

SW-04305A-09-0291



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**ORIGINAL**

**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**

**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

47  
60

Investigator: Al Amezcua

Phone:

Fax:

**Priority: Respond Within Five Days**

Opinion      **No. 2010 - 85522**

Date: 3/5/2010

Complaint Description:      08A Rate Case Items - Opposed  
N/A Not Applicable

Complaint By:      **First: Ann D**      **Last: Swart**

Account Name:      Ann D Swart

Home:

Street:

Work: (000) 000-0000

City:      San Manuel

CBR:

State:      AZ      Zip: 85631

is:

Utility Company:      **Coronado Utilities, Inc.**

Division:      Sewer-water

Contact Name:      Jason Williamson

Contact Phone:

**Nature of Complaint:**

ANN D SWART

San Manuel, Arizona 85621 1 029  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
March 2010

Arizona Corporation Commission  
Consumer Services Section  
1200 West Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Arizona Corporation Commission

**DOCKETED**

MAR 11 2010

DOCKETED BY

AZ CORP COMMISSION  
DOCKET CONTROL

2010 MAR 11 A 9:04

RECEIVED

Reference: Docket No. SW04305A-09-0291

To Whom It May Concern:

When I received the Public Notice of Hearing with one of my Coronado Utilities, Inc., bills, it took me a while—quite a while, in fact—to stop “seeing red” and simmer down. I was, truthfully, extremely upset. In this regard, I wish to present my case.

This rate increase, if allowed, is literally an obscenity!!! The sewer service charge we are currently paying is beyond the pale, and is just another example of the “big guys” taking advantage of the “little guys.” I, for one here in San Manuel, pay less than \$30.00 monthly for my water usage and try to be frugal in all my utilities use. I consider the current monthly rate of \$46.65 already extremely high, and if the requested increase goes into effect, sewer service will cost me almost twice as much as my water! I have never heard of such an unfair ratio. Having lived in California for more than 50 years before retiring to Arizona about nine years ago, I had never experienced residential sewer service rates not based on water usage. What a rude awakening! Of course, the sewer rate when I bought my home in San Manuel (\$48.00 yearly!) was, admittedly, ridiculously low but now it has “blossomed” to the other end of the spectrum. I understand the sewer system needed revamping and

# ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

## UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM

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upgrading when removed from the closed mine's system, but give me a break! Estimating 1500 residential customers in San Manuel, each paying \$46.65 a month, that sum alone—without factoring in the revenue from commercial, mobile home and school customers in the area—would bring in more than \$ 800K annually.

Where, then is San Manuel's state-of-the-art, exemplary sewer system? Nothing seems to have changed as far as we mortals in this town can tell. What a travesty! I assume the Coronado stockholders—of whom I understand BHP, the closed mine owner, is one—are enjoying their dividends, all at the expense of the townspeople.

I understand there is some sort of a low income discount but have been unable to find out what the requirements for this "perk" are. I am an 80-year-old retired woman who lives on Social

Arizona Corporation Commission

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Security income and a small income (less than \$1 00/monthly) from a part-time job cleaning houses. Yes, I still have to work! Recently, I have had to apply for food stamps when even the part-time job's hours were cut in half: And guess what I get? All of \$16.00 monthly! More than half the residents in this town are retired and living on fixed incomes and/or below the poverty level. Please help us!

I am unable to attend the scheduled hearing on this matter, but hope this letter will be given some consideration when you make your decision. I am only one voice but know that it is one of many like voices who feel the same about the way this company is gouging us here in Sari Manuel. We need your conscientious attention to this blatantly ridiculous request from Coronado. As an added aside, in the past when I have called Coronado regarding billing questions, etc., the "bedside manner" of the staff answering the phone has been sadly lacking, even downright rude and condescending. Just who do they think we are, a bunch of idiots?

Very truly yours,

Ann D. Swart

ADS:ms

\*End of Complaint\*

### Utilities' Response:

### Investigator's Comments and Disposition:

3/5/10 Comments noted for the record and docketed. CLOSED.

\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 3/5/2010**

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85522**

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**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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**Investigator:** Al Amezcua

**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**Priority:** Respond Within Five Days

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**Opinion No. 2010 - 85520**

**Date:** 3/5/2010

**Complaint Description:** 08A Rate Case Items - Opposed  
N/A Not Applicable

**Complaint By:** **First:** Diana R **Last:** Perault

**Account Name:** Diana R Perault

**Home:** (000) 000-0000

**Street:**

**Work:** (000) 000-0000

**City:** San Manuel

**CBR:**

**State:** AZ **Zip:** 85631

**is:**

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**Utility Company:** Coronado Utilities, Inc.

**Division:** Sewer-water

**Contact Name:** Jason Williamson

**Contact Phone:**

**Nature of Complaint:**

Diana R Perault

San Manuel, AZ 85631

March 3, 2010

Arizona Corporation Commission  
Consumer Services Section  
1200 West Washington.  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Docket No. SW-04305A-09-0291

Dear Sirs/Madams;

I am writing concerning the rate increase and surcharge plan proposed in the above referenced Docket number for Coronado Utilities, Inc..

I have been a San Manuel resident for many years. San Manuel has many citizens on a fixed income, of which I am one. I am already paying more for my sewer than any of the surrounding communities. I fail to understand how Coronado Utilities can charge a fiat fee on each home regardless of the size of the family living there or how much water is being used by that family. I think Coronado Utilities needs to revamp their entire billing structure and start charging homeowners according to usage, not a flat fee. Perhaps they need to get into communication with the water company and find out the amount of each homeowner's water usage. I think it is totally unfair that I am paying the same amount for my sewer as a family of 6 or more, one size does not fit all in this situation.

Also, it is my understanding that Coronado Utilities is also asking for a low income tariff where qualified lower

**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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income households will have a 25% lower sewer bill. Coronado Utilities is proposing that the homeowners that are able to pay their bills will have to pick up this 25% deficit. That would penalize the people that are not qualified for the lower income rates - this is totally unfair! I don't know who is coming up with these ideas, but Coronado Utilities, Inc. seems to be out of control and needs to take a look at the economy and the struggling homeowners who are just making it now.

Please don't let Coronado Utilities, Inc., have this rate increases and additional surcharges, this is very poor timing on their part, with the economy the way it is.

Sincerely,  
Diana R Perault

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Mr. Richard Perault also wrote the same letter  
\*End of Complaint\*

**Utilities' Response:**

**Investigator's Comments and Disposition:**

3/5/10 Comments noted for the record and docketed. CLOSED.  
\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 3/5/2010**

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85520**

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# ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

## UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM

**Investigator:** Al Amezcua

**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**Priority:** Respond Within Five Days

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85511**

**Date:** 3/5/2010

**Complaint Description:** 08A Rate Case Items - Opposed  
N/A Not Applicable

**Complaint By:** **First:** Robert E **Last:** David

**Account Name:** Robert E David

**Home:** (000) 000-0000

**Street:**

**Work:** (000) 000-0000

**City:** San Manuel

**CBR:**

**State:** AZ **Zip:** 85631

**is:**

**Utility Company:** Coronado Utilities, Inc.

**Division:** Sewer-water

**Contact Name:** Jason Williamson

**Contact Phone:**

**Nature of Complaint:**

San Manuel, AZ 85631

March 3, 2010

Arizona Corporation Commission  
Consumer Services Section  
1200 West Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Docket No. SW-04305A-09-0291

Dear Sirs/Madams;

I am writing concerning the rate increase and surcharge plan proposed in the above referenced Docket number for Coronado Utilities, Inc..

I have been a San Manuel resident for many years. San Manuel has many citizens on a fixed income, of which I am one. I am already paying more for my sewer than any of the surrounding communities. I fail to understand how Coronado Utilities can charge a flat fee on each home regardless of the size of the family living there or how much water is being used by that family. I think Coronado Utilities needs to revamp their entire billing structure and start charging homeowners according to usage, not a flat fee. Perhaps they need to get into communication with the water company and find out the amount of each homeowner's water usage. I think it is totally unfair that I am paying the same amount for my sewer as a family of 6 or more, one size does not fit all in this situation.

Also, it is my understanding that Coronado Utilities is also asking for a low income tariff where qualified lower

**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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income households will have a 25% lower sewer bill. Coronado Utilities is proposing that the homeowners that are able to pay their bills will have to pick up this 25% deficit. That would penalize the people that are not qualified for the lower income rates - this is totally unfair! I don't know who is coming up with these ideas, but Coronado Utilities, Inc. seems to be out of control and needs to take a look at the economy and the struggling homeowners who are just making it now.

Please don't let Coronado Utilities, Inc., have this rate increases and additional surcharges, this is very poor timing on their part, with the economy the way it is.

Sincerely,

Robert E. David  
\*End of Complaint\*

**Utilities' Response:**

**Investigator's Comments and Disposition:**

3/5/10 Comments noted for the record and docketed. CLOSED.  
\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 3/5/2010**

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85511**

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**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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It has been said by this particular utility that charging a flat fee is "fairer to everyone." It is only fairer to the billing process of the utility company, in that they do not have to go to the trouble of computing/collecting accurate data for each user. It is certainly NOT fairer to the consumer! Using the example of the electric and water utilities mentioned above who charge based on consumption, why should the sewer utility be exempted from this common practice? The response most often given is that it would be more expensive to the consumer to install individual sewer meters and that any perceived savings would evaporate when faced with that expense.

Well, I think another route is feasible. The ACC can and should mandate a relationship level between both the water and sewer utilities serving this community, whereby water usage, already metered, can be shared with the sewer utility. That information is not a national, classified secret! There would be other considerations, as there always are, in utilizing water consumption to determine sewer rates. Most jurisdictions where this is done, for example, make an allowance for irrigation usage as an offset to the amount of actual discharge into the sewer system.

Thirdly, Coronado has stated in previous years' Hearings, that these increases would not continue to be an annual practice. So far we have been faced with regular increases based on one pretext or another. It is difficult to ascertain why the San Manuel system, newly rebuilt, continues to require annual increases when their staffing is very limited, their debt service is already fixed and in place, and their permitted ROI is already calculated in. These fixed costs should not cause increases in the magnitude suggested. Only variable costs, electricity, wage increases (if they are given at all in this economy) and supplies should affect rates at this stage in the history of the company's presence in this community. It doesn't seem obvious to me that the variable costs are on a par with the rate increase requested. It's time to say "NO" to the constant spiral of rate increases this small operation in this small community has been subjected to.

When a company chooses to make an investment, it runs the same risks as everyone else, in that there may be good times and bad times. One can't always foresee the future accurately. However, it appears time and time again in processes before the Commission, that many companies think they should be insulated from the vagaries of the market and make the same or more money as they always do, no matter what—that somehow they are "entitled" to increases to preserve their cash flow at a level they are comfortable with. They forget that their cash flow comes from their customers who don't always enjoy that same entitlement. As Commissioners, please remember this fact of life and take it into your consideration as you deliberate.

Please don't let Coronado Utilities stick it to us once again with an annual exorbitant rate increase and surcharges. In tough times shouldn't they have to tighten their corporate belts and make less, just as everyone else has had to do?

Sincerely,  
Charles and Mary Bast  
\*End of Complaint\*

**Utilities' Response:**

**Investigator's Comments and Disposition:**

3/5/10 Comments entered for the record and docketed. CLOSED.  
\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 3/5/2010**

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85508**

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**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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**Investigator:** Al Amezcua

**Phone:**

**Fax:**

**Priority:** Respond Within Five Days

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**Opinion No.** 2010 - 85507

**Date:** 3/5/2010

**Complaint Description:** 08A Rate Case Items - Opposed  
N/A Not Applicable

**Complaint By:** **First:** Cynthia **Last:** Tripp

**Account Name:** Cynthia Tripp

**Home:** (000) 000-0000

**Street:**

**Work:** (000) 000-0000

**City:** San Manuel

**CBR:**

**State:** AZ **Zip:** 85631

**is:**

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**Utility Company:** Coronado Utilities, Inc.

**Division:** Sewer-water

**Contact Name:** Jason Williamson

**Contact Phone:** "

**Nature of Complaint:**

Cynthia Tripp

San Manuel, AZ 85631  
March 3, 2010

Arizona Corporation Commission  
Consumer Services Section  
1200 West Washington  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

RE: Docket No. SW-04305A-09-0291

Dear Sirs/Madams;

I am writing concerning the rate increase and surcharge plan proposed in the above referenced Docket number for Coronado Utilities, Inc..

I have been a San Manuel resident for several years. I am one of the many San Manuel residents who are on fixed incomes. A few years ago I invested my retirement monies by purchasing two additional rental properties. The sewer bills escalated and now I find that I am paying more for sewer services than any of the surrounding communities. My retirement plan is not working as well as I had, hoped.

I fail to understand how Coronado Utilities can charge a flat fee on each home regardless of the size of the family living there or how much water is being used by that family. I think Coronado Utilities needs to revamp their entire billing structure and start charging homeowners according to usage, not a flat fee. Perhaps they need to communicate with the water company and find out the amount of each homeowners water usage. I think it is totally unfair that I am paying the same amount for my sewer as a family of six or more, one size does not fit all in this situation. I am a widow, living alone and work to conserve on my water usage. I cannot understand the

**ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION**  
**UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM**

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rational used by Coronado Utilities in charging a flat fee.

It is my understanding that Coronado Utilities is asking for a low income tariff where qualified lower income households will have a 25% lower sewer bill. Coronado Utilities is proposing that the homeowners that are able to pay their bills will have to pick up this 25% deficit. That would penalize the people that are not qualified for the lower income rates - this is totally unfair! I don't know who is coming up with these ideas, but Coronado Utilities, Inc. seems to be out of control and needs to take a look at the economy and the struggling homeowners who are just making it now.

Please don't let Coronado Utilities, Inc., have this rate increases and additional surcharges, this is very poor timing on their part, with the economy the way it is.

Cynthia Tripp  
\*End of Complaint\*

**Utilities' Response:**

**Investigator's Comments and Disposition:**

3/5/10 Comments noted for the record and docketed. CLOSED.  
\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 3/5/2010**

**Opinion No. 2010 - 85507**

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