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DOCKET NO. 53685

**APPLICATION OF MANVEL TERRACE § PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
UTILITIES FOR A CLASS D RATE §
ADJUSTMENT § OF TEXAS**

**COMMISSION STAFF’S AMENDED RECOMMENDATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE
COMPLETENESS AND FINAL DISPOSITION**

On June 6, 2022, Manvel Terrace Utilities (Manvel) filed an application for a Class D rate adjustment under Texas Water Code (TWC) § 13.1872 and 16 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 24.49.

On July 11, 2022, the administrative law judge (ALJ) filed Order No. 2, requiring the Staff (Staff) of the Public Utility Commission of Texas (Commission) to file a supplemental recommendation on sufficiency of the application and notice, and propose a procedural schedule, if appropriate by August 4, 2022. Therefore, this pleading is timely filed.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLETENESS

Staff has reviewed the application, notice and supplemental information and, as detailed in the attached memorandum from James Onyeneke, of the Rate Regulation Division, recommends that the application and notice are administratively complete. Manvel submitted an application using the Commission’s approved form and included a proposed notice that satisfies the requirements of 16 TAC § 24.49(e) and included the relevant pages of Manvel’s current tariff¹. Manvel is an entity that is affiliated with SP Utility which did not file its application in the quarter that corresponds to the last two digits of its CCN in accordance with the requirements of 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(2). On July 13, 2022, SP Utility filed a good cause exception in Docket No. 53686 to the requirements of 16 TAC § 24.49(f). As stated in 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(2), “for a utility holding multiple CCNs, the utility may file an application in any quarter for which any of its CCN numbers is eligible.” Therefore, if SP Utility’s good cause exception is granted, Staff recommends that Manvel as an affiliate of SP Utility also be granted good cause to waive the requirements of 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(2).

¹ 16 TAC § 24.49(c)(2)

II. FINAL DISPOSITION

Under TWC § 13.1872 and 16 TAC § 24.49, the Commission may approve a Class D utility's request for a rate adjustment of no more than five percent without a hearing. As described in the memorandum, Mr. Onyeneke completed a technical review of the application and supplemental information and recommends approval of the increase in Manvel's water rates. Staff has confirmed that the increase was calculated correctly and has attached a revised tariff reflecting the requested rate adjustment to this pleading to be provided to Manvel.

III. NOTICE

Staff recommends that Manvel issue notice of the rate adjustment using the notice it has provided and in compliance with the following deadlines:

Event	Deadline
Deadline for Manvel to provide notice to customers	September 5, 2022
Effective date of rate adjustment	October 6, 2022

IV. CONCLUSION

For the reasons detailed above, Staff recommends that the application be found administratively complete and that Manvel's rate adjustment be approved. Staff further recommends that Manvel provide notice of the new rate, using only the notice pages approved by the ALJ, by September 5, 2022 to be effective on October 6, 2022. Staff respectfully requests the entry of an order consistent with these recommendations.

Dated: August 9, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF TEXAS
LEGAL DIVISION**

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Division Director

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that unless otherwise ordered by the presiding officer, notice of the filing of this document was provided to all parties of record via electronic mail on August 9, 2022 in accordance with the Second Order Suspending Rules, issued in Project No. 50664.

/s/ Arnett Caviel
Arnett D. Caviel

Public Utility Commission of Texas

Memorandum

TO: **Arnett Caviel**, Attorney
Legal Division

FROM: James Onyeneke, Regulatory Accountant
Rate Regulation Division

DATE: August 9, 2022

RE: Docket No. 53685 – *Application of Manvel Terrace Utilities for a Class D Rate Adjustment*

On June 6, 2022, Manvel Terrace Utilities (Manvel) filed an application for a Class D rate adjustment for its public water system No. 0200102, under certificate of convenience and necessity (CCN) No. 12080. Using the provisions of Texas Water Code (TWC) § 13.1872 and 16 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 24.49, a Class D utility may request an annual increase to its tariffed rates, under certain conditions described below. In support of its application Manvel provided:

1. A corrected Class D application for a water or sewer annual rate adjustment;
2. Completed proposed notice to be mailed to customers after the proposed rate adjustment is approved; and
3. Copies of relevant pages of the current approved tariff (rate pages only) that show the correct rates.

The requested increase may be implemented no more than once per calendar year and must be filed in the quarter designated by Commission rule.¹

Manvel holds CCN No. 12080 for water and its owner SP Utility Company, Inc. (SP Utility) also holds CCN Nos. 12080 and 12978. Because the owner SP Utility holds multiple CCNs, it may file an application in any quarter for which any of its CCN numbers is eligible as required by 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(2). SP Utility filed its application outside of the quarters associated with the last two digits of its CCN number; however, it requested a good cause exception to file before July in Docket No. 53686.² According to the supplemental information filed on July 13, 2022, SP Utility represents that the factors that contributed to its request for a good cause exception include high fuel prices and inflation. Additionally, it stated that temporary management of the Reed Estates Water System required a large investment to return

¹ TWC § 13.1872(f); 16 TAC § 24.49(f).

² *Application of SP Utility Company, Inc. for a Class D Rate Adjustment*, Docket 53686, Good Cause Exception (Jul. 13, 2022).

it to a state of functionality. Therefore, if the good cause exception is granted, Manvel will have met the requirements of 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(2)

An increase may not be granted more than four times between rate proceedings described under TWC § 13.1871.³

This application represents Manvel's Fourth-Class D rate adjustment request between base rate proceedings. Manvel's third rate adjustment was approved in 2020 in Docket No. 51006.⁴

The requested annual increase may be no more than five percent.⁵

Manvel requests approval to increase its current water base rates by 5%.

The following table includes Manvel's current and proposed minimum monthly water charges by meter size and current and proposed gallonage charges:

Meter Size (Includes 0 Gallonage)	Approved Base Rate	Proposed Rate
5/8" or 3/4"	\$35.15	\$36.91
Gallonage Charge	Previously approved Gallonage Rate	Proposed Gallonage Rate
	\$4.11	\$4.32

I have reviewed the application and confirmed that Manvel correctly calculated the proposed 5% increase to its current water rates.

Notice must be sent at least 30 days before the effective date of the proposed rate adjustment.⁶

Manvel submitted a Notice of Approved Utility Rate Adjustment which includes the information required by 16 TAC § 24.49(e). I have reviewed the notice and have confirmed that Manvel filled out the notice completely and correctly calculated the billing comparison for 5,000 gallons and 10,000 gallons of usage. The proposed notice listed September 5, 2022, as the date notice will be provided and October 6, 2022, as the effective date of the proposed rate adjustment.

Based upon my review of the application, I recommend that:

1. The application be found administratively complete, and the proposed notice be found sufficient;

³ TWC § 13.1872(f); 16 TAC § 24.49(f)(1).

⁴ *Application of Manvel Terrace Utilities, Inc. for a Class D Rate Adjustment*, Docket No. 51006, Notice of Approval (Aug. 19, 2020).

⁵ TWC § 13.1872(e)(2); 16 TAC § 24.49(c)(1).

⁶ TWC § 13.1872(c)(1), (e)(1); 16 TAC § 24.49(e).

2. The rate adjustment be approved as proposed in the application and with an effective date that coincides with Manvel's billing cycle;
3. Manvel should provide the approved notice to customers as required by TWC § 13.1872(c)(1) at least 30 days before the effective date of the proposed rate adjustment;
4. The attached tariff be approved; and
5. Commission Staff provide a copy of the approved tariff to Manvel.



**WATER UTILITY TARIFF
Docket Number 53685**

Manvel Terrace Utilities, Inc.
(Utility Name)

2460 Country Club Drive
(Business Address)

Pearland, Texas 77581
(City, State, Zip Code)

(832) 534-8545
(Area Code/Telephone)

This tariff is effective for utility operations under the following Certificate of Convenience and Necessity:

12080

This tariff is effective in the following county:

Brazoria

This tariff is effective in the following cities or unincorporated towns (if any):

None

This tariff is effective in the following subdivisions or systems:

Manvel Terrace Subdivision (PWS 0200102)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The above utility lists the following sections of its tariff (if additional pages are needed for a section, all pages should be numbered consecutively):

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APPENDIX A	DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN	
APPENDIX B	SAMPLE SERVICE AGREEMENT	

SECTION 1.0 - RATE SCHEDULE

Section 1.01 - Rates

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Monthly Minimum Charge</u>	<u>Gallonage Charge</u>
5/8" or 3/4"	<u>\$36.91</u> (Includes 1000 gallons)	<u>\$4.32</u> per 1000 gallons

FORM OF PAYMENT: THE UTILITY WILL ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING FORM(S) OF PAYMENT

Cash , Check , Money Order , Credit Card , Other (specify)

THE UTILITY MAY REQUIRE EXACT CHANGE FOR PAYMENTS AND MAY REFUSE TO ACCEPT PAYMENTS MADE USING MORE THAN \$1.00 IN SMALL COINS. A WRITTEN RECEIPT WILL BE GIVEN FOR CASH PAYMENTS.

REGULATORY ASSESSMENT 1.0%
 PUC RULES REQUIRE THE UTILITY TO COLLECT A FEE OF ONE PERCENT OF THE RETAIL MONTHLY BILL AND TO REMIT THE FEE TO THE TCEQ.

Section 1.02 - Miscellaneous Fees

TAP FEE \$400.00
 TAP FEE COVERS THE UTILITY'S COSTS FOR MATERIALS AND LABOR TO INSTALL A STANDARD RESIDENTIAL 5/8" or 3/4" METER. AN ADDITIONAL FEE TO COVER UNIQUE COSTS IS PERMITTED IF LISTED ON THIS TARIFF.

TAP FEE (Large meter) Actual Cost
 TAP FEE IS THE UTILITY'S ACTUAL COST FOR MATERIALS AND LABOR FOR METER SIZE INSTALLED.

METER RELOCATION FEE ACTUAL COST TO RELOCATE METER NOT TO EXCEED TAP FEE
 THIS FEE MAY BE CHARGED IF A CUSTOMER REQUESTS THAT AN EXISTING METER BE RELOCATED.

METER TEST FEE \$25.00
 THIS FEE WHICH SHOULD REFLECT THE UTILITY'S COST MAY BE CHARGED IF A CUSTOMER REQUESTS A SECOND METER TEST WITHIN A TWO-YEAR PERIOD AND THE TEST INDICATES THAT THE METER IS RECORDING ACCURATELY. THE FEE MAY NOT EXCEED \$25.

SECTION 1.0 - RATE SCHEDULE (CONT.)

RECONNECTION FEE

THE RECONNECT FEE MUST BE PAID BEFORE SERVICE CAN BE RESTORED TO A CUSTOMER WHO HAS BEEN DISCONNECTED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS (OR OTHER REASONS LISTED UNDER SECTION 2.0 OF THIS TARIFF):

- a) Nonpayment of bill (Maximum \$25.00)..... \$25.00
- b) Customer's request that service be disconnected..... \$40.00

TRANSFER FEE..... \$25.00

THE TRANSFER FEE WILL BE CHARGED FOR CHANGING AN ACCOUNT NAME AT THE SAME SERVICE LOCATION WHEN THE SERVICE IS NOT DISCONNECTED

LATE CHARGE (EITHER \$5.00 OR 10% OF THE BILL)..... \$5.00

PUC RULES ALLOW A ONE-TIME PENALTY TO BE CHARGED ON DELINQUENT BILLS. A LATE CHARGE MAY NOT BE APPLIED TO ANY BALANCE TO WHICH THE PENALTY WAS APPLIED IN A PREVIOUS BILLING.

RETURNED CHECK CHARGE..... \$25.00

RETURNED CHECK CHARGES MUST BE BASED ON THE UTILITY'S DOCUMENTABLE COST.

CUSTOMER DEPOSIT RESIDENTIAL (Maximum \$50)..... \$50.00

COMMERCIAL & NON-RESIDENTIAL DEPOSIT..... 1/6TH OF ESTIMATED ANNUAL BILL

GOVERNMENTAL TESTING, INSPECTION AND COSTS SURCHARGE

WHEN AUTHORIZED IN WRITING BY TNRCC AND AFTER NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS, THE UTILITY MAY INCREASE RATES TO RECOVER INCREASED COSTS FOR INSPECTION FEES AND WATER TESTING 16 TAC §24.25(b)(2)(G).

LINE EXTENSION AND CONSTRUCTION CHARGES:

REFER TO SECTION 3.0 EXTENSION POLICY FOR TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND CHARGES WHEN NEW CONSTRUCTION IS NECESSARY TO PROVIDE SERVICE.

SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES

The utility will have the most current Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC or Commission) rules, Chapter 24, available at its office for reference purposes. The Rules and this tariff shall be available for public inspection and reproduction at a reasonable cost. The latest Rules or commission approved changes to the Rules supersede any rules or requirements in this tariff.

Section 2.01 - Application for Water Service

All applications for service will be made on the utility's standard application or contract form (attached in the Appendix to this tariff), will be signed by the applicant, any required fees (deposits, reconnect, tap, extension fees, etc. as applicable) will be paid and easements, if required, will be granted before service is provided by the utility. A separate application or contract will be made for each service location.

Section 2.02 - Refusal of Service

The utility may decline to serve an applicant until the applicant has complied with the regulations of the regulatory agencies (state and municipal regulations) and for the reasons outlined in the PUC Rules. In the event that the utility refuses to serve an applicant, the utility will inform the applicant in writing of the basis of its refusal. The utility is also required to inform the applicant that a complaint may be filed with the commission.

Section 2.03 - Fees and Charges & Easements Required Before Service Can Be Connected

(A) Customer Deposits

If a residential applicant cannot establish credit to the satisfaction of the utility, the applicant may be required to pay a deposit as provided for in Section 1.02 - Miscellaneous Fees of this tariff. The utility will keep records of the deposit and credit interest in accordance with PUC Rules.

Residential applicants 65 years of age or older may not be required to pay deposits unless the applicant has an outstanding account balance with the utility or another water or sewer utility which accrued within the last two years.

Nonresidential applicants who cannot establish credit to the satisfaction of the utility may be required to make a deposit that does not exceed an amount equivalent to one-sixth of the estimated annual billings.

Refund of Deposit - If service is not connected, or after disconnection of service, the utility will promptly refund the customer's deposit plus accrued interest or the balance, if any, in excess of the unpaid bills for service furnished. The utility may refund the deposit at any time prior to termination of utility service but must refund the deposit plus interest for any residential customer who has paid 18 consecutive billings without being delinquent.

(B) Tap or Reconnect Fees

A new customer requesting service at a location where service has not previously been provided must pay a tap fee as provided in Section 1. A customer requesting service where service has previously been provided must pay a reconnect fee as provided in Section 1. Any applicant or existing customer required to pay for any costs not specifically set forth in the rate schedule pages of this tariff shall be given a written explanation of such costs prior to request for payment and/or commencement of construction.

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SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES (Continued)

If the applicant or existing customer does not believe that these costs are reasonable or necessary, the applicant or existing customer shall be informed of their right to appeal such costs to the PUC or such other regulatory authority having jurisdiction over the utility's rates in that portion of the utility's service area in which the applicant's or existing customer's property(ies) is (are) located.

Fees in addition to the regular tap fee may be charged if listed specifically in Section 1 to cover unique costs not normally incurred as permitted by 16 TAC § 24.163(a)(1)(C). For example, a road bore for customers outside a subdivision or residential area could be considered a unique cost.

(C) Easement Requirement

Where recorded public utility easements on the service applicant's property do not exist or public road right-of-way easements are not available to access the applicant's property, the utility may require the applicant to provide it with a permanent recorded public utility easement on and across the applicant's real property sufficient to provide service to that applicant. Such easement(s) shall not be used for the construction of production, storage, transmission or pressure facilities unless they are needed for adequate service to that applicant.

Section 2.04 - Utility Response to Applications for Service

After the applicant has met all the requirements, conditions and regulations for service, the utility will install tap, meter and utility cut-off valve and/or take all necessary actions to initiate service. The utility will serve each qualified applicant for service within 5 working days unless line extensions or new facilities are required. If construction is required to fill the order and if it cannot be completed within 30 days, the utility will provide the applicant with a written explanation of the construction required and an expected date of service.

Except for good cause where service has previously been provided, service will be reconnected within one working day after the applicant has met the requirements for reconnection.

Section 2.05 - Customer Responsibility

The customer will be responsible for furnishing and laying the necessary customer service pipe from the meter location to the place of consumption. Customers will not be allowed to use the utility's cutoff valve on the utility's side of the meter. Existing customers may install cutoff valves on their side of the meter and are encouraged to do so. All new customers may be required to install and maintain a cutoff valve on their side of the meter.

No direct connection between a public water supply system and any potential source of contamination or between a public water supply system and a private water source (ex. private well) will be allowed. A customer shall not connect, or allow any other person or party to connect, onto any water lines on his premises.

Section 2.06 - Customer Service Inspections

Applicants for new service connections or facilities which have undergone extensive plumbing modifications are required to furnish the utility a completed customer service inspection certificate. The inspection certificate shall certify that the establishment is in compliance with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Rules and Regulations for Public Water Systems, Section 290.46(j). The utility is not required to perform these inspections for the applicant/customer but will assist the applicant/customer in locating and obtaining the services of a certified inspector.

SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES (Continued)

Section 2.07 - Back Flow Prevention Devices

All non-residential customers requiring a greater than 1” meter or any customer with irrigation or firefighting systems, must install backflow prevention devices which have been approved by the utility or its consulting engineers on each of their customer service lines.

The backflow assembly shall be tested upon installation by a recognized prevention assembly tester and certified to be operating within specifications. Backflow prevention assemblies which are installed to provide protection against high health hazards must be tested and certified to be operating within specifications at least annually by a recognized backflow prevention device tester. The maintenance and testing of the backflow assembly shall occur at the customer’s expense.

No water connection shall be made to any establishment where an actual or potential contamination or system hazard exists without an approved air gap or mechanical prevention assembly. The air gap or backflow prevention assembly shall be installed in accordance with the American Water Works (AWWA) standards C510, C511 and AWWA Manual M14 or University of Southern California Manual of Cross-Connection Control, current edition. The backflow assembly installation by a licensed plumber shall occur at the customer’s expense.

Section 2.08 - Access to Customer’s Premises

The utility will have the right of access to the customer's premises at all reasonable times for the purpose of installing, testing, inspecting or repairing water mains or other equipment used in connection with its provision of water service, or for the purpose of removing its property and disconnecting lines, and for all other purposes necessary to the operation of the utility system including inspecting the customer's plumbing for code, plumbing or tariff violations. The customer shall allow the utility and its personnel access to the customer's property to conduct any water quality tests or inspections required by law. Unless necessary to respond to equipment failure, leak or other condition creating an immediate threat to public health and safety or the continued provision of adequate utility service to others, such entry upon the customer's property shall be during normal business hours and the utility personnel will attempt to notify the customer that they will be working on the customer’s property. The customer may require any utility representative, employee, contractor, or agent seeking to make such entry identify themselves, their affiliation with the utility, and the purpose of their entry.

All customers or service applicants shall provide access to meters and utility cutoff valves at all times reasonably necessary to conduct ordinary utility business and after normal business hours as needed to protect and preserve the integrity of the public drinking water supply.

Section 2.09 - Meter Requirements, Readings, and Testing

One meter is required for each residential, commercial, or industrial connection. All water sold by the utility will be billed based on meter measurements. The utility will provide, install, own and maintain meters to measure amounts of water consumed by its customers.

Meters will be read at monthly intervals and as nearly as possible on the corresponding day of each monthly meter reading period unless otherwise authorized by the Commission.

SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES (Continued)

Meter tests. The utility will, upon the request of a customer, and, if the customer so desires, in his or her presence or in that of his or her authorized representative, make without charge a test of the accuracy of the customer's meter. If the customer asks to observe the test, the test will be made during the utility's normal working hours at a time convenient to the customer. Whenever possible, the test will be made on the customer's premises, but may, at the utility's discretion, be made at the utility's testing facility. If within a period of two years the customer requests a new test, the utility will make the test, but if the meter is found to be within the accuracy standards established by the American Water Works Association, the utility will charge the customer a fee which reflects the cost to test the meter up to a maximum \$25 for a residential customer.

Following the completion of any requested test, the utility will promptly advise the customer of the date of removal of the meter, the date of the test, the result of the test, and who made the test.

Section 2.10 – Billing

(A) Regular Billing

Bills from the utility will be mailed monthly unless otherwise authorized by the Commission. The due date of bills for utility service will be at least sixteen (16) days from the date of issuance. The postmark on the bill or, if there is no postmark on the bill, the recorded date of mailing by the utility will constitute proof of the date of issuance. Payment for utility service is delinquent if full payment, including late fees and the regulatory assessment, is not received at the utility or the utility's authorized payment agency by 5:00 p.m. on the due date. If the due date falls on a holiday or weekend, the due date for payment purposes will be the next workday after the due date.

(B) Late Fees

A late penalty of either \$5.00 or 10.0% will be charged on bills received after the due date. The penalty on delinquent bills will not be applied to any balance to which the penalty was applied in a previous billing. The utility must maintain a record of the date of mailing to charge the late penalty.

(C) Information on Bill

Each bill will provide all information required by the PUC Rules. For each of the systems it operates, the utility will maintain and note on the monthly bill a local or toll-free telephone number (or numbers) to which customers can direct questions about their utility service.

(D) Prorated Bills - If service is interrupted or seriously impaired for 24 consecutive hours or more, the utility will prorate the monthly base bill in proportion to the time service was not available to reflect this loss of service.

Section 2.11- Payments

All payments for utility service shall be delivered or mailed to the utility's business office. If the business office fails to receive payment prior to the time of noticed disconnection for non-payment of a delinquent account, service will be terminated as scheduled. Utility service crews shall not be allowed to collect payments on customer accounts in the field.

SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES (Continued)

Payment of an account by any means that has been dishonored and returned by the payor or payee's bank, shall be deemed to be delinquent. All returned payments must be redeemed with cash or valid money order. If a customer has two returned payments within a twelve month period, the customer shall be required to pay a deposit if one has not already been paid.

Section 2.12 - Service Disconnection

(A) With Notice

Utility service may be disconnected if the bill has not been paid in full by the date listed on the termination notice. The termination date must be at least 10 days after the notice is mailed or hand delivered.

The utility is encouraged to offer a deferred payment plan to a customer who cannot pay an outstanding bill in full and is willing to pay the balance in reasonable installments. However, a customer's utility service may be disconnected if a bill has not been paid or a deferred payment agreement entered into within 26 days from the date of issuance of a bill and if proper notice of termination has been given.

Notice of termination must be a separate mailing or hand delivery in accordance with the PUC Rules.

B) Without Notice

Utility service may also be disconnected without notice for reasons as described in the PUC Rules.

Section 2.13 - Reconnection of Service

Utility personnel must be available during normal business hours to accept payments on the day service is disconnected and the following day unless service was disconnected at the customer's request or due to a hazardous condition.

Service will be reconnected within 24 hours after the past due bill, reconnect fees and any other outstanding charges are paid or the conditions which caused service to be disconnected are corrected.

Section 2.14 - Service Interruptions

The utility will make all reasonable efforts to prevent interruptions of service. If interruptions occur, the utility will re-establish service within the shortest possible time. Except for momentary interruptions due to automatic equipment operations, the utility will keep a complete record of all interruptions, both emergency and scheduled and will notify the Commission in writing of any service interruptions affecting the entire system or any major division of the system lasting more than four hours. The notice will explain the cause of the interruptions.

Section 2.15 - Quality of Service

The utility will plan, furnish, and maintain production, treatment, storage, transmission, and distribution facilities of sufficient size and capacity to provide a continuous and adequate supply of water for all reasonable consumer uses. Unless otherwise authorized by the PUC or TCEQ, the utility will maintain facilities as described in the TCEQ Rules and Regulations for Public Water Systems.

SECTION 2.0 – SERVICE RULES AND POLICIES (Continued)

Section 2.16 - Customer Complaints and Disputes

If a customer or applicant for service lodges a complaint, the utility will promptly make a suitable investigation and advise the complainant of the results. Service will not be disconnected pending completion of the investigation. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the utility's response, the utility must advise the complainant that he has recourse through the PUC complaint process. Pending resolution of a complaint, the commission may require continuation or restoration of service.

The utility will maintain a record of all complaints which shows the name and address of the complainant, the date and nature of the complaint and the adjustment or disposition thereof, for a period of two years after the final settlement of the complaint.

In the event of a dispute between a customer and a utility regarding any bill for utility service, the utility will conduct an investigation and report the results to the customer. If the dispute is not resolved, the utility will inform the customer that a complaint may be filed with the Commission.

Section 2.17 - Customer Liability

Customer shall be liable for any damage or injury to utility-owned property shown to be caused by the customer.

(Utility Name)

SECTION 3.0 – EXTENSION POLICY

Section 3.01 – Standard Extension Requirements

Line Extension and Construction Charges: No Contribution in Aid of Construction may be required of any customer except as provided for in this approved extension policy.

The applicant for service will be given an itemized statement of the costs, options such as rebates to the customer, sharing of construction costs between the utility and the customer, or sharing of costs between the customer and other applicants prior to beginning construction.

Unless an exception is granted by the PUC, the residential service applicant shall not be required to pay for costs of main extensions greater than 2" in diameter for water distribution and pressure wastewater collection lines and 6" in diameter for gravity wastewater lines.

Exceptions may be granted by the PUC if:

- adequate service cannot be provided to the applicant using the maximum line sizes listed due to distance or elevation, in which case, it shall be the utility's burden to justify that a larger diameter pipe is required for adequate service;
- or larger minimum line sizes are required under subdivision platting requirements or building codes of municipalities within whose corporate limits or extraterritorial jurisdiction the point of use is located; or the residential service applicant is located outside the CCN service area.

If an exception is granted by the PUC, the utility shall establish a proportional cost plan for the specific extension or a rebate plan which may be limited to seven years to return the portion of the applicant's costs for oversizing as new customers are added to ensure that future applicants for service on the line pay at least as much as the initial service applicant.

The utility will bear the full cost of any over-sizing of water mains necessary to serve other customers in the immediate area.

For purposes of determining the costs that service applicants shall pay, commercial customers with service demands greater than residential customer demands in the certified area, industrial, and wholesale customers shall be treated as developers. A service applicant requesting a one inch meter for a lawn sprinkler system to service a residential lot is not considered nonstandard service.

If an applicant requires service other than the standard service provided by the utility, such applicant will be required to pay all expenses incurred by the utility in excess of the expenses that would be incurred in providing the standard service and connection beyond 200 feet and throughout his property including the cost of all necessary transmission facilities.

Residential customers will be charged the equivalent of the costs of extending service to their property from the nearest transmission or distribution line even if that line does not have adequate capacity to serve the customer. However, if the customer places unique, non-standard service demands upon the system, the customer may be charged the additional cost of extending service to and throughout their property, including the cost of all necessary transmission and storage facilities necessary to meet the service demands anticipated to be created by that property.

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SECTION 3.0 – EXTENSION POLICY (Continued)

Section 3.02 - Costs Utilities Shall Bear

The utility will bear the full cost of any oversizing of water mains necessary to serve other customers in the immediate. The individual residential customer shall not be charged for any additional production, storage, or treatment facilities. Contributions in aid of construction may not be required of individual residential customers for production, storage, treatment or transmission facilities unless otherwise approved by the Commission under this specific extension policy.

Within its certified area, the utility will pay the cost of the first 200 feet of any water main or distribution line necessary to extend service to an individual residential customer within a platted subdivision. However, if the residential customer requesting service purchased the property after the developer was notified in writing of the need to provide facilities to the utility, the utility may charge for the first 200 feet. The utility must also be able to document that the developer of the subdivision refused to provide facilities compatible with the utility's facilities in accordance with the utility's approved extension policy after receiving a written request from the utility.

The utility is not required to extend service to any applicant outside of its certificated service area and will only do so under terms and conditions mutually agreeable to the utility and the applicant, in compliance with PUC rules and policies, and upon extension of the utility's certificated service area boundaries by the PUC.

Section 3.03 - Contributions in Aid of Construction

Developers may be required to provide contributions in aid of construction in amounts sufficient to furnish the development with all facilities necessary to provide for reasonable local demand requirements and to comply with TCEQ minimum design criteria for facilities used in the production, transmission, pumping, or treatment of water or TCEQ minimum requirements. For purposes of this subsection, a developer is one who subdivides or requests more than two meters on a piece of property. Commercial, industrial, and wholesale customers will be treated as developers.

Any applicant who places unique or non-standard service demands on the system may be required to provide contributions in aid of construction for the actual costs of any additional facilities required to maintain compliance with the TCEQ minimum design criteria for water production, treatment, pumping, storage and transmission.

Any service extension to a subdivision (recorded or unrecorded) may be subject to the provisions and restrictions of 16 TAC § 24.163(d). When a developer wishes to extend the system to prepare to service multiple new connections, the charge shall be the cost of such extension, plus a pro-rata charge for facilities which must be committed to such extension compliant with the TCEQ minimum design criteria. As provided by 16 TAC § 24.161(e)(3), for purposes of this section, commercial, industrial, and wholesale customers shall be treated as developers.

SECTION 3.0 – EXTENSION POLICY (Continued)

A utility may only charge a developer standby fees for unrecovered costs of facilities committed to a developer's property under the following circumstances:

- Under a contract and only in accordance with the terms of the contract; or
- if service is not being provided to a lot or lots within two years after installation of facilities necessary to provide service to the lots has been completed and if the standby fees are included on the utilities approved tariff after a rate change application has been filed. The fees cannot be billed to the developer or collected until the standby fees have been approved by the commission or executive director.
- For purposes of this section, a manufactured housing rental community can only be charged standby fees under a contract or if the utility installs the facilities necessary to provide individually metered service to each of the rental lots or spaces in the community.

Section 3.04 - Appealing Connection Costs

The imposition of additional extension costs or charges as provided by Sections 3.0 - Extension Policy of this tariff shall be subject to appeal as provided in this tariff, PUC rules, or the rules of such other regulatory authority as may have jurisdiction over the utility's rates and services. Any applicant required to pay for any costs not specifically set forth in the rate schedule pages of this tariff shall be given a written explanation of such costs prior to payment and/or commencement of construction. If the applicant does not believe that these costs are reasonable or necessary, the applicant shall be informed of the right to appeal such costs to the PUC or such other regulatory authority having jurisdiction over the utility's rates in that portion of the utility's service area in which the applicant's property(ies) is (are) located.

Section 3.05 - Applying for Service

The utility will provide a written service application form to the applicant for each request for service received by the utility's business offices. A separate application shall be required for each potential service location if more than one service connection is desired by any individual applicant. Service application forms will be available at the utility's business office during normal weekday business hours. Service applications will be sent by prepaid first class United States mail to the address provided by the applicant upon request. Completed applications should be returned by hand delivery in case there are questions which might delay fulfilling the service request. Completed service applications may be submitted by mail if hand delivery is not possible.

Where a new tap or service connection is required, the service applicant shall be required to submit a written service application and request that a tap be made. A diagram, map, plat, or written metes and bounds description of precisely where the applicant desires each tap or service connection is to be made and, if necessary, where the meter is to be installed, along the applicant's property line may also be required with the tap request. The actual point of connection and meter installation must be readily accessible to utility personnel for inspection, servicing, and meter reading while being reasonably secure from damage by vehicles and mowers. If the utility has more than one main adjacent to the service applicant's property, the tap or service connection will be made to the utility's nearest service main with adequate capacity to service the applicant's full potential service demand.

SECTION 3.0 – EXTENSION POLICY (Continued)

Beyond the initial 200 feet, the customer shall bear only the equivalent cost of extending from the nearest main. If the tap or service connection cannot be made at the applicant's desired location, it will be made at another location mutually acceptable to the applicant and the utility. If no agreement on location can be made, the applicant may refer the matter to the PUC for resolution.

Section 3.06 - Qualified Service Applicant

A "qualified service applicant" is an applicant who has: (1) met all of the utility's requirements for service contained in this tariff, PUC rules and/or PUC order, (2) has made payment or made arrangement for payment of tap fees, (3) has provided all easements and rights-of-way required to provide service to the requested location, (4) delivered an executed customer service inspection certificate to the utility, if applicable, and (5) has executed a customer service application for each location to which service is being requested.

The utility shall serve each qualified service applicant within its certified service area as soon as practical after receiving a completed service application. All service requests will be fulfilled within the time limits prescribed by PUC rules once the applicant has met all conditions precedent to achieving "qualified service applicant" status. If a service request cannot be fulfilled within the required period, the applicant shall be notified in writing of the delay, its cause and the anticipated date that service will be available. The PUC service dates shall not become applicable until the service applicant has met all conditions precedent to becoming a qualified service applicant as defined by PUC rules.

Section 3.07 - Developer Requirements

As a condition of service to a new subdivision, the utility shall require a developer (as defined by PUC rule) to provide permanent recorded public utility easements as a condition of service to any location within the developer's property.

APPENDIX A – DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN

“This page incorporates by reference the utility’s Drought Contingency Plan, as approved and periodically amended by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.”

APPENDIX B -- APPLICATION FOR SERVICE
Chapter 290.47(b) Sample Service Agreement
SERVICE AGREEMENT

- I. **PURPOSE.** The NAME OF WATER SYSTEM is responsible for protecting the drinking water supply from contamination or pollution which could result from improper private water distribution system construction or configuration. The purpose of this service agreement is to notify each customer of the restrictions which are in place to provide this protection. The utility enforces these restrictions to ensure the public health and welfare. Each customer must sign this agreement before the NAME OF WATER SYSTEM will begin service. In addition, when service to an existing connection has been suspended or terminated, the water system will not re-establish service unless it has a signed copy of this agreement.
- II. **RESTRICTIONS.** The following unacceptable practices are prohibited by State regulations.
- A. No direct connection between the public drinking water supply and a potential source of contamination is permitted. Potential sources of contamination shall be isolated from the public water system by an air-gap or an appropriate backflow prevention device.
 - B. No cross-connection between the public drinking water supply and a private water system is permitted. These potential threats to the public drinking water supply shall be eliminated at the service connection by the installation of an air-gap or a reduced pressure-zone backflow prevention device.
 - C. No connection which allows water to be returned to the public drinking water supply is permitted.
 - D. No pipe or pipe fitting which contains more than 8.0% lead may be used for the installation or repair of plumbing at any connection which provides water for human use.
 - E. No solder or flux which contains more than 0.2% lead can be used for the installation or repair of plumbing at any connection which provides water for human use.
- III. **SERVICE AGREEMENT.** The following are the terms of the service agreement between the NAME OF WATER SYSTEM (the Water System) and NAME OF CUSTOMER (the Customer).
- A. The Water System will maintain a copy of this agreement as long as the Customer and/or the premises is connected to the Water System.
 - B. The Customer shall allow his property to be inspected for possible cross-connections and other potential contamination hazards. These inspections shall be conducted by the Water System or its designated agent prior to initiating new water service; when there is reason to believe that cross-connections or other potential contamination hazards exist; or after any major changes to the private water distribution facilities. The inspections shall be conducted during the Water System's normal business hours.
 - C. The Water System shall notify the Customer in writing of any cross-connection or other potential contamination hazard which has been identified during the initial inspection or the periodic reinspection.
 - D. The Customer shall immediately remove or adequately isolate any potential cross-connections or other potential contamination hazards on his premises.
 - E. The Customer shall, at his expense, properly install, test, and maintain any backflow prevention device required by the Water System. Copies of all testing and maintenance records shall be provided to the Water System.
- IV. **ENFORCEMENT.** If the Customer fails to comply with the terms of the Service Agreement, the Water System shall, at its option, either terminate service or properly install, test, and maintain an appropriate backflow prevention device at the service connection. Any expenses associated with the enforcement of this agreement shall be billed to the Customer.

CUSTOMER'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____