

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Case No. UWI-W-04-4, Order No. 29810

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Commission suspends ruling in United Water case

Boise – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission is suspending for another 60 days a final decision on United Water’s request for a rate increase. United Water serves about 75,400 customers in Ada and Canyon counties.

The complex nature of the case and the large discrepancy between what commission staff proposes for a rate increase and the company’s request led the commission to suspend a final decision to no later than Aug. 29. Originally, a decision was supposed to have been issued by no later than June 29.

The commission noted that United Water originally requested a 21.46 percent overall increase, while commission staff recommended a 1.8 percent increase. Since then, the parties have revised their recommendations, but they still remain far apart with the company recommending a 17.5 percent increase, while staff recommends 4.5 percent.

“This case involves a large public utility requesting a general rate increase, which necessarily involves numerous complex and technical issues,” the commission said. “In addition to the size of the requested increase in rates, the complexity of this particular case is compounded by the fact that there is a large disparity, both in numbers and in methodology, between the company’s case and the recommendations of the commission staff.”

Much of the disagreement between the staff and company deals with the methodology used to establish the level of United Water’s investment on which it can earn a rate of return.