



Idaho Public Utilities Commission

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Paul Kjellander, Commissioner
Mack A. Redford, Commissioner
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Case No. AWW-W-13-01, Order No. 33219

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www.puc.idaho.gov

Commission OKs certificate, rates for water utility seeking to serve Schweitzer ski resort in Bonner County

BOISE (February 11, 2015) – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission is awarding a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Acme Water Works to operate as a water utility in Bonner County.

Acme will serve 23 residential customers on three lots within the Schweitzer Mountain Ski Resort, 15 miles northwest of Sandpoint. If both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the development are completed, the company may eventually serve up to 260 residential customers on 107 lots. The water system consists of two wells, a 200,000-gallon storage reservoir, distribution mains and fire hydrants.

The owners are Joel and Leslie Wahlin of Sandpoint. The company currently contracts all water master duties, including water testing, billing and collections with Water Systems Management, operated by Bob Hansen of Sandpoint.

Commission staff determined an annual revenue requirement of \$8,067. To meet that revenue requirement, the commission authorized a minimum monthly flat rate for residential customers of \$29.25. That's 40% less than the company's current monthly rate of \$48 per month. The company originally proposed that customers pay a monthly minimum charge plus a volume allowance based on monthly consumption. The commission denied that proposal stating that without individual meters, the company did not have was to accurately measure monthly consumption.

The company proposed a hook-up fee for new customers of \$9,430, up from the current \$7,000. The commission approved a hook-up fee of \$150. Acme said the higher hook-up fee is needed to recover an approximate \$1.5 million investment in new utility construction. The commission said collecting hook-up fees from new customers to pay off the loans used to build the water system is in violation of commission rules.

The commission also denied a company request to assess a monthly standby or availability charge to customers who have paid a connection fee but are not yet connected to the system. Finally, the commission directed the company to repair any system sanitary deficiencies identified by the state Department of Environmental Quality and Panhandle Health Department.

Petitions for reconsideration of the commission's order must be filed with the commission secretary by no later than Feb. 23, 2015.

A copy of the commission's order and other documents related to the case can be found on the commission's Web site at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Water" heading and scroll down to Case No. AWW-W-13-01.

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