



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Marion Municipal Water Rate Case: OUCC Invites Public Comments**

### ***IURC Hearing Scheduled for April 26 in Marion***

If you would like to comment on the City of Marion's water rate request, you have the chance to do so.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC), the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), is inviting written consumer comments for the official case record through the rest of this month. In addition, the IURC will hold a public field hearing in Marion on April 26, 2023.

### **Written Consumer Comments**

The OUCC is using its legal and technical resources in analyzing the utility's testimony and exhibits. The agency is scheduled to complete its review and file testimony on May 9, 2023.

Public comments are invited in writing through May 2, 2023. Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the case record may do so via the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm), by email at [uccinfo@oucc.in.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.in.gov), or by mail at:

Public Comments  
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC)  
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 SOUTH  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments **no later than May 2, 2023**, so that it can: 1) Consider them in preparing its testimony and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal evidentiary record. Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to either "**IURC Cause No. 45838**" or **Marion Municipal Water Works**. Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

### **Public Field Hearing**

The IURC's public field hearing on the water utility's request is scheduled for Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at the Marion Public Library (600 S. Washington St.) in Meeting Room B. The hearing is scheduled to begin at 6:00 p.m. and is statutorily required in this case.

The field hearing's sole purpose is to receive public testimony. No final decisions will be made at the hearing.

- Consumers can speak directly to the Commission under oath and on the record.
- Oral comments presented during the field hearing will become part of the case record. They will carry the same weight as written consumer comments submitted to the OUCC by May 2, 2023.

**(Continued)**

- Utilities do not make presentations or answer questions during field hearings. The focus, again, is on public input. In this case, Marion filed testimony and exhibits in January 2023.
- Commissioners are not allowed to answer questions about the case. They will ultimately render a decision after weighing evidence from the utility, the OUCC, and intervening parties.

## Case Overview

According to its testimony, the utility is seeking the changes due to increased operating and maintenance costs and the need to make infrastructure improvements.

Marion’s current water rates received IURC approval in 2005.

The city is proposing an increase to be implemented in five phases. Under the City’s pending proposal, monthly water charges for a residential customer using 700 cubic feet (approximately 5,200 gallons per month) would rise as follows:

Current Rates	Phase I (Fall/Winter 2023)	Phase II (Jan. 2025)	Phase III (Jan. 2026)	Phase IV (Jan. 2027)	Phase V (Jan. 2028)
\$27.25	\$32.20	\$35.08	\$37.22	\$39.57	\$41.35

\*Amounts include monthly fire protection charges.

The City is also requesting authority to issue up to approximately \$11.7 million in long-term debt. According to its filing, the utility is seeking the changes due to increased operating and maintenance costs and the need to make major infrastructure replacements and repairs, water tank improvements, water main replacements, and water meter replacements.

A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding. Such an agreement, if reached, would require IURC approval finding that the settlement terms are in the public interest.

Municipal sewer utilities throughout Indiana are exempt from IURC oversight and are not at issue in this case. Their rates are set by elected city and town councils.

The OUCC is posting case updates online at <https://www.in.gov/oucc/watersewer/key-cases-by-utility/marion-municipal-water/>. Case updates are also available through the agency’s monthly electronic newsletter. Consumers can subscribe at [www.in.gov/oucc/news/](http://www.in.gov/oucc/news/).

(IURC Cause No. 45838)

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) represents Indiana consumer interests before state and federal bodies that regulate utilities. As a state agency, the OUCC’s mission is to represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, and creative problem solving.