

November 1, 2009

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Honorable Ted Strickland  
Governor's Office  
Riffe Center, 30th Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6108

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PUCO

09-391-WS-AIR

PUCO  
Attention: Docketing Division  
180 E. Broad St.  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Sharon Ricker  
5561 Oslo Dr.  
Westerville, Ohio 43081

**09-0391-WS-AIR.**

Dear Commission Members,

I have been a resident of the Huber Ridge subdivision in Franklin County since 1973 and I am writing to protest the rate increase requested by Ohio American Water. I am opposed to the rate increase for the following reasons:

- Wednesday morning October 28, 2009 I got up early (7:00 AM) to put my dogs outside. As I filled their bowl with "fresh" water, I noticed the water was pale yellow. I emptied the bowl and refilled it. Again, the water was colored. I let the water run for several minutes (wasteful and expensive) until it cleared. I know the company was not flushing hydrants at that hour. Did I call the water company – no, because it had cleared and they would not do anything anyway.
- Approximately four (4) weeks ago the quality of the water changed. I know that because when I stepped into the shower it felt like Chinese water torture. The water quality had changed – I could feel it. When water is not softened properly you can feel it immediately on your skin.
- Not all regions in this area enjoy the same level of softness. I would like to know why other areas have better water than we do – we are paying the highest rates in central Ohio.

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- I still have calcium carbonate deposits (aka chalk) on my fixtures. I have a red porcelain cast iron sink and white chalk is very visible.
- I still have mold rings in my toilets – very embarrassing when you have company – especially if you are serving dinner. Do dinner guests ask themselves “Do I want to eat the food if they cannot even clean the toilets?” What would you think???
- The more we conserve the more we are punished. I personally have low flow showers, 1.6 toilets, water conserving washing machine and dishwashers. We are told to conserve to lower our costs and in turn, the company asks for a larger increase to make up for the drop in revenue. **Punishment for conserving is sheer idiocy.** We are damned if we do and damned if we do not. Is there no end to this??? **We should be rewarded for conserving.** After all, the water company does not own the water.

I suspect the “colored” water and the change in quality are a veiled attempt by the company to reduce costs. They reduce chemicals to save money, wait for the complaints to come in and when they do; they revert to using proper chemicals. When they come to your house and test the water, of course, the quality has improved, things look normal and they tell you the water meets all standards. The company is then off the hook.

Since the water company reads all of the letters sent by their “complaining” customers especially when they have asked for a raise, I would ask them please do not call me to ask if they can come to my house to test the water. It will just be the same old song and dance routine and I have heard it before. **The water meets all requirements and you will just have to live with it.**

What is most egregious about this request is the current economic environment and the amount of increases they have already received. Many companies are struggling to make a profit and would be happy with a return of three to five percent on earnings. OAW is not happy with that and wants more. What is infuriating is that they do not have to earn it - just ask for it. The PUCO acts as an anti-trust agency blocking all competition and setting prices as they see fit.

Before Ohio American Water took over I never had chalk on my fixtures and I never had mold rings in my toilets. The water did not irritate my skin and I did not need bottles of lotion to soothe the irritation.

The practices of this company show that they have not earned nor do they deserve any more increases.

Respectfully yours,



Sharon Ricker