

W-01737A-12-0478

ORIGINAL



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ARIZONA CORPORATION COM

UTILITY COMPLAINT FORM

Investigator: Trish Meeter

Phone:

Fax:

Priority: Respond Within Five Days

Opinion No. 2013 - 112446

Date: 8/26/2013

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

Complaint By: First: Melissa Last: Stopkey

Account Name: Silverton II HOA

Home:

Street:

Work:

City: Peoria

CBR:

State: AZ Zip: 85382

is:

Utility Company: New River Utility Company

Division: Water

Contact Name:

Contact Phone

Nature of Complaint:

8/26 OPPOSED

RATE INCREASE

W-01737A-12-0478

12 August 2013

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

Arizona Corporation Commission  
**DOCKETED**  
SEP - 4 2013

DOCKETED BY nr

Z CORP COMMISSION  
DOCKET CONTROL

2013 SEP - 4 P 12:55

RECEIVED

Docket No. W 01737A 12 0478

To Whom It May Concern:

Regarding the 86.28% increase requested by New River Utility Company, I would like to go on record as contesting this increase. I am the President of the Silverton IIHOA and on behalf of the homeowners would like to point out reasons why this increase would be devastating to our community. In the document that we received about the hearing it was stated that the increases they are wanting would be over 80%, with an example of an average homeowner going from \$20.92 to \$37.67. However, they don't mention that communities like Silverton II would go from over \$20,000 to \$37,000 in water costs annually. This is a draconian increase in one year that a small HOA like ours can't quickly handle.

In the last seven years I have personally written two grants to the City of Peoria for grant money to remove grass to reduce our water bills. Silverton II was able to remove enough grass and put other water conservation measures into practice to reduce our water bill over 30%. Our common areas are water retention areas for the City of Peoria and we were told at the last grant proposal meeting that we had to leave at least 25% of our common area with grass by Peoria law. So at this point we can not remove enough grass to be cost effective and still maintain 25% in grass because unfortunately the water retention area is very large. We have to keep the

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remaining grass.

New River Water is a private water company and if you call or have concerns they offer no customer service. They work out of an old house and when you drop off a payment it goes in an unsecured box. They offer no auto pay and when their postcard size bill, which has very little information and is frequently wrong, is lost in the mail they do not hesitate to call and threaten to turn off your water. One woman drives around on a golf cart and reads the meters and basically runs the entire operation. When I called asking about our water usage and wanting to do some conservation efforts I was told that they didn't do that and that she didn't work for me and wouldn't even give me her name. She even threatened me with the police when I told her someone had removed a cover on one of the meters and I had replaced it in the common area. If they didn't make money in 2011 it was probably because they let the water run into our common area for over 3 months which was an area the size of a football field full of water while they opened a new well or something. This was not only a huge waste of water but discolored the granite under the water. I was told that the City of Peoria denied their request to do this so they went to the county to get permission. It wasn't clear then why they were doing this but now I think I understand perfectly and why a one year snapshot would be easily manipulated.

I would also like to point out that homeowners in this community not only pay for water but we also pay the CAGR (Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District) over \$10,000 a year and that increases every year. Homeowners also pay the CAGR for their own water usage on their property tax bill. If this increase happens the Silverton II HOA will not be able to pay

the bills at the current assessments we are receiving and because we are bound by our CC&Rs we can only ask for a 10% increase which would not cover the 80% increase New River is asking for. Times have been extremely hard in the last 5 years we have seen many foreclosures in the area and homeowners have not been able to pay their assessments so because of that we have not been able to give any vendor an increase in that period of time. Frankly everyone wants an increase.

In summary New River Utility Company is poorly run and the homeowners of Silverton II will be greatly impacted by this increase. I would just ask that you please take this into consideration as you make your decision on this matter. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like more information from me concerning this matter.

Sincerely,  
ct  
Melissa J. Stokew

Z 85382

623-476-8286

Complaint filed for Q/S issues  
\*End of Complaint\*

**Utilities' Response:**

**Investigator's Comments and Disposition:**

docketed  
\*End of Comments\*

**Date Completed: 8/26/2013**

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