yeah. My last

1 name's Fields, F-i-e-l-d-s.

2 MR. BULGRIN: And your address?

3 MS. FIELDS: 3547 Elmhurst

4 Court, Brimfield.

5 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

6 MS. FIELDS: Okay. I live in  
7 the Beechcrest Allotment. I'm also a Township  
8 Trustee in Brimfield, but my concern is the  
9 bills as they're coming in. I'm looking at 365  
10 homes in the Beechcrest Allotment, and I think  
11 that allotment was built in about 1963, maybe  
12 1960, so we're looking at all the equipment and  
13 the lines being that old.

14 I don't see much being replaced or  
15 updated and we've all been paying our pills each  
16 month, but my main concern is we're dealing with  
17 365 homes, we are 1,200 square foot homes on a  
18 concrete slab. That will give you an idea of  
19 what we look like. We're not gingerbread houses  
20 by any means. And years ago this was considered  
21 the low income portion of Brimfield.

22 A lot of my neighbors, they are  
23 young, married couples with children. We've got  
24 many retired people who are on fixed incomes.  
25 the original owners that bought, and we see

1 everything in our budget being increased, the  
2 gas, the electric, the water, everybody wants a  
3 piece of the pie. Our pies keep getting smaller  
4 and smaller and smaller. My husband is a  
5 hundred percent disabled from the Korean War,  
6 and we are on his Social Security, a fixed  
7 income, so I want to represent the people.

8 I think Mr. Hardman addressed the  
9 mechanics of the problem. I won't go there.  
10 I'm just very concerned about how this much of  
11 an increase along with -- we passed a school  
12 levy, we passed a police levy and we keep seeing  
13 this disposable income being eaten up. So a 24  
14 percent increase, I think, is really, really  
15 ludicrous and I just really want to talk for  
16 those people that can't be here tonight on that  
17 issue.

18 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you. Bill  
19 Kerns?

20 MR. KERNS: Yeah.

21 MR. BULGRIN: Raise your right  
22 hand.

23 (Thereupon, Mr. Kerns was sworn.)

24 MR. BULGRIN: Please be seated.

25 MR. KERNS: My name is Bill

1 Kerns. I live a 3933 Morley Drive. That's in  
2 Brimfield. It's a Kent address, 44240. My  
3 question to try to get answered is -- this is to  
4 give you an idea, and if anybody else that wants  
5 to look at it, this is Morley Drive. Water  
6 comes down, goes between my house and my  
7 neighbor's next door, and then goes up Neville  
8 Drive and goes down here and goes on down to  
9 these other three houses. There was no line  
10 through here. They just recently put in a --  
11 started some new condos down here. They come  
12 down and put a waterline down and tied in down  
13 here. (Indicating.)

14 So then Brimfield -- the water  
15 company, they decided that they was going to  
16 take the waterline from here and down and tie it  
17 into the new line that the other people put in,  
18 and they wanted to know if me and this gentleman  
19 here would pay for having a new waterline run  
20 over -- clear over across this street in order  
21 for them there to eliminate this one.  
22 (Indicating.)

23 To start off with, they spent money  
24 putting a line in here that they wouldn't have  
25 had to have done because it still goes to the

1 same place. These lines are still open. This  
2 goes down here and now goes this way.

3 (Indicating.)

4 That's where he said the backhoe sat  
5 all that time that they come down there and tied  
6 in after a week and a half. So that's when they  
7 come and contacted me and wanted to know if I  
8 would put a -- be willing to pay for a line to  
9 go all the way across here, across the street  
10 and all the way over into the waterline on the  
11 other side.

12 Because I asked them, "Are you going  
13 to shut this off?" And he said, "Oh, no, we  
14 can't do that." So they got -- you know, they  
15 spent this money for what reason? It still goes  
16 to the same place. They just --

17 MR. BULGRIN: This is a waterline  
18 running --

19 MR. KERNS: Yeah. This is  
20 Morley Drive here. This is Ranfield Road and  
21 this is Neville. (Indicating.)

22 MR. BULGRIN: So it's between  
23 Morley Road and Neville?

24 MR. KERNS: Right. Between  
25 Morley Drive and Neville Drive, right.

1 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

2 MR. KERNS: The other thing was  
3 not being notified when they're shutting the  
4 water off. They said that they put the things  
5 on the doors, but I don't -- I think if you'll  
6 take anybody that's actually here today, I bet  
7 they didn't get a notification at all that they  
8 was going to shut the water off. And, of  
9 course, I can't blame this -- these people here,  
10 but they didn't even know that this waterline  
11 went between these houses until I told them.  
12 But that was before they put all of this -- they  
13 spent this money over here. So anyway that's  
14 what I had today. (Indicating.)

15 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

16 MR. KERNS: Thank you.

17 MR. BULGRIN: Tom?

18 MR. O'BRIEN: No questions.

19 MR. BULGRIN: Doug McCullough?

20 (Thereupon, Mr. McCullough was  
21 sworn.)

22 MR. BULGRIN: All right. Please  
23 be seated and state your name and spell your  
24 last name.

25 MR. McCULLOUGH: My name is Doug



1 McCullough, M-c, capital C-u-l-l-o-u-g-h. My  
2 address is 3898 Morley Drive, Brimfield. A  
3 brief background about myself. I grew up in  
4 Brimfield in the same house I'm in now from when  
5 I was a child, from 1961 to 1972. When I got  
6 married, we moved to Ravenna and then my parents  
7 remained there and we bought the house back from  
8 them in 1992. I've lived there since. So I  
9 know some of the history of it.

10 Beechcrest was originally built  
11 around 1957, '58. We're called Beechcrest II or  
12 III?

13 MR. KERNS: Three.

14 MR. WEILL: Two.

15 MR. McCULLOUGH: Three? Bill says  
16 three. Beechcrest III, which was developed  
17 around 1960, '61. In fact, the home we bought  
18 was the model home -- or that my parents bought.  
19 And like they said, you know, it's the same  
20 existing water system. And, of course, when  
21 they built that development they obviously cut  
22 corners because, as Mr. Kerns just explained,  
23 they took a shortcut through our -- between our  
24 houses to the next street rather than go down to  
25 the corner and then across.

1 Am I allowed to ask questions of the  
2 representative from the water company?

3 MR. BULGRIN: No.

4 MR. McCULLOUGH: None? Okay. I'll  
5 ask you then.

6 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

7 MR. McCULLOUGH: You represent the  
8 PUCO, correct? What I want to know is: Are  
9 each of the systems, water systems structured as  
10 separate entities or subsidiary corporations?  
11 You know, like, are we different than Franklin  
12 County, Columbus area?

13 MR. BULGRIN: No. It's the same  
14 company. They're a separate --

15 MR. McCULLOUGH: They're not  
16 structured as subsidiary companies of American  
17 Water?

18 MR. BULGRIN: I don't believe so.

19 MR. McCULLOUGH: Okay. Because, you  
20 know, they've broken out -- on their proposal  
21 they've broken out the different districts and  
22 the different expenses and costs.

23 MR. BULGRIN: Right.

24 MR. McCULLOUGH: We're listed as  
25 Portage County; however, they have two separate

1 distinct systems in Portage County. One is in  
2 Aurora, I believe, and then Brimfield.

3 And the reason I bring that up is  
4 because I think it was in 1998, give or take, I  
5 attended one of these meetings for a rate  
6 increase, at that time it was owned by Citizens  
7 Utilities, and the premise was to pay for  
8 improvements done.

9 The improvements were done in Aurora.  
10 And the PUCO even was under the -- was under the  
11 idea that we were the same system, just  
12 different areas. They thought we were being  
13 provided service by the same wells and so forth,  
14 which was not the case. So we ended up paying  
15 for their improvements because we didn't acquire  
16 any new improvements.

17 And then Citizens Utilities sold this  
18 company to Ohio American Water. Do you know  
19 what year that was?

20 MR. BULGRIN: I don't know off  
21 the top of my head.

22 MR. McCULLOUGH: It was within the  
23 last, somebody said, five, I thought it was two  
24 or three years ago.

25 MR. BULGRIN: It was in the last

1 five years.

2 MR. McCULLOUGH: So a lot of these  
3 problems, of course, were Citizens Utilities'  
4 and you can't necessarily fault American Water  
5 for that, but -- give me a second, please. Do  
6 you know how many employees --

7 MR. BULGRIN: Let's go off the  
8 record here.

9 (Thereupon, a discussion was held off  
10 the record.)

11 MR. McCULLOUGH: Well, I don't have  
12 exactly a personal -- well, I have a gripe, but  
13 I'm here as a voice of a group as a whole  
14 expressing my opinion like everybody else has.

15 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

16 MR. McCULLOUGH: Again, I lost my  
17 train of thought here. When Citizens Utilities  
18 still owned it, it's true -- there was, I think,  
19 some misstated information earlier. Citizens  
20 Utilities had this company. We did derive our  
21 water from wells in proximity of the water tower  
22 that's in Beechcrest I. However, they had --  
23 they had started acquiring water from Portage  
24 County who has wells elsewhere in the township.  
25 And I'm not sure how many years ago that was. I

1 don't know. Do you know?

2 MR. BULGRIN: No, I don't.

3 MR. McCULLOUGH: Well, that's  
4 important because the quality of water up to  
5 that point was horrendous. Corroded fixtures --  
6 when I bought the house back in 1992 I had to  
7 replace all the fixtures because of the  
8 corrosion. Water heaters lasted on average, you  
9 know, five to eight years because of the  
10 corrosion, at that time.

11 Since we started buying water from  
12 Portage County, the quality of water has  
13 improved night and day. I still don't like to  
14 drink it because of the hardness, so I do buy  
15 bottled water, as do most of my neighbors. I  
16 wanted to know if Ohio American Water was  
17 approached by Portage County to buy the system.

18 MR. BULGRIN: I don't know the  
19 answer to that.

20 MR. McCULLOUGH: Okay. My  
21 understanding is that Portage County approached,  
22 and I don't know if it was Citizens Utilities or  
23 Ohio American Water at the time, to buy their  
24 system. And it was shortly there after that  
25 they started buying water. We're buying -- Ohio

1 American Water is buying water from Portage  
2 County, who also sells -- their wells are in  
3 Brimfield. They sell water to Rootstown, which  
4 is five miles to the east. So, in effect, we're  
5 getting our water from Portage County.

6 Ohio American Water is a middleman  
7 that ups the price for a profit. And that's my  
8 perspective on that. I wanted to know since  
9 acquiring it from Citizens Utilities what major  
10 improvements have been made. I don't know if  
11 you want to ask the attorney here representing  
12 them or not.

13 MR. BULGRIN: No. This is an  
14 opportunity for you to give your input. So if  
15 there's anything that you need to testify as to  
16 the problems with your service --

17 MR. McCULLOUGH: Isn't this also a  
18 fact gathering meeting?

19 MR. BULGRIN: Just as to your  
20 service.

21 MR. McCULLOUGH: Okay. I want to  
22 know how has my service been improved since  
23 acquiring it from Citizens Utilities?

24 MS. YOST: Your Honor, may I?

25 MR. McCULLOUGH: Pardon?

1 MS. YOST: Hi. I'm Melissa  
2 Yost with Ohio Consumers' Counsel. This issue  
3 is before the Commission. What you're  
4 testifying to will be part of the record, which  
5 they'll get to read. They need to make the  
6 determination whether your rates are just and  
7 reasonable and whether your service is adequate.

8 So if you could provide any testimony  
9 as to the reasonableness of your rates or the  
10 service, the adequacy of your service, that's  
11 what the Commission would be interested in.

12 MR. McCULLOUGH: Well, I'm trying to  
13 find out how they're substantiating a rate  
14 increase when they're not -- have not done  
15 anything from before -- the way it was before  
16 other than wages.

17 My understanding is they have one  
18 employee. That one employee covers both the  
19 Brimfield water system and the Aurora water  
20 system. He replaced another individual  
21 approximately four or five years ago.  
22 Everything -- any work that's done to any broken  
23 lines and so forth are all subcontracted out.  
24 They do not have their own maintenance staff in  
25 place. So any repairs that need to be made are

1 subcontracted out to some other individuals.

2 The water tower has not been used.

3 When this rate increase was proposed -- do you  
4 have the date when this proposal was made?

5 Earlier in the year, January, I believe, or  
6 February, or was it a year ago?

7 MR. BULGRIN: The application was  
8 filed in April. April 17th of this year -- or  
9 2006.

10 MR. McCULLOUGH: I think the  
11 research study was done, and I believe the PUCO  
12 did one as well, and it wasn't until after this  
13 proposal was made did they start working on  
14 these fire hydrants. they started working on  
15 repairing of the water tower because they didn't  
16 need the water tower because they were buying  
17 their water from Portage County.

18 They ran a line, they tied it in.  
19 It's at the end of Ranfield Road and Tallmadge  
20 Road. And Portage County are the ones that read  
21 the meters, they monitor it, they do all the  
22 chlorination and the additives, the  
23 fluorination, which we didn't have before.  
24 Portage County does that. They merely buy the  
25 water after it's been treated, pass it on to us



1 and add a surcharge.

2 Then when this proposal came up, now  
3 they started to try to repair the water tower.  
4 It had to be -- have certain inspections. My  
5 understanding was they were going to need to  
6 paint the interior of that tower, and they put  
7 it off and put it off because of the major  
8 expense.

9 Then the fire hydrants, I think there  
10 were four, I'm not sure, if anybody knows, there  
11 were four hydrants, they're obsolete and they  
12 had a difficult time finding parts for them. To  
13 the best of my knowledge, I don't think they've  
14 still found parts. Every once in a while they  
15 come and visit the hydrants, because I've  
16 watched them, I take pictures of them. They  
17 lift the pad, they look around, they put it back  
18 on, get in the van, drink a cup of coffee and  
19 they leave.

20 And the waterline that Mr. Kerns  
21 mentioned that they just put in to go around us  
22 now to the corner to Ranfield instead of between  
23 our houses was all subcontracted. So I don't  
24 see how they can justify an increase. I don't  
25 know we need them. I think we should just sell

1 the lines and that to Portage County and  
2 continue as we have. Let Portage County take  
3 care of it, which won't be necessary to be  
4 regulated by the PUCO. That's basically all I  
5 have to say.

6 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

7 MR. McCULLOUGH: You're welcome.

8 MR. BULGRIN: Margaret Stickel?

9 (Thereupon, Ms. Stickel was sworn.)

10 MR. BULGRIN: State your name  
11 and --

12 MS. STICKEL: My name is Margaret  
13 Stickel. I live at 5278 Sundale Place North,  
14 Columbus, Ohio 43232. That's Blacklick Estates.  
15 And I did some research on line and I went and  
16 got -- my doctor told me not to get any more  
17 because of my condition, but I got a hundred  
18 signatures backing me up on our water quality  
19 and so forth.

20 But at the last rate hike meeting in  
21 February, y'all allowed the raise -- rates on  
22 the condition that Ohio American Water would  
23 agree to provide additional services such as  
24 repair activities and low income assistance.

25 In August I called asking for

1 assistance because our water bill was around  
2 \$120 a month. And in my condition I cannot  
3 work. I tried to get assistance. They  
4 explained they do not have any assistance  
5 programs or not so much as even a payment plan  
6 to work out with me to keep my water on. My  
7 bill got up to \$800.

8 They came out to disconnect in  
9 December. I paid \$200. They disconnected  
10 anyway. I begged, borrowed, came up with  
11 another \$290. I'm a single mom of a small child  
12 and obviously one on the way and I came up with  
13 another \$290. That still wasn't enough. Then  
14 they sent me a bill for \$120 for not having  
15 services.

16 I was \$11 short and they refused to  
17 restore services. They wouldn't work with me at  
18 all. They also said -- which I had a plumber  
19 that came in and he can testify, he checked my  
20 plumbing, there's no possible way I could have  
21 used this much water. They charged me for  
22 11,000 gallons. 11,968 gallons of water when it  
23 was disconnected, and that was only for 18 days  
24 of their billing.

25 The reason that they are having this

1 hike is this German based company is trying to  
2 make their numbers look good for their IPO  
3 because they're planning to resell later this  
4 year. Our water is not fit to drink. They  
5 failed to provide good water quality or meet any  
6 expectations. They're out for profit. They  
7 should actually be asked to lower their prices  
8 instead of raising them because it's absolutely  
9 ridiculous.

10 I'll show you here. In November I  
11 had water services, in December I did not and  
12 they have charged me for more water than I had  
13 in November. They're just out to make a quick  
14 buck, so that's pretty much all I have to say.

15 MR. BULGRIN: Are these  
16 signatures you collected?

17 MS. STICKEL: Yes, I collected  
18 those myself. I went on two separate days. And  
19 my doctor suggested that I not do it no more,  
20 otherwise I -- and that was like four or five  
21 streets. And I'm sure if I went throughout the  
22 neighborhood I would have gotten a lot more.  
23 All of these people are paying over a hundred  
24 dollars for their water.

25 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

1 MS. STICKEL: Thank you.  
2 MR. BULGRIN: Leo Weill? Is it  
3 "Weill"?  
4 MR. WEILL: My name is Leo  
5 Weill, W-e-i-l-l.  
6 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.  
7 (Thereupon, Mr. Weill was sworn.)  
8 MR. BULGRIN: And your name  
9 again? I'm sorry.  
10 MR. WEILL: Leo Weill.  
11 MR. BULGRIN: That's W --  
12 MR. WEILL: W-e-i, two L's.  
13 MR. BULGRIN: And your address,  
14 please?  
15 MR. WEILL: 3853 Morley,  
16 M-o-r-l-e-y, Drive.  
17 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.  
18 MR. WEILL: I've got here a  
19 bottle of the water that does not go through my  
20 water treatment center. If you would like a  
21 drink, be my guest. You can see from the color  
22 of it, it is nasty.  
23 MR. McCULLOUGH: I thought it was  
24 iced tea.  
25 MR. WEILL: Huh?

1                   MR. McCULLOUGH:    I thought it was  
2   iced tea.

3                   MR. WEILL:           It looks like weak  
4   iced tea. That's before it goes through the  
5   \$1,800 system that I've replaced recently  
6   because the ones I've had -- since I've been  
7   there this is my third system. I've been in  
8   this house since the water system got put up in  
9   allotment number three.

10                  MR. BULGRIN:       Which was when?

11                  MR. WEILL:        1960. I was the  
12   second or third person to buy a house and some  
13   of the houses that these -- my neighbors live in  
14   wasn't even built when I moved in. And now we  
15   have a road that's paved; we didn't at first.

16                  Okay. My first problem is I  
17   understood there was a surcharge and it went on  
18   my bill. I called up to the PUCO and I asked  
19   when they had hearings on it. I was told,  
20   "Huh?" So obviously the PUCO did not approve  
21   the surcharge. Who put it in? I don't know.  
22   It's there.

23                  The Brimfield Water Company area has  
24   one employee. His job is to repair the water  
25   reading meters to make sure that he gets

1 readings. Sometimes he reads them, sometimes he  
2 doesn't. My bills come in estimated several  
3 times. My averages run between 25 and 30 to \$45  
4 a month depending upon what I'm doing at the  
5 time; watering lawns, then it's higher and in  
6 winter it's not. However, I had a strange thing  
7 happen this year. Out of the clear blue sky I  
8 suddenly got a \$92 bill -- \$89.92 bill. I  
9 called up the water company and they said, "Oh,  
10 we've been estimating and we did this to make it  
11 up."

12 I called the water company man. I  
13 asked him to come out and plug the meter and  
14 read it, and instead of using 16,000 gallons,  
15 which is what I was charged for, I found out I  
16 was using 2,000 gallons. The next month it went  
17 up to 4,000 gallons and now it's back on the  
18 estimated 6 to 8,000 gallon readings. So I  
19 don't know who's doing the readings or how  
20 they're coming up with these things. It looks  
21 like they're pulling these figures out of thin  
22 air.

23 The next thing I would like to tell  
24 you about is the water pressure. In all the  
25 years I've lived in the house -- I was having

1 trouble when I first moved in because I live at  
2 the top of the hill. The water tower, I'm above  
3 over half of it. My second floor shower many  
4 times will not run and the amount of water I had  
5 in the bottom would run. So I put a pressure  
6 gauge on my system in the house so I would know  
7 what the water pressure is. It has never  
8 exceeded 30 pounds per square inch. The usual  
9 rating is below 18 pounds per square inch on the  
10 second floor.

11               However, several weeks ago I went out  
12 to dinner and came home to find that the hose  
13 from my dishwasher had been blown off of the  
14 pipe. And I checked the water gauge and I was  
15 suddenly at 79.3 pounds, and the water had run  
16 out the door. I got some plumbing people, I got  
17 somebody in to fix it and we repaired it. That  
18 was when the water was running -- hot water was  
19 running down the street. It sure cleaned out my  
20 hot water tank. That lasted for four weeks.

21               The pressure currently is 19 pounds  
22 per square inch this evening on my second floor,  
23 which means if you don't have a shower head that  
24 will limit water and have decent spray, you're  
25 going to get a putzy type of a shower. And my



1 daughter does not take a bath until she comes  
2 home from work at two in the morning because at  
3 that time there's enough pressure to fill the  
4 bathtub.

5 Now, my history with the water  
6 company. I moved into the house in 1960. In  
7 1966 I testified before the PUCO against the  
8 water increase because of problems. The PUCO in  
9 its infinite wisdom decided that what we  
10 testified to in Columbus was not worth bothering  
11 with and gave them the raise as they wanted.

12 I got a little upset, so I bought a  
13 bunch of stock in Citizens Utilities and went to  
14 their board meetings when they had them and  
15 created some problems wherein a certain vice  
16 president got fired. And we didn't have too  
17 much trouble with it until about four years ago.

18 At that time my stock from Citizens  
19 Utilities, which was paying about 17 to 19  
20 percent per quarter, was sold to RWE of  
21 Dusseldorf, Germany. All the letters I get from  
22 RWE tell me that they are not having much  
23 trouble with their utility systems and only in  
24 46 states are having problems with water  
25 problems or sewer problems.

1                   I know where my son lives in the  
2 Sonoma Valley, the State of California condemned  
3 the system, took it by eminent domain and is now  
4 forcing the county to rebuild the system for the  
5 people there.

6                   I, on the other hand, maintained my  
7 stock from RWE, and in the 4 years I have  
8 received 155 percent profit in dividends. The  
9 only other place I know they're having problems  
10 is with the other English speaking area and  
11 that's in London, England.

12                  Obviously they buy these water  
13 companies, they have no intention of doing  
14 anything, they will run up bills that don't  
15 really fix anything and then they get the rate  
16 increase. And I'm of mixed feelings. I don't  
17 like paying the raised bills, but I do like  
18 getting the additional income on the dividends.  
19 But they're running a dividend rate much higher  
20 than the 6 to 10 percent which the  
21 Consumers'/Public Utilities says a public  
22 utility used to have to have when they used to  
23 control it a lot better.

24                  When a company can get itself raised  
25 from the 4 to 6 percent, which is what I thought

1 Public Utilities rules said where they had to  
2 remain, and go up to 21 percent and then have  
3 the nerve to ask for a raise, I think they're  
4 being obnoxious and so forth.

5 I have sold my stock because I have a  
6 feeling that company's going to go down in a  
7 hole. I know they're trying to unload whatever  
8 they can in the way of water companies because  
9 I've read their reports and I get them from the  
10 home office. Unfortunately, to unload the  
11 stock, I have to sell them on the German stock  
12 market, get euros and then have it transferred  
13 back to the United States.

14 I would say that that -- plus the  
15 fact that I know that when the water pressure  
16 went up, suddenly they passed the testing at the  
17 school system. The pressure is now down. I  
18 question that. I went in to the County and  
19 asked to see the contract between Ohio Water and  
20 the County Commissioners. I'm not exactly sure,  
21 because I've tried to read what \$39 an hour  
22 means, but I figured out what they meant was at  
23 \$39 a million they are selling the water to the  
24 company. They are charging me \$4.45 a thousand.  
25 Therefore, when I had 16,000, I wound up with an

1 \$89 bill. How I wound up with 16.000 I've yet  
2 to figure out because I only have a 7/8ths of an  
3 inch pipe going in, and to have that much water  
4 flow through a 7/8ths inch pipe would take  
5 something like a thousand hours.

6 MR. McCULLOUGH: It's five-eighths.

7 MR. WEILL: Huh?

8 MR. McCULLOUGH: It's five-eighths.  
9 It's smaller than three-quarters. It's  
10 five-eighths.

11 MR. WEILL: It's five-eighths.  
12 I'm sorry. I stand corrected. But it would  
13 take several thousand hours. I don't know  
14 what's going on. I think the Company has not  
15 always been truthful to the Public Utilities. I  
16 met sideways with one of the fellows who said,  
17 "Oh, I'm from the Public Utility for this area  
18 and I've done this, that and the other thing,"  
19 and I find out that your inspector did not do  
20 what he supposedly told somebody that I was  
21 listening to.

22 That's the other thing I have a  
23 problem with. I question the Public Utilities'  
24 inspection of what they've done and the person  
25 who did it, mainly because the man who was doing

1 that in this area is retired from Ohio Water.

2 And I'm just wondering how accurate things are.

3 I don't have much else to do. I do  
4 know that the Water Company did switch over. I  
5 believe it was January of 2002. It went from  
6 Citizens to RWE and it remained Citizens for a  
7 little while somewhere in that period, that  
8 nine-month period prior to that as it was  
9 switching over controls. But what's happened is  
10 they've gotten rid of most of the people that  
11 would run things in this country except for  
12 their building department, which has very little  
13 leeway except to do exactly what they're told to  
14 do.

15 The person in each area -- and we  
16 have one man in all of Portage County. However,  
17 in talking to people in Ashtabula, people in  
18 Warren and people in Toledo, the same thing is  
19 going on there. They bought this thing, they  
20 don't intend to do a damn thing to it and they  
21 just want to reap it and milk it for all it's  
22 worth.

23 I think to give them a raise of 24  
24 percent would be obscene. Their profits exceed  
25 the 4 to 6 percent they're allowed to make under

1 the old law. I do not know if utility law has  
2 changed. Maybe you do.

3 MR. BULGRIN: We'll talk about  
4 that later.

5 MR. WEILL: Okay.

6 MR. BULGRIN: Is there anything  
7 more?

8 MR. WEILL: No. I don't think  
9 I have much more to say. I think that's about  
10 it. I do know that I'm going to try to get in  
11 touch with the representatives like  
12 Mrs. Chandler and Senator Zurz of all of these  
13 areas that we have -- that have this company  
14 involved. And I think the Public Utility, if  
15 they don't pay attention to what their citizens  
16 are saying, may find itself with some problems  
17 with the legislature. And that's not a threat.  
18 That's just an observation. Thank you very  
19 much.

20 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you. Is  
21 there anybody else? Anybody else?

22 MR. WEILL: The lady back here.

23 MS. MUELLER: My name is on  
24 there, I thought.

25 MR. BULGRIN: Come on up.

1 MS. MUELLER: My name's Sharon  
2 Mueller.

3 (Thereupon, Ms. Mueller was sworn.)

4 MR. BULGRIN: Okay. Have a seat.  
5 State your name and spell your last name.

6 MS. MUELLER: It's Sharon  
7 Mueller. M-u-e-l-l-e-r.

8 MR. BULGRIN: And your address?

9 MS. MUELLER: My address is 5119  
10 Rutledge Drive -- Rutledge Drive,  
11 R-u-t-l-e-d-g-e, Drive North, Columbus 43232.  
12 We're also in Blacklick.

13 MR. BULGRIN: Okay.

14 THE WITNESS: My husband, my  
15 family and I are a family of four. We live --  
16 been living there for approximately four years  
17 now. At the time we moved in we didn't realize  
18 that our water softener was not working in our  
19 home and had found that it was impossible to  
20 even use the dishwasher without softener. The  
21 water came out -- the dishes, of course, were  
22 not spotless and had to be rewashed or rinsed in  
23 order for me to be able to use them.

24 And then we lived for at least two  
25 years without the softener. My husband was

1 raised on well water and refused to even drink  
2 the water. Not until we did purchase a softener  
3 at over a thousand dollars, which has been about  
4 a year ago, maybe a year and a half, did we  
5 finally get water that was even usable in the  
6 dishwasher. And, of course, we had to use that  
7 on -- buy that on credit. We've had to maintain  
8 that, of course, with the softener salts, which  
9 is about 45 to \$60 a month on top of that.

10 Our average water bill, I can  
11 testify, was 90 to \$120 until we had to bring up  
12 a new rule in the home, which wasn't very  
13 pleasant, and I'm going to say it anyway, we had  
14 to conserve, and the best way to say that, if it  
15 was yellow, it's mellow, if it's not, flush it  
16 down. We had to go to such extremes to try to  
17 conserve, and I've never heard of doing that,  
18 even in the city.

19 I've had water bills well in the past  
20 when I lived on the west side that was probably  
21 35 to \$40 for an average of 3 months is what we  
22 were paying, and even with inflation I couldn't  
23 see it going up much more than that.

24 I had one quote that I wanted to talk  
25 about and then I'm about done. I do believe



1 that water should be managed as a public trust.  
2 I can't remember the name of the lady that had  
3 this because my friend wrote this for me on  
4 another piece of paper that "Water should be  
5 managed as a public trust in public interest,  
6 but instead our essential resources are being  
7 bought and sold to make a quick buck." And I  
8 don't see that -- I don't see the justification  
9 for such an increase with the type of service  
10 that we've been receiving. Thank you for your  
11 time.

12 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you. Anybody  
13 else?

14 (Thereupon, Mr. Sagaser was sworn.)

15 MR. BULGRIN: Please be seated  
16 and give us your name, spell your last name and  
17 your address.

18 MR. SAGASER: My name is Bill  
19 Sagaser, S-a-g-a-s-e-r. I live at 3925 Neville  
20 Drive in Kent, Brimfield. And I just wanted to  
21 add a little bit to what Mr. Kerns was saying  
22 about the construction that recently took place.  
23 I live behind him and they ran those lines up --  
24 the old lines between our house and next to  
25 mine, last year they ran them up Ranfield and

1 this year they ran them through my front yard.  
2 That's been about three months ago and I haven't  
3 seen anybody back yet. I still have dirt mounds  
4 in the front yard. They came out, put a new  
5 line in and left it. I don't see how they can  
6 justify a rate increase when they're not  
7 finishing the work they have.

8 We were also told that at the time  
9 that they did the work that they wouldn't be  
10 able to fix our blacktop driveway that they had  
11 to tear part of it out to run the new lines.

12 We also received in our -- I believe  
13 our last bill, a \$15 charge because they had to  
14 buy water from somewhere else for one day. I  
15 don't know why I'm having to pay for them to get  
16 water from somewhere else. Either that or I  
17 don't have water for the day is what they had  
18 told us. That's all I have.

19 MR. BULGRIN: Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. McCULLOUGH: I had a couple of  
21 additional comments that I had forgotten. On  
22 more than one occasion when there was a water  
23 break and the water had to be shut off for  
24 repair, they never bothered to notify the fire  
25 department that there was a water outage, and

1    thus no hydrants were -- in case of a fire. And  
2    these were outages that lasted over a day in  
3    some instances and they don't bother to notify  
4    the fire department.

5                    And also when they had a recent, oh.  
6    I guess it was a boil alert, I did get a card on  
7    my door and the card was from Citizens Utilities  
8    and that was just recent. They're using old  
9    stock. I mean, I'm thrifty, too, but I don't  
10   think they can use that with Citizens, or  
11   shouldn't do that.

12                   MR. BULGRIN:            Yes, sir.

13                   MR. CAMP:                I passed a while  
14   ago, but a couple of things have come up.

15                   (Thereupon, Mr. Camp was sworn.)

16                   MR. BULGRIN:            Okay. Have a seat.  
17   State your name, spell your last name and give  
18   us your address.

19                   MR. CAMP:                My name is William  
20   F. Camp, that's C-a-m-p, 3569 Keswick Drive,  
21   Kent, Ohio 44240. Just on the billing is what I  
22   was concerned about. Two times I got bills and  
23   they said, "Well, the reason why they're so high  
24   is simply because you filled your swimming  
25   pool."

1                   Now, this is what the billing guy  
2   that read the meters told the billing clerk,  
3   that this was what my bill should be because I  
4   had -- I don't have a swimming pool. And two  
5   times this happened. And I told them I never  
6   want to hear of this again, of filling my  
7   swimming pool.

8                   Well, then there was another time  
9   that came up, "Well, you probably got a leak in  
10   your basement." Anybody here can tell you  
11   anything that's in Beechcrest does not have a  
12   basement. They're all slab homes. But it's the  
13   man who is supposed to be reading the meters is  
14   not reading them. It's all estimating, as far  
15   as I'm concerned. I've never seen the man for  
16   month at a time.

17                  And so they're just adding on to your  
18   bill whatever they want to and getting away with  
19   it. And this is rather disturbing to me because  
20   I called the PUCO about estimating a bill. I  
21   says, "I don't pay estimated bills." "Well,"  
22   they said, "the thing is that they can  
23   estimate."

24                  Now, from what I was told by the  
25   PUCO, what these companies want to do, the gas,

1 the electric and all the others, they don't want  
2 to even read your meter for one year. They want  
3 to try to bypass the whole thing and only bill  
4 you once a year for it. Now, you know that that  
5 is not going to work.

6 I'm on a fixed income, just like a  
7 lot of these other people. I'm retired, I'm on  
8 Social Security and with the school taxes and  
9 all the other taxes that have went in this last  
10 year I've had to cut drastically on my things  
11 that I have to do.

12 Now, you take -- I'm not poor and I'm  
13 not rich, but I feel sorry for these people  
14 that's on a very limited income. I have a good  
15 pension. I have good Social Security. My wife  
16 draws Social Security. But these poor people,  
17 they're going to be losing their homes if these  
18 taxes keep going up and up and up.

19 The house that I paid \$15,000 for --  
20 with, the first one I bought there was 8,000,  
21 almost \$9,000. The school levies have gotten  
22 increases throughout the years more than --  
23 above and beyond what the people has voted to  
24 give them, simply because my house went from  
25 \$8,000 or \$15,000 up to \$130,000. That's what

1 I'm paying taxes on today.

2 That house isn't worth as much as it  
3 was when it was built, as far as I'm concerned,  
4 because -- I've done a lot of repairs and  
5 things, but if these taxes and these rates and  
6 things keep going up, my wife and I have already  
7 been talking, and there's a lot of other people  
8 that I've talked to in Brimfield, we're going to  
9 move.

10 I was on the internet here the other  
11 day and there was a place out in the Dakotas,  
12 \$6,000, and it's got 4 houses on it. I can get  
13 that place for \$9,000. Do you know where I'm  
14 going to be? You bet you. With these people  
15 like this -- we have been gouged to death by  
16 these foreign companies, the gas and that.

17 I'm not too smart, but when I went to  
18 school I was told that a byproduct of a volcano,  
19 there's three major ones, gas, oil and fresh  
20 water. Now -- and the gas keeps going up, the  
21 water keeps going up. And, you know, there's  
22 plenty of water. All you have to do is go get  
23 it. It's been a proven fact underneath the  
24 Atlantic Ocean so far down that's pure fresh  
25 water. All you have to do is tap into it. I'm

1 not very bright. I've only got a tenth grade  
2 education, but what I did learn when I was going  
3 to school I kept here. (Indicating.)

4 And I know these people are gouging  
5 the living daylights out of us. When they come  
6 along and they don't read your meter and they  
7 jack up your prices, what can you think about a  
8 person like that, you know?

9 That's all I've got to say about this  
10 company. They're gouging the living daylights  
11 out of us. And I fought in several different  
12 wars, I've been in the service for 16 years, and  
13 I came out, which I won't get into that.

14 MR. BULGRIN: Thank you.

15 MR. CAMP: You're welcome.

16 MR. BULGRIN: Anyone else?

17 MR. McCULLOUGH: My understanding is  
18 they're hiring college students to read meters.

19 MR. CAMP: I haven't seen one.

20 MR. HARDMAN: Neither have I.

21 MR. WEILL: I know I did create  
22 a problem about 20 years ago when I made them  
23 wear a thing that said "Brimfield Water Company"  
24 on it or I wouldn't let them inside the house,  
25 but then they put the outside meters in.

1                   MR. BULGRIN:           Is there anybody  
2 else that wants to testify?

3                   MR. SILAS:            I have something I  
4 would like to bring up.

5                   MR. BULGRIN:           Come on up here.

6                   MR. SILAS:            Real quickly. My  
7 name is Chris Silas. I live at 2213 Foxcroft  
8 Green, Columbus, Ohio.

9                   (Thereupon, Mr. Silas was sworn.)

10                  MR. SILAS:            Just real briefly,  
11 with it being a foreign company -- I mean, there  
12 was such a big stink about the Dubai port deal.  
13 nobody wanted to let Dubai watch our ports and  
14 make sure -- well, we're going to trust a  
15 foreign company to make sure that we have safe  
16 drinking water? I'm sorry, but this seems like  
17 a homeland security issue to me.

18                  If a foreign company is going to keep  
19 track of our water, and let's say we piss off  
20 the Germans, doubt it, but say it happens, who's  
21 to say that they're not going to do anything to  
22 our water or let someone else come in and play  
23 with our water? And that's all I have to say.  
24 Thank you.

25                  MR. BULGRIN:           All right.



1 Anything further? Okay. If not, then this  
2 public hearing will be concluded.

3 The evidentiary hearing has been  
4 continued until Monday, January 8th. I believe  
5 it is, in Columbus, so you can come down. If  
6 you want to testify, you can come down then.  
7 And if there's nothing --

8 MR. SILAS: When was that?

9 MR. BULGRIN: Monday, January 8th  
10 at 10 a.m.

11 MR. WEILL: Where?

12 MR. BULGRIN: In Columbus.

13 MR. WEILL: Where?

14 MR. BULGRIN: At the Commission  
15 offices.

16 MS. CHANDLER: The 8th or 18th?

17 MR. BULGRIN: The 8th.

18 MR. WEILL: And it's at the  
19 Commission offices which happens to be located  
20 where?

21 MR. BULGRIN: 180 East Broad  
22 Street --

23 MR. WEILL: Thank you.

24 MR. BULGRIN: -- Columbus, Ohio.

25 Okay. This hearing will be concluded. Thank

1     you.

2                   (Thereupon, the proceedings were  
3                   concluded at 7:16 o'clock p.m.)

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## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF OHIO, )  
 ) SS:  
SUMMIT COUNTY, )

I, Christina A. Arbogast, a Registered Professional Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Ohio, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that these proceedings were taken by me and reduced to Stenotypy, afterwards prepared and produced by means of Computer-Aided Transcription and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcription of the proceedings so taken as aforesaid.

I do further certify that these proceedings were taken at the time and place in the foregoing caption specified.

I do further certify that I am not a relative, employee of or attorney for any party or counsel, or otherwise financially interested in this action.

I do further certify that I am not, nor is the court reporting firm with which I am affiliated, under a contract as defined in Civil Rule 28(D).

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office at Akron, Ohio on this 9th day of January, 2007.

*Christina A. Arbogast*

Christina A. Arbogast, RPR

My commission expires December 7, 2010.



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