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Arizona Corporation Commission  
1200 W. Washington  
Phoenix, AZ. 85007-2996

September 9, 2005 W-02255A-05-0678

To Whom It May Concern:

I write in regards to the Yarnell Water Improvement Association's request to raise water rates.

Asking the Commission for a change in rates is a good time for the Commission to consider righting a billing practice that is unfair and inequitable. The community is made up of many retired persons and many "weekenders" or people who own homes and use them only occasionally on weekends. The current practice of charging everyone a residential minimum of \$21 (for a 5/8-3/4 inch meter for example) and then \$2.50 for 1 gallon to 5000 gallons, puts an unfair burden of the expense on those senior citizens and weekenders who use little water. Those who are conserving the water table, whether through intended conservation or because they are not there to use it, should not carry the same financial burden as those who use their 5000 gallons or, for a dollar more, 10,000 gallons. It is not that the water is over-priced necessarily; it's just that many of us are being forced to pay for product we do not consume. This is just plain unfair.

I would ask the Commission consider setting a lower minimum service charge and then a water usage fee based on actual consumption in 250, 500 or 1000 gallon increments. This would make both the cost of conveyance and the usage equitable. Currently I must pay \$21 whether I use a drop of water or not. If I use only 10 gallons to water my plants and flush the toilet, I have to pay 23.50, the same as my neighbor who may use up to 5000 gallons for the same 23.50. This is unfair and appears to be causing the weekend water conservers to subsidize the local fulltime resident's water usage. I understand that a portion of the fees are used to pay for getting the water to the tap, but it's the inequitable charge for actual amount of consumption that is at issue.

When considering this increase I would ask the Commission to:

- Consider setting a minimum fee of \$15-18, even \$20 dollars and then allowing a usage charge based on **actual water usage** in 100, 250 or 500 gallon increments. Even if you grant the minimum charge increase to \$22, have that include the first 500 gallons and then a charge for each additional 250, 500 or 1000 gallons. That cost could still be kept in line with the value of the water, but cost would then be shouldered by those who are **actually using** the water.

Asking seniors (who tend to use less water) and weekenders to essentially pay more for their water than other residents is a clear way of discriminating against the very residents who are conserving the water table.

Thank you for the time and effort on behalf of the water conserving residents of Yarnell.

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