

WUTC Commissions,

You must feel our frustrations by now. On a near weekly basis we hear about the misdeeds of high officials, some forced into resignation, some heavily fined and some even serving jail terms. Then there are CEO's of companies charged with misdeeds and judged to either jail sentences or fined large amounts. Our frustration mounts and only continues when we learn about unreasonable compensation provided to many company officers while our own buying power diminishes. And now all this unrest is centered on the water that issue from our own faucets.

We learned not many weeks ago that the Rosario Utilities was about to be sold to an outside company. That alone was barely a ripple in our feelings. After all, if RU sold maybe a new owner would be more concerned with the users. No sooner had the word gone out than we heard about a proposed rate increase for the water we depend on. A modest increase would likely cause no great alarm, however the unreasonable boost of 62% aroused everyone's suspicions.

Examination of what has been the practice of RU uncovers several matters that move frustrations to what approaches anger. For example: Water users were charged for the construction of a water treatment plant and were informed that within a period of so many years that debit would be paid. That period has passed and we now learn there is still a large debit owed. Why? Did the RU fail to renegotiate a lower interest loan when possible? If not why not? Is this poor management or poor judgment or miscalculation on the part of the RU? It would appear that the RU felt any errors on their part could be covered with a rate increase without lose to them.

The fact that RU is asking for an unreasonable rate increase prior to the sale of the company seems very strange. Is this simply a ploy to make the sale more appealing to a buyer? Then there is information, not confirmed, that the new owner would request a rate increase every two years after taking over control of the treatment plant.

We feel that RU has not been very transparent with the users and has managed to hide important information from us. Recommendations and suggestions dating back from the time a new facility was in the planning stage have been largely ignored and now this proposed rate increase really tops it.

Respectfully



Jim Newland