

Jean Jewell

From: flener@camano.net
Sent: Thursday, July 09, 2015 9:38 PM
To: Beverly Barker; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness
Cc: flener@camano.net
Subject: Case Comment Form: Barry Flener

Name: Barry Flener
Case Number:
Email: flener@camano.net
Telephone: 425.327.1452
Address: PO Box 1629
Stanwood WA, 98292

Name of Utility Company: Schweitzer Water Basin Company Acknowledge public record: True

Comment: 5/28/2015

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0074

Re: Case SCW-W-15-01 Schweitzer Water Basin Company Dear IPUC Commissioners, My comments are on the application of the Schweitzer Basin Water LLC.

I have owned property within this water districts area since the early 1990's. I built 4 homes (2 duplexes) on Slalom Road. I built the first in 1995. One of which was my own home. (I have since moved my vacation home up the street to our new building that was constructed in 1997) I have had interaction with the SBW (water Company) many times. I have located 4 leaks in their system for them. 3 of them they did not know existed. The other was a major leak. Thousands of gallons of water where lost thru the system. We were entering the December Holidays, we had several people staying at our home, and we had no water.

I contacted the owner, he and one other person (not an employee) were trying to find the leak. I brought he and that person coffee and food to try and encourage them. This went on for a couple days, finally the owner of the water company informed me " he had no idea where the leak might be " We and our guests used the Green Gables lodge for showers and getting water. I could not understand why in this day and age a huge water leak of tens of thousands of gallons of water could not be located? A figure the SBW owner gave me.

At this point there was the owner of the water system and one contractor trying to find the leak. I thought " how hard, even with the snow , can it be, to find a leak of tens of thousands of gallons of water?"

I started walking the streets that the water system served, within about 2 hours I located the leak, called the owner. He and the one man contractor he had hired showed up to start fixing it. The contractor used his backhoe, the water system backhoe {if there is one } was never at the repair site. The break could not be repaired as the SBW owner had no parts. They had to be ordered. It was at this point the contractor began to inform me of the lack of quality that was put into the system, the company he worked for actually built the water lines that served our street. Apparently it met the minimum requirements but it was as he put it " the cheapest material you could use". Either way the material broke off under the snow load, SBW had no clue how to locate the leak.

We were without water for days.

I have shared then and many, many times since with the owner of the Water system that he could spend just a little money each year and put in electronic monitoring systems that if

there was a major leak, would allow him to know it just by driving around his system, in just a short time he could locate it. He could put the monitors at key main valve locations. Since that time I have located 3 additional leaks in the system that they had no idea that water was leaking. 2 of these on my property. One on the Southwest corner, just shortly after I had paid for a survey. The Water Company had to tear up part of my lot and some asphalt there, and the Survey marker for that corner was placed in the asphalt. My only request of the water company owner was to have the corner re-surveyed and the property corner stake replaced. He agreed, but in the end it was not done, someone simply drove a nail into the pavement, suggesting it was the property corner. Complete lack of integrity. I have never been informed that a RE-survey of my corner ever took place.

My biggest concern, and I believe the IPUC Commissioners should demand, is the potential lack of fire flow. I have a fire Hydrant about 8 feet from my home, and I have no idea if it will work or not. I believe everyone on this water system should be mailed a notice informing them that even though there is a fire hydrant on their street or near their home, (my understanding is) that the water company doesn't have to provide enough water to it to fight a fire at my home or in my neighborhood? This is my understanding from discussing this with Idaho State officials. Please inform me if my understanding is incorrect?

Every home owner on this system should be informed whether they have a fire Hydrant that works as one would expect it to. The insurance companies covering these home will be in shock to know (if this is the case) that the fire Hydrant may or may not work. Wow. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission should insist that all property owners understand that the Hydrant in front of their home or nearby, may not work. This is unbelievable. Every owner should be notified and informed.

I have built homes in small water systems, medium size systems and system with hundreds of connections. I have built, designed, constructed many small water systems for the homes I have built (being a builder of homes). I still own one of those. I have never built a home in a water system that had fire Hydrants, that may or may not work? They should function to combat a fire, if and when needed.

Barry Flener

Owner

168 Slalom Rd
Sandpoint, Id 83864

Mailing address

PO Box 1629

Stanwood, WA 98292

Cell: 425.327.1452

Schweitzer Home 168 Slalom Rd

Email: flener@camano.net

Unique Identifier: 50.35.52.241