



For Immediate Release

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Southern Monroe Water Authority rate case: Consumer comments invited

If you would like to comment on Southern Monroe Water Corporation's requested rate increase, you have the chance to do so.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is inviting written consumer comments on the utility's request through December 5, 2018. The OUCC, the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), is scheduled to file its testimony and recommendations with the Commission on December 12, 2018.

The OUCC will use its legal and technical resources to review the utility's request. In its December testimony, the OUCC will detail the results of its analysis.

Southern Monroe Water Authority's base rates received IURC approval in 2011, though rates have since been adjusted to cover increases in wholesale water costs. Under its pending request, a monthly residential water bill for 5,000 gallons would rise from \$34.80 to \$37.95. The not-for-profit utility, which provides service to more than 3,400 customers in Monroe County, cites increased operating and maintenance costs in its filing with the IURC.

More information on this case is available at www.in.gov/oucc/2637.htm.

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, by email at uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov, or by mail at:

Consumer Services Staff
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 South
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than December 5, 2018 so that it can: 1) Consider them in preparing its report and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal record. Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to "**IURC Cause No. 45141-U.**" Please do not include account numbers, social security numbers, or other sensitive information.

Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

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Southern Monroe Water Authority is seeking the rate increase through the state's Small Utility Filing Procedure, which is available to utilities with fewer than 5,000 customers and is designed to reduce the time and expense involved with regulatory filings. Savings are gained by allowing utility staff to use standardized forms resulting in utilities needing less assistance from rate consultants or attorneys.

The standard for OUCC and IURC reviews on small utility filings is the same that applies to traditional utility filings. The OUCC conducts its review on behalf of all utility consumers while the IURC's review is conducted on behalf of the public interest (a balancing of utility and customer interests). A settlement agreement is possible in any legal proceeding; such an agreement, if reached, would require IURC approval.

(IURC Cause No. 45141-U)

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.

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