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I'm Buel Wetmore, my family and I live at 7802 E. Carefree Estates Circle in Carefree. I'm a self employed business owner and the former President of our HOA. I'm here today to speak about the Black Mountain Sewer Company's lift station, known as the CIE lift station which adjoins my property.

Despite a documented history of spills, blockages and failed equipment at this out-of-date facility; BMSC has continued to place profits above its responsibilities to serve the public.

Our Association of 33 homes pays over \$15,000 per year in fees to Black Mountain and in return we receive the use of a system that produces almost constant odor with intermittent total breakdowns. This necessitates the use of pumping trucks to haul percolating sewage to other locations. There are reports that the PPM of hydrogen sulfide gas at this location have had readings of 700 +.....300 PPM is considered dangerous.

Even being aware of the potential impact on this pending hearing, they allowed the system totally shut down AGAIN due to faulty equipment over the Memorial day weekend and was pumped for hours three times in six days, removing an estimated 20,000 gallons of sewage which was deposited at another location. The noise was like being next to a jet engine and odor was terrible. At least this time it was during daylight hours....the last time was from 10:00 pm until 2:30 AM.

It is well known that the lift station is over 40 years old and is actually a series of septic tanks which have been jury-rigged into a makeshift pumping facility. The head BMSC engineer, himself, blew the whistle on it's "poor hydraulic design". Instead of committing any serious investment to the replacement of either this relic or to the whole antique infrastructure, the BMSC people continue the "band-aid" approach, usually blaming the lack of funding from the home office.

The result over the past 3 1/2 years has been

- (1) raw sewage running down our street when the system stops,
- (2) raw sewage exploding from our toilets as the system is pressurized, and
- (3) daily odor punctuated by overwhelming stench when the system fails.

When pressed for answers or results, the company's public approach has been to ignore, deny, obfuscate or if we're lucky to apply yet another band-aid.

This company has no idea of good corporate citizenship and apparently has no intention of becoming a good neighbor either. They have no office in our town and, I believe, no tangible equipment other than a leased pickup and some shovels.

They seem to operate from emergency to emergency and while they are getting better at crisis management, the cost of this kind of operation must be astounding. They hire subcontractors to do ALL the plumbing and pumping work and to apply more bandaids. We all know what it costs to hire a plumber outside of regular business hours. Someone need to tell them.

The almost 100% plus turnover in personnel at all levels and the obvious absence of any planning for the future says that giving these guys a rate hike is throwing good money after bad. Please don't reward them for mediocre performance!

I'm hoping that you will not only deny this undeserved increase, but to use your authority through the Utilities Division to force this company to become a decent neighbor and responsible corporate citizen

Please use this opportunity to send a message to this company that no matter how fast Arizona is growing that we still have time to care about the health, safety, rights and money of its citizens.

Thank you

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