



Water Rate Case Process

Docket No. UW 196 – Seavey Loop
Water Company

Steph Yamada
Senior Utility Analyst (PUC Staff)
June 8, 2023



Common Questions



Q: Will the utility's requested rate increase go into effect?

A: No. The rate increase is suspended pending review by the Commission. The ultimate rate increase can be no higher than what the Company requests and is often lower.

Q: When will new rates become effective?

A: In most cases, a decision is reached **6-9 months** after the utility's filing.

Q: Will the rate increase be reviewed before it becomes effective?

A: YES!

Rate Case - Who's Involved?



The Commission



ALJ



Ensures that the proceedings are fair, impartial, and orderly.

Administrative Law Judge

- Delegated authority
- Presides over hearings
- Makes evidentiary rulings
- Supervises discovery
- Decides procedural matters
- Issue protective orders
- Decides Petitions to Intervene

Parties



- Burden of Proof

- Review, analysis, discovery
- Represented by DOJ
- Support the public interest

- Petition to Intervene

Flowchart – Water Rate Case



➤ 1. UTILITY FILING

Utility files application, direct testimony, and tariffs to PUC

➤ 2. NOTIFICATION

Utility notifies customers within 15 days of filing

➤ 3. TARIFF SUSPENSION

Commission orders tariffs suspended to allow time to review the utility's proposal (typically 6 to 9 months)

➤ 4. PUBLIC COMMENT HEARING

Town Hall forum to ask questions, share information, voice concerns/opinions

➤ 5. PREHEARING CONFERENCE

Adopt schedule, Receive petitions to intervene, Identify issues, Identify Parties, Create service list

➤ 6. DISCOVERY

Data Requests/Data Responses

➤ 7. SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE

Staff presents its recommended case to utility and intervenors who attempt to reach agreement on as many issues as possible

➤ 8. WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Staff and intervenors responding to utility's direct testimony

➤ 9. REPLY AND REBUTTAL TESTIMONY

Utility and all party responses as Necessary

➤ 10. EVIDENTIARY HEARING

Enter pre-filed testimony into record. Cross-examination of witnesses. Identify issues to be briefed. ALJ briefing instructions.

➤ 11. WRITTEN BRIEFS

Briefs are submitted as scheduled

➤ 12. COMMISSION DECISION

Commission issues order on requested rates

PUC Staff's Review



- Operating Expenses
 - E.g., Labor, repairs, utilities, management, insurance, etc.
- Other Revenue Deductions
 - Income taxes, property taxes, depreciation, etc.
- Assets
 - Must be prudent and necessary
- Capital Costs
 - Amount and cost of debt and equity
- Distribution of Revenue
 - Rate spread, rate design
- Utility-Specific Matters
 - Affiliate transactions, major service issues, capital projects, etc.



Intervenor – Party to the Case



- Any person may file a Petition to Intervene
 - Usually a customer or customers' representative
- Active participation in case
 - Participate in settlement negotiations, discovery, sponsor testimony, etc.
 - May not “unreasonably broaden the issues, burden the record, or delay the proceedings.”
 - Attorney representation not required
- How to Participate
 - Contact PUC Administrative Hearings Division
 - puc.hearings@puc.oregon.gov or (503) 378-6678
 - Petition form available on PUC website: oregon.gov/puc
 - Search “Petition to Intervene”

Non-Party Status



- Interested Person
 - Receives e-mail notification of filings in the case
 - How to Participate: Contact PUC Administrative Hearings Division
 - puc.hearings@puc.oregon.gov or (503) 378-6678
 - Reference Docket Number
- Review filings on PUC website: oregon.gov/puc

The screenshot shows the Oregon.gov website navigation bar with the 'eDockets' link highlighted in a red box. Below the navigation bar is the 'eDockets - Select Search Type' section. Under the heading 'Dockets', there are three radio button options: 'All', 'Open', and 'By Docket Number'. The 'By Docket Number' option is selected and highlighted with a red box. Below this option is a text input field labeled 'Enter Docket Number' with a placeholder '(ex. UM 345)'.

Public Comments



- Customers may voice concerns/comments
 - In person at Public Comment Hearing
 - By email: puc.publiccomments@puc.oregon.gov
 - By mail: PO Box 1088
Salem, OR 97308-1088
- PUC Consumer Services
 - Email: puc.consumer@puc.oregon.gov
 - Phone: (503) 378-6600
 - Toll-free: (800) 522-2404
- PUC Staff
 - Steph Yamada
 - Email: stephanie.yamada@puc.oregon.gov
 - Phone: (971) 375-5110