

✓ Min. Ack  
sent 12/28/07

✓ To AV  
✓ To Commes  
H

4511 FAIRMONT PL.  
BOISE, ID. 83706

RE: INCREASE OF WATER BILLS  
DUE TO CHANGE TO MONTHLY  
READINGS, by UNITED WATER

- After talking to many people at our Neighborhood Assoc. Meeting, I could NOT find one person who wanted monthly readings & billings!
  - This is absurd and merely a way to increase income.
  - There is no need to change the current system!
  - I can't believe that they had any customers asking for monthly billing. Why would anyone want to pay more?
- Barbara Carter

RECEIVED  
2007 DEC 29 AM 9:19  
UTAH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

✓ Gen Ack  
sent 12/28/07

✓ To A.V.

✓ To Comms  
:H

UNITED WATER IDAHO INC.  
8248 West Victory Road, Boise, ID 83709  
P.O. Box 190420, Boise, ID 83719-0420  
Tel: 208.362.1300 • Fax: 208.362.1479



Dear United Water Idaho Customer:

On September 17, 2007 United Water Idaho filed an Application with the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) asking for authority to convert to monthly meter reading and billing for all customers. Currently, water meters are read and billed every two months.

There are a several benefits of monthly billing, including:

- Easier budgeting and easier to pay than a bi-monthly bill;
- Enhanced water conservation and lower bills through the provision of more timely information on consumption, allowing customers time to make changes in water use practices during the irrigation season, thus saving money;
- More frequent visits to your premises by United Water Idaho personnel, enabling quicker detection and troubleshooting of customer leaks or meter problems.

*I do not agree with this statement.*

In the Application United Water Idaho is proposing a revenue increase of \$1,125,905. Under the proposed Application the increase will be applied to the fixed Customer Charge portion of your bill which is not affected by how much water you use. The requested increase would raise rates for all customers by about \$1.15 a month (about 4 cents a day), bringing the average annual residential customer bill from \$368.61 to \$382.44, or 3.75%..

*Forget the increase and leave the billing the way it is.*

The proposed increase is necessary to cover the increased costs of additional personnel, billing, and collections attributable solely to the conversion to monthly meter reading and billing.

To learn more about the company's Application please visit the company's website at <http://www.unitedwateridaho.com>.

The proposal to convert to monthly billing and the proposed increase in rates are subject to review and approval by the IPUC. A complete copy of the proposal is available at the company's office at 8248 W. Victory Road, Boise, ID and at the Commission's office at 472 W. Washington, Boise, ID. It is also available on-line at the IPUC website: <http://www.puc.state.id.us/FILEROOM/water/water.htm>.

You can also file a comment on the Application via the IPUC website at: <http://www.puc.state.id.us/scripts/polyform.dll/ipuc>.

Or mail comments to:

Idaho Public Utilities Commission  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0074

Sincerely,

United Water Idaho

RECEIVED  
DEC 21 AM 8:20  
IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

*Mrs. Allen Vuyketeke  
11975 W. Spring River Ct.  
Boise, Idaho 83709*

UNITED WATER IDAHO INC.  
8248 West Victory Road, Boise, ID 83709  
P.O. Box 190420, Boise, ID 83719-0420  
Tel: 208.362.1300 • Fax: 208.362.1479



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Or mail comments to:

Idaho Public Utilities Commission  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0074

Sincerely,

United Water Idaho

06010012007

*WHY NOT BILL QUARTERLY  
AND DECREASE EXPENSES?*

*WHAT IS THE BIG CONCERN TO BILL  
MONTHLY??*

*MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL!!*

*Robert Smith*

*Jean Ack  
sent 12/27/07*

*✓ to AV.*

*✓ to Commis.  
; H*

**Jean Jewell**

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**Sent:** Wednesday, December 19, 2007 7:28 AM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from William R. Schroeder follows:

-----  
Case Number:  
Name: William R. Schroeder  
Address: 3314 Cassia St  
City: Boise  
State: Idaho  
Zip: 83705  
Home Telephone: (208) 342-1510  
Contact E-Mail:  
Name of Utility Company: United Water  
Add to Mailing List: yes

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

I am opposed to the rate increase request for United Water to enable them to switch over to a monthly billing system instead of the current bi-monthly. This appears to me to be unnecessary, the current bi-monthly bill is convenient, meaning less paperwork and a monthly cycle wouldn't improve anything. They are proposing to establish a new department to accomplish this, which means extra work load, so it takes more money and an increase to the customer in their monthly bill. It is an additional corporate bureaucracy that is unnecessary to the customer.

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 67.60.229.140

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✓ Gen. Ack sent 12/27/07  
✓ To Comm. ? H  
**Jean Jewell**

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**From:** ada0341@hotmail.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 22, 2007 10:14 AM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from John Sproul follows:

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Case Number: UWI-W-07-04  
Name: John Sproul  
Address: 1866 S Goldking Wy  
City: Boise  
State: ID  
Zip: 83709  
Home Telephone: 208 383-0220  
Contact E-Mail: ada0341@hotmail.com  
Name of Utility Company: UNITED WATER  
Add to Mailing List: no

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

First of all, I would like to see Idaho get a water company that is from Idaho, not France. Second, United Water wants a SUBSTANTIAL rate increase. This in addition to going to monthly readings because it is more convenient for THEM! I would like to see the statistics on that because I cannot imagine that creating twice as much postage, more meter readers, and more paper SAVES them money. I think that it is obvious that we are being taken for a ride by this bloated, foreign 'utility' and I think that the people of Idaho deserve better. United Water is already too expensive for what we get. Even if I use NO water at all, I still have to pay almost \$30 just to have the privilege of being ripped off by the water company. What if United Water was not only denied a rate increase, but were told that their rate structure was out of line with the rest of the country and to LOWER their rates. Maybe we could drive these frenchy frenchmen clear out of the country.

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 24.117.255.72  
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✓ Gen Ask sent 12/27/07  
✓ To A.V.  
✓ To Comm. ; H

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**Jean Jewell**

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**From:** GOTJ@cableone.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 26, 2007 4:43 AM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from Geroge E. Cawthon follows:

-----  
Case Number: UMI-W-07-04  
Name: Geroge E. Cawthon  
Address: 10228 W. Calico Street  
City: Boise  
State: Idaho  
Zip: 83709  
Home Telephone: 377-4299  
Contact E-Mail: GOTJ@cableone.net  
Name of Utility Company: United Water  
Add to Mailing List: yes

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

In a letter to customers, United Water (UW) states they want to change meter readings from once every 2 month to once each month. This will require an increase in the customer rate by about \$1.15 per month (\$2.30 every 2 months) to pay for the expense of increased meter readings.

United Water presents this change to monthly billing as a benefit to the customer in the following ways:

1. Easier budgeting and pay for customers.

For a very small minority of homeowners, who have a difficult time with expenses, monthly water bills might seem easier, but their costs will go up. A much better plan for such homeowners would be to change to a xeric landscape. All other homeowners would receive no benefit but would realize an increase in cost. Monthly billing is not easier for most customers. It is difficult to see how UW reasons that writing 12 checks instead of 6 checks per year would be easier for customers.

2. Enhanced water conservation especially during the irrigation season

Any water savings would be rather minuscule for the following reasons. A large percentage of the homes served by UW irrigate with water provided by an irrigation district not domestic water from UW. A very large percentage of homeowner historically do not and will not change their water use patterns unless costs increase radically. Without large cost increases, measurable water conservation occurs only when a government entity implements measures and strictly enforce those measures with fines or other deterrents. A very small percentage of homeowners can be expected to make modest water use changes in irrigation water use, preferring to maintain their lawns, shrubs and trees. UW, seems to forget that monthly billing would present prior month information that is 1½ to ½ month old, during the 2 month high water use period. So, the potential for more timely information to influence customer water usage would be increased by only a ½ month period of greatest irrigation water use in the Boise Area. Potential water savings would be limited.

3. Quicker detection and trouble shooting of leaks and meter problems

Leaks are either catastrophic or slow. Catastrophic leaks are detected by the homeowner observation of water spouts, puddling, basement filling up, etc. Action is needed in minutes or hours not days or weeks for a meter reader to detect. The best insurance to reduce possible damage is for the homeowner to know where the meter is and to have a wrench that fits valve at the meter. Slow leaks result in increased water usage but that isn't likely to mean anything to a meter reader. Homeowners detect slow leaks by slow water accumulation on surfaces or other changes around the property or by noting unexpected water consumption for a prolonged period of time. The homeowners alone can

determine if the change in water consumption is unusual or unexpected. A meter reader doesn't have the knowledge to know if changes in water consumption is natural or a cause for concern. Furthermore, homeowners will likely delay action for a long period after suspecting a minor leak. They may suspect a problem after 3-4 meter readings but discusses it with coworkers and friends for several months before acting when slow leaks occur. A change from bimonthly to monthly meter reading is no help with catastrophic leaks and is unlikely to make much difference with slow leak detection which requires homeowner knowledge. Earlier detection of meter problems would benefit UW more than the customer (meter slow or stops, customer benefits; meter speeds, UW is sued for return of money).

None of the three "benefits" indicated by UW are valid. It is interesting that UW indicates the cost increase for this measure at \$1.15 per month rather than \$2.30 per current billing period. A per month change is used just to minimize cost impact. Even sleazier is indicating the cost increase per day, a typical tactic of a door to door magazine salesmen.

Sometime back UW introduced homeowner insurance against failure of piping downstream of the meter; piping downstream is the homeowners responsibility. To many, this insurance sounds like a good deal, and it is for the insurance company, but it isn't good deal for most customers. Although everyone has heard of a pipe failure and an exorbitant cost to fix the problem, few people realize how rare a failure is with proper construction or what the actual cost may be. The literature with the insurance offer was mostly based on scare tactics and overinflated estimate of costs for potential repair. For that reason, I wonder if the #3 reason above, helping the homeowner detect leaks, isn't looking forward to increase opportunities to sell leak insurance.

If UW really wanted to help the customer, not their bottom line, they would keep the bimonthly billing.

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 24.119.23.137

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✓ Jen Ask sent 12/21/07

✓ To AV.

✓ To Commms  
:H

**Jean Jewell**

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**From:** jeffrey\_w\_morris@msn.com  
**Sent:** Friday, December 21, 2007 6:12 AM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from JEFF MORRIS follows:

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Case Number: UWI-W-07-04  
Name: JEFF MORRIS  
Address: 8574 W MORNIN MIST ST  
City: BOISE  
State: ID  
Zip: 83709-0766  
Home Telephone: 208-658-1056  
Contact E-Mail: jeffrey\_w\_morris@msn.com  
Name of Utility Company: Homeowner  
Add to Mailing List: yes

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

I received United Water's Application to the Idaho Public Utilities Commission requesting to convert to montly meter reading and billing for all customers dated September 17, 2007.

I DISAGREE with the proposal for two reasons.

1. The proposed increases cost to all customers. While the increase attempts to make water bills more affordable for 'low income' customers, the charge instead increases the overall cost to thse very customers United Water is trying to protect.
2. Adding more vehicles to canvas United Waters Service area to collect meter readings is not energy efficient. While I applaud United Water's efforts to add jobs to the service area, this business proposal does not meet customers' requirements for efficient and affordable cost.

Possible Alternative Recommendations:

1. Offer monthly billing to customer areas with the largest concentration of 'unpaid debt'. Every business must have the ability to collect bad debt from customers who are either behind or unwilling to pay.
2. Counter this increase billing expense by offering quarterly billing to more affluent customers. I personally experienced quarterly billing in the United Kingdom. The British water system offered customers living on fixed incomes or 'low incomes' a level pay program to enable the customer to budget more effectively.

A more appropriate question is how much would it cost to add additional personnel dedicated to collecting bad debt and working out affordable plans with delinquent customers to bring those customers back into good standing with United Water.

I understand United Water's business perspective to reduce bad debt, but I disagree with the proposed increase that reduces business efficiency collecting meter readings; increases traffic and environmental impact collecting meter readings; and increases cost to Idaho Public water consumers.

//Jeff Morris//

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 71.209.1.186

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*✓ Ben. Ack sent 12/21/07*  
*✓ To AV.*      *✓ To Commms*  
*SH*

**Jean Jewell**

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**From:** bernard\_schur@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 19, 2007 9:46 AM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from Bernard Schur follows:

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Case Number: ?  
Name: Bernard Schur  
Address: 8634 West Falling Star Street  
City: Boise  
State: ID  
Zip: 83709-6368  
Home Telephone: 208-562-0404  
Contact E-Mail: bernard\_schur@yahoo.com  
Name of Utility Company: United Idaho Water, Inc  
Add to Mailing List: yes

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

United Water Idaho of Boise, has an application to increase rates 3.75%, to increase services, do monthly billing and add significant numbers of personnel to provided these increased services. In their statement to water users UWI indicate that going to a monthly billing cycle will increase revenues and still require more personnel so they must seek a rate increase.

If the current system is working why change it? By their own statement in the Nov. mailing the current system is efficient and working well and no advantage to the rate payer exists in the proposed monthly billing system. So if there is no benefit to the rate payer, then why do it? About 90% of the rate increase will be for an increase in personnel, mostly meter readers and clerks. The other 10% will go for administrative and executive raises that are far above salaries of most Boise, Idaho residents, especially at the Corporate level. With the addition of more staff, the raise required next year and in subsequent years due to the cost of living, will result in a much larger budget then is necessary to efficiently operate the water utility. IF THE RATE INCREASE WILL NOT DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE RATE PAYERS, AND IT WILL NOT REDUCE THE COST OF SERVICES, OR LOWER RATES, AND NOT ENHNACE THE EFFICIENCY OF SERVICES, THEN PLEASE REJECT THE RATE INCREASE REQUEST.

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipuc1/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 71.36.13.36

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✓ Gen. Ack.  
sent 12/21/07

✓ To Commms  
: H

**Jean Jewell**

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**From:** sixbostons@msn.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 20, 2007 2:32 PM  
**To:** Tonya Clark; Jean Jewell; Gene Fadness; Ed Howell  
**Subject:** PUC Comment/Inquiry Form

A Comment from Aaron Boston follows:

-----  
Case Number: UWI-W-07-04  
Name: Aaron Boston  
Address: 10310 W. Raleigh St.  
City: Boise  
State: ID  
Zip: 83709  
Home Telephone: 208-658-8984  
Contact E-Mail: sixbostons@msn.com  
Name of Utility Company: United Water  
Add to Mailing List: no

Please describe your question or comment briefly:

My comment is against the application to raise water rates to cover costs to switch to monthly billing. So many people I know have no problem budgeting for the seasonal swing in water bills. I am the same way. Monthly billing will not help. I also don't believe that monthly billing will keep people from irrigating to maintain their landscaping. They will water however much they want to, and still be surprised at the cost whenever they receive a bill. That's human nature. Please do not allow unnecessary raising of everyone's water bill for the zero benefit almost all of us would receive. ATB

The form submitted on <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/forms/ipucl/ipuc.html>  
IP address is 71.33.13.129

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