

Public Comments by Case

UG-150205

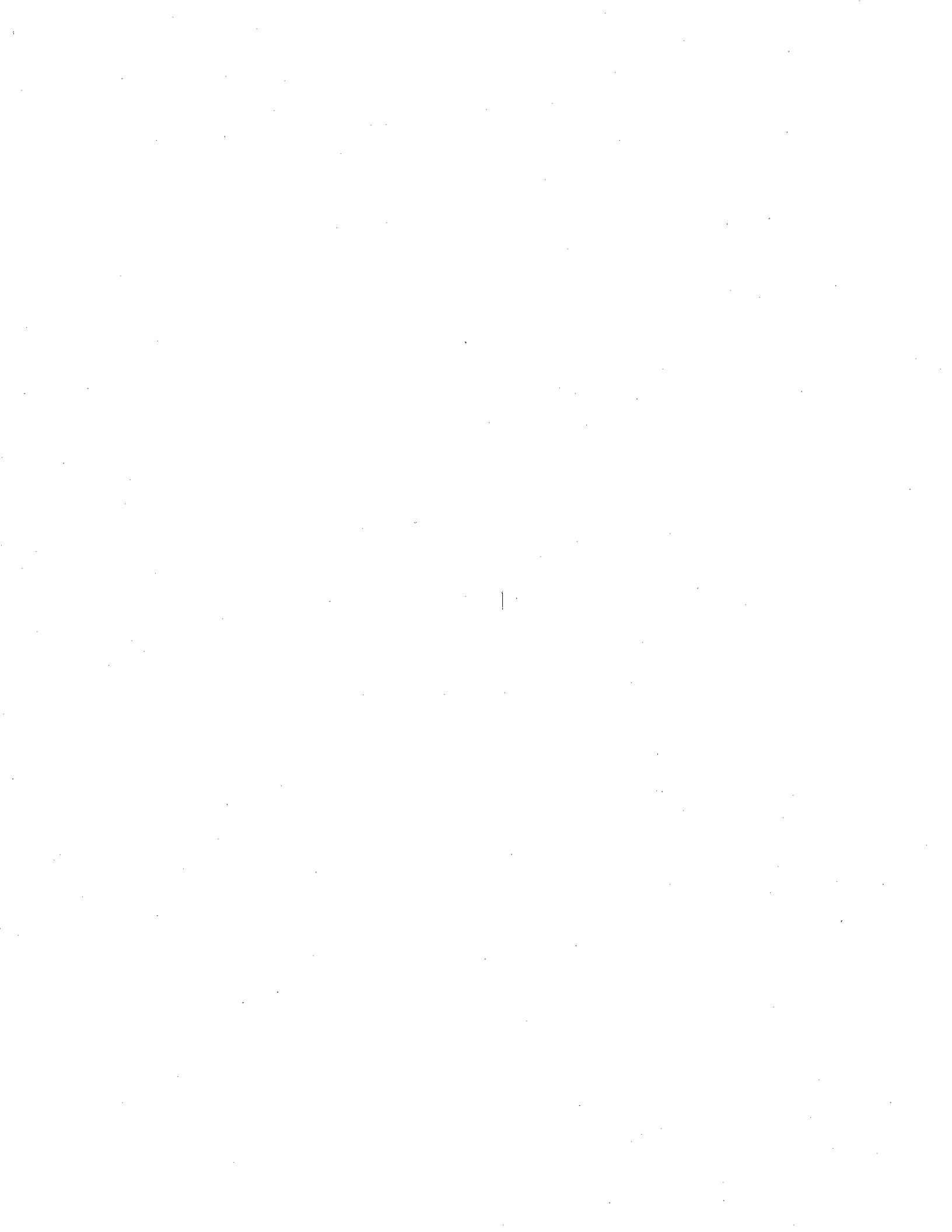
Total Comments: 2

In Favor: 0

Opposed: 2

Undecided: 0

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
No	Linda Busse	Web	The State of Washington has the highest natural gas rates in the nation already. We DO NOT need a rate hike. I can barely afford what I am paying now. Don't give your Executives a pay raise or a bonus and give that back to the consumer and then we can talk.
	Shirley Slade	Web	Natural gas rates increasing 7.94% AGAIN. Those of us on fixed incomes get MAYBE 3. something% increase yearly or nothing.....we canNOT support these increases.....that go to managerial salaries, etc. We have to buy medicine and groceries..... Electric increases are also OVER any Increase we get monthly.....please consider.....the greying of America....and there's many of US out here.... Thank you.



Public Comments by Case

UG-150204

Total Comments: 102

In Favor: 0

Opposed: 94

Undecided: 8

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
No	Richard Jensen	E-mail	<p>UE-150204/UG-150205</p> <p>I disapprove of the rate increases. Now the Avista strategy is to use the replacement of all the infrastructure that Avista owns. Until your commission acquires the knowledge to validate the proposed increases you should have an independent auditor review and validate any recommendations proposed by Avista.</p> <p>How do they ask and get more than the true cost of living increases?</p> <p>How do the executive officers get the large pay raises and salaries? Only by raising the income (rate increases).</p> <p>You need to control these increases. They are getting out of hand. Until you do, Avista will continually ask for increase.</p> <p>As a consumer we are relying on you to protect our interests.</p> <p>Richard Jensen</p>
	Sharyl Hartung	E-mail	<p>This is the second year in a row a request for rate increase is being made by Avista. Last year was a major increase. Avista is already the highest rate in the State of Washington. Having had 2 properties at the same time with different utility companies, the comparison is great. Puget Sound Energy bills were much lower than what Avista's are. The continual increase needs to be reviewed carefully and be certain that our monies are being spent wisely and are truly needed. There are many people that cannot afford these continual increases in the rural eastern communities of the state. Many cannot afford insurance and lost their homes during the recent fires. We do not support</p>

			the continued annual rate increases. Are the capital investments in infrastructure technology really needed or just nice to have?
	Sharyl Hartung 2264 Scott Rd. Lot H		
Virva Nunn	Web		I regard the proposal for an increase of the nature to desperately harm persons who have very small incomes. I am really opposed for anything that is proposing a 9.9% return on shareholder investments. Poor people can't buy investments and they can hardly pay for the current utility bill.
Jan Johnson-Sale	Web		Twice a year now Avista asks for rate hikes. My husband and I are trying to retire. We've worked our whole lives and can't make ends meet. As the power companies keep getting richer and richer, we the consumers that pay our bills can't afford all the hikes. Food is twice as much this year compared to last. Medical insurance has gone way up. What are we to do. Someone has to draw a line. I hope you will act for the people, please!!!
Connie Hickman	Web		PHONE (SH) Every few months they ask for a raise and they always get it. And we are retired, on a fixed income and our money doesn't go up. Just once it would be so nice, just once, if the UTC said "No." Just because, in all honesty, I think they ask for 50% and they only want 25% and that's what they get. Just once I would like to see a big No. They make big bucks, those guys, and don't tell me they don't. They should use the money more wisely.
Rick Krisnosky	Mail		Customer is happy about a decrease in gas rates, but not about an increase in electric rates.
Dean Curtis	Web		Customer's letter save as attachment under "Notes" tab. Your income and retired and oppose to the company's additional yearly request for an increase. I don't have money to go off the grid and the basic rate is \$15 and the other one is \$8 basic charge and before I get any usage I get \$23. Seems greedy and they need to stop and think about the customers.
Richard Woolard	Web		The paper had earnings, profit of 73% for last year and the company executives received a 6.5% across the board. The paper also stated that the company was getting an increase from Bonneville Power. The paper also stated that profits this year were up 42%. It seems like this company gets an increase very year, it has got to stop some where.
Nashira A. Ellis	E-mail		ar Public Council Unit & Council Members, I am a Washington resident living in Spokane; I am writing to say that I object strongly to the requested rate increases (Avista Utilities) because the rates are currently too high for myself and many other families here in Spokane to be able to keep the lights on. We just don't have any more

		<p>money to give. My net spendable income is \$15 after paying for housing, power, water, phone, and food....in that order....toilet paper and soap is what I spend any LEFT OVER money on.</p> <p>If this rate increase is approved in any amount, the people of this state will suffer extreme amounts of unnecessary stress; stressed out citizens can be a threat to a civil and peaceful society.</p> <p>The reasons for the new increases are and should be viewed as items which are categorically and historically included as COGS (the cost of doing business) in Generally Accepted Accounting Principles to the executives and shareholders of Avista.</p> <p>I hope you agree and tell Avista "no" to any new rate increases.</p> <p>Thank you for listening,</p>
Judy Lowe	Web	<p>PHONE (SH)

I don't object to the rate increase per se but every time they get a rate increase they raise the amount they charge for each meter. I live out on a farm and I have eight meters and they're \$18 a month per meter and it's ridiculous. There's no way I can lower that, that's not affected by the electricity I use. I really don't object to the amount of electricity I use, I expect to pay for that. I don't understand why they, there's no way I can lower the use, but when they keep raising the per meter, and that's a flat rate, and there's nothing I can do about that. They started out at \$5.50, \$6.50, \$8.50 and then \$12 and now \$18. And I want them to stop that.</p>
Holly Bloom	E-mail	<p>Good day</p> <p>I would like to put my comments in regarding Avista's proposed rate hike. As customers, we feel that this proposal should not be approved. First, the basic charge is a regressive tax, paid by the smallest house with the poorest occupants, the same as the largest house and property with the richest occupants. Secondly, if Avista has money to pay millions in salary to their CEO, and keep a fleet of 3 private planes, as a relatively small local utility; their rates are obviously already too high.</p> <p>As Avista has grown through the years as a huge bureaucracy, they have lost all their customer service skills; one on one customer service skills has gone wayside. As landlords, it is a monstrous task to rectify errors, mistakes, and issues.</p> <p>These ideas are the sentiment of Avista customers though you might not get negative rate hike responses due to customers feeling that the rate hike is a forgone conclusion and that their voices will not be heard.</p>

			Thank you for your time
			Sincerely, Avista customer
Gary Keller DDS	Web		I believe the state of Washington should not approve a rate increase for AVISTA. I would ask why a company with a private jet aircraft, that flies employees on private golfing expeditions, wants the state to approve a rate increase from the public? Do you know how much a private jet costs? Do you know how much money the top executives make in addition to having a private jet? I would suggest the state regulators do their due diligence before allowing anymore unjustified rate increases. This is not a fair request and the state should not approve it until Avista lives like the rest of us rate payers. Thank you in advance. Gary Keller DDS
Lisa Savage	Web		Please send profit trends for Avista at this website. http://www.wikinvest.com/stock/Avista_(AVA)/Data/Gross_Profit/2014/Q1 Avista is making record breaking profits, far above the majority of it's competitors. The cost to heat a home in Spokane is nearly the highest bill we have. Some of us, like my elderly mom and elderly next door neighbor have had to make choices regarding food/medical care/medicine verses heating their home for the winter. What's wrong with a small, steady profit like they've had in the past. This new record profit at the expense of the average Spokane worker is insane. The only person in Spokane that can afford their winter heat bill is the Mayor. Please don't allow this increase for Avista.
Pat Evans	Web		The company receives a rate increase every year. It seems like the company does not know how to run the business. Washington Water Power Company does not get a rate increase every year. The proposed increase is not fair to fixed income senior citizens.
Suzanne Ramey	Web		ANOTHER rate increase? This is ridiculous. We can barely pay our bill now. We have to be hot in the summer and cold in the winter so the bill doesn't get too high. What were Avista profits last year? The executives eating steak while we eat potatoes and top ramen. PLEASE deny their rate increase request.
Angela Wint	Phone		PHONE (SH) Every time they say their rate increase is going to cost \$2.81 extra a month, for a consumer using an average of 960 kilowatts is untrue because I use less than that for my electricity this month and my electricity bill is \$96. You guys just let them raise their rate so on top of their electricity gas rates I'm paying another \$17.50 (basic monthly charges combined)and the rates keep going up. And my husband for one has not had a pair raise since 1998 and even though we have cut our usage in half our bill is four times more than it was four years ago. And I'm just going to give you an example, for 27 days of usage, I haven't cooked in my house, I hardly do laundry, we have had the air conditioner on, my total bill for this month alone was \$108 (electric and basic monthly for the gas) and on top of that there was no one there for a week. I was in the hospital there was no one here. And my bill in the winter was \$300+. I can't afford to even

		<p>use Avista anymore. And my other thing is, I don't know how this company isn't a monopoly (I educated customer it is a monopoly). Modern Electric charges are much lower. At some point they've got to stop making...to the point that they're able to give their CEO a million dollar bonus every year. I live in Stevens County, I'm told they will never will repair facilities because it's not a profitable area. Every time we have a storm - no power. If the wind comes up - I run around and unplug everything because I love my appliance. They make more money, I pay more money and get nothing out of it and I just end up sitting here. If this rate increase goes again I'm going to sit here and freeze. I have to make a decision to pay my power bill or pay for my seizure medicine. I went a month without my medicine so Avista would get its money. I'm paying \$8 a month for a gas meter that I don't even use. I only use the gas for my furnace. I'm going to get solar panels when I can afford it.</p>
Scott Barrick	Web	<p>Docket UE-150204/Ug-150206

Part of their request for the increase is to purchase Advanced Metering Infrastructure, which only benefits Avista and not the customer. Avista will use the technology to collect usage data electronically, which may or may not save them money over how they collect the usage data currently. However, they are wanting the customer to pay for it. If it is such a good thing for Avista, it will have an ROI that will pay for itself in so many months/years. That should be the driving force on whether they implement the technology, not make the customer pay for it so they don't have to worry about the ROI. We also know that this technology is the first step in demand rate billing, which allows them to charge more during peak times. Again, not a help to the customers who have to pay for the infrastructure.</p>
Raymond H Ogle	Web	<p>I do not think Avista rate an increase in their utility rates. They charge a sir charge on the electric and gas use. The sir charge on my electric bill is 20% of my bill and the sir charge on my gas bill is more than my gas use bill. Example on my gas use was \$8.57 and the sir charge is \$9.00 and my electric use was \$40.84, the sir charge was \$8.50. I do try to conserve and the Avista bill keeps increasing and my service is no better. I have had several electric outages this year. Our cost of living increases are far below the Avista rate increases in comparison.
Thank for reading this. Best regards. Raymond Ogle
</p>
rick	Web	<p>this will be the third rate hike in the last 3 years this is getting ridiculous my cost of living raise didn't even match there last rate hike please put an end to this and stop this insanity theyre going to drive me to go I have to go get help from the government.this company is a business and if there taking a hit because electricity n gas prices are down,doesn't mean we have to cover there behind.thank you for your time</p>
Dave Shoemaker	Phone	<p>No to rate increase. Please keep rate increases as low as possible.</p>
Joyce Tasker	E-mail	<p>Please do not grant Avista another rate increase.</p>
Anonymous	E-mail	<p>Avista is again asking for a rate increase. This GREEDY utility has literally tried to rape the public with their greed for decades; ever since it was Washington Water Power. Take particular not to:</p>

		<p>Utility Gross Margin - Year-to-Date 2015 compared to Year-to-Date 2014</p> <p>Avista Utilities' operating revenues (exclusive of intra-company revenues between electric and natural gas of \$44.4 million for the six months ended June 30, 2015 and \$63.3 million for the six months ended June 30, 2014) increased \$3.6 million and resource costs decreased \$4.9 million, which resulted in an increase of \$8.5 million in gross margin. The gross margin on electric sales increased \$7.7 million and the gross margin on natural gas sales increased \$0.8 million.</p> <p>This is a GREAT example of manipulation AGAINST the general public and these maffoids (a person displaying eccentric behaviour and mental characteristics that approach the psychotic.) should be charged with some kind of false pretense as they (including their CEO) have excised more money from those who they are supposed to serve than they deserve!</p> <p>DO NOT ALLOW THIS DISGRACE AGAINST THE PUBLIC TO CONTINUE AND FINE THEM FOR ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR!</p> <p>As I See It!</p>
Berne	Web	<p>Avista Corp is AGAIN asking for a rate increase. Every year, it seems, they try to excise more money out of the more poor; out of their pockets & off their dinner table! They should be FINED for that abusive behavior! Consider that EVERY YEAR that Avista asks for rate increases they have had robust to considerable profits:
Utility Gross Margin - Year-to-Date 2015 compared to Year-to-Date 2014
Avista Utilities' operating revenues (exclusive of intra-company revenues between electric and natural gas of \$44.4 million for the six months ended June 30, 2015 and \$63.3 million for the six months ended June 30, 2014) increased \$3.6 million and resource costs decreased \$4.9 million, which resulted in an increase of \$8.5 million in gross margin. The gross margin on electric sales increased \$7.7 million and the gross margin on natural gas sales increased \$0.8 million.
As if that is not enough proof just research your records for prior years and IF you cannot find them just ask me.</p>
Helena Smith-Franke	Web	<p>Thank you for taking my comment; I can count on a rate increase from Avista year, it's just like the teachers strikes. My raises as a custodian do not cover the rate increase Avista is asking for. I wish all I could do was ask for a raise & get it, they all see what I do & how well I do my job. Every bill collector wants a little bit more & it adds up. I am already on the assistance program. My husband lost his job a year ago last July & has been unfortunately unable to find work; I'm in my late 50's & he is 60.</p>
Diane Doughty	E-mail	<p>Again I ask you deny Avista's request for a rate increase. As you agree to their increases each time our rates go up but our income does not.</p>
Charles E Mixey	E-mail	<p>Please, please, PLEASE do not allow AVISTA a rate hike for electricity. Let their dividends pay for whatever they claim they need. The people of Washington have had a rough year with wildfires, gas tax hikes, etc. We cannot afford all these extra attacks on our limited incomes.</p> <p>PLEASE put the people's interest ahead of ALL others. We're hurting !!!</p>

Steffanie Shaw

E-mail

I am writing in regards to the recent rate hikes from Avista. I have submitted several before this, and will continue to write in as long as I see commercials advertising Avista and then they say they need to raise rates to cover their costs. I don't believe that the cost of maintaining the power grid should be passed down to it's customers. McDonald's doesn't raise prices every time they have to remodel a store. I feel like with Avista having profits UP 42% tat they can cover the cost of technology and infastructure just fine on their own. I struggle to make ends meet as a single mom of 2. I have to tell my children to keep the heat down in the winter just to make ends meet. I do not understand why Avista insists on raising rates almost yearly now to pay for technology, when it is clear that their profits are booming - while the rest of us sit here paying the bills with no other options. I refuse to be bust from Avista's boom in profits.

Thank you!

Robert M. Fees

E-mail

FIRST, I wanted to bring the Attention of the Attorney General to the fact that my local neighbors were paying \$353\Month and \$153\Month Averaging, and \$300\Month, in 2011, and that since the rate increases, their average Avista bill is much higher than that. Sometimes my Studio apartment bill, even after doing over a hundred dollars worth of insulation was showing \$40 to \$60 in Winter time, since rate increases, yet in 2011 had not gone up to over \$30 in record cold of 2010-2011. I mentioned to Attorney General that many persons, since then have told me that they turn off their electrical appliances, and unplug them from outlets and look to see if the meters of Avista still spin, and THEY DO STILL SPIN, even with nothing plugged in. So, I was stating this to the Attorney General to let them know that when AVISTA states that they think that the average monthly Avista charge is only \$70\Month, that in my opinion, based on others information I have talked with, this is an erroneous statement by Avista. In my opinion, the Attorney General should do a Survey of half of all of Spokane, WA evenly, to find out the EXACT AMOUNT of payments, people are paying, and to define that AVISTA is asking for too much in rate increases, and that Avista is over-exaggerating, their estimate, that monthly billing is averagely low for Spokane, WA residents.

FIRST, what I want is that the UTC should more accurately do such a survey to determine these actual monthly charge amounts, which people are being charged, by asking the people, how much they are being charged, and ask them if they too, have that experience of Avista meter wheels spinning around, when nothing is plugged, in. Since I had asked also that the FBI investigate the problem, it is okay with me,if UTC asks a court for a survey investigation of the people's billing and complaint and subpoena's any FBI investigation, about this matter, for such court, with the intent of discovering the problem, and if possible refunds to persons on over charges.

[This seems to be the common complaint, that the persons I have talked with seem to be complaining about including high costs per month, in all seasons, even though the summer seasons, is the lowest. Wheels of meter spinning around, and racking up kW when nothing is turned on, and all is unplugged, is a major complaint. We tell the UTC but they don't do anything. We tell the Attorney General but they do not do anything]. [I talked with my neighbor, last Tuesday, that this issue of mine had been sent to the UTC, and he said, he was Glad that I did that, and that he would stand up and testify, to any issue, the UTC was actually investigating to get rid of AVISTA bad business practices, and potentially criminal electrical meter use jacking, or price jacking. In the meantime, he also told me of another horror story, of Avista having charged him for something at a rate around \$20, and when he tried to cancel the service, they charged him another \$90).

People appear to be hopping mad, about Avista bad practices, and aren't hearing what, if anything, Attorney General or UTC is doing about it. People have the idea that somehow the Attorn Gen or UTC is supposed to stop the problem and end the bad practices.]

In relationship to SECOND: Having me meters checked, wouldn't solve any such problem.

The information I sent to you about that, in the Letter to FBI detailed all that problem, about how they come out and check the meters, declare that there is nothing wrong with it, and supposedly, it is even running slower, in my favor, supposedly. When I show them the discrepancies between all off meter readings and all on, showing use, they blame the house, they blame all old buildings, they blame, cross-wiring, yet never declare any faulty wiring which will have the fire marshal come in and declare it has to be fixxed. They do not deal with the problem. Besides, if Avista is really criminally involved with a jerk-device somewhere in the bracket that holds the meter, or somewhere in the line, then probably all their mechanisms for "checking the meters" is just another scam, of its kind, anyway, like rigging up a light box to flash for the customer skills. Getting a Refund, on my last year's billing up to September or until refund, from June - July 2014 for September 2014 showed ZERO THERMS used, to currently, June - July 2015 paid in September 2015... and until my refund that future date.

Since, as a tenant, I just would normally tell Avista, I am the new tenant at 525 S. Hatch St. Unit 2, Spokane, WA 99202, then that would start service for Electrical and Gas. In this case, since June-July 2014, last year, I asked that AVISTA cancel my service on gas(because I do not use the hot water, nor much of any tap water because it is contaminated with cancer-causing chemistry, according to the City of Spokane, WA Water Quality report. It also has a radiation level of "8" which is 250-350 picocuries of radiation per day which is the equivalent of a chest-xray full of radiation per day. As a cancer survivor, I choose to avoid the trouble. I buy and use distilled and ozonated water by the gallon, instead), and refund all my money from base charges, increase rates, and taxes, from June-July 2014 to September 2015, currently, and any future, which may come to

pass before it is refunded. GETTING THIS REFUND, THE APPROPRIATE WAY, LEGALLY IS THE WAY TO DO THAT, whatever that is, and I cannot determine from the choices you have given me, which way will get me the refund.

THIRD, in relationship to 509-808-3147, this IS MY PHONE NUMBER. When Avista last called this number to schedule a meter reading in 2014, they got through, so I give it the shadow of the doubt, that they may have dialed the wrong number, when you asked if they had contacted me.

Fourth, I would like to ask for a refund on all the electrical overcharges and discrepancies on an average, if possible, from the use of forms to configure audit use of electricity during use and non-use times, average, multiplied by months of that kind, x terms x dollars and cents charged + tax, for all the hassles of the past in relationship to this one thing. Because that is an overcharge of over \$1500 if proven, or totally showable, given any reality average of months, of total discrepancy. The normal way would be to investigate it, and go through courts if possible. The other way, is UTC or what?

FIFTH, at this point, if you the UTC cannot get my refund nor deal with that part of my questions and issues, then what part of the government does that? And how do I contact them?

Thanks for taking the time to write me, this way,

Sincerely,
 RMFees.
 09-03-2015

Julie Dehle

Web

We are on a fixed income , and understand that big business needs to make a profit. However, there is no need , that i can see. for yet another increase in cost to us, the customer.
Forward planning by any company should include growth and maintenance, otherwise , some one is not doing their job. In the regular world, that person would lose the job. Not when it comes to Avista however, they pass that cost on to us. Despite the fact that they also make huge profits every quarter, without fail. I oppose this latest price increase whole heartedly.
We already keep our thermostat low in the winter and high in the summer. Wear appropriate clothing for the season. Our home is insulated well and our windows are to code or better. There is no more money, do we have to go without prescription drugs or food in order to keep our above freezing . I hope not.

L. Stone	Mail	<p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>Avista is expressing the need for more money. It has cited the need because they have to expand and bring about better technology. They need to construct and renovate - Fine - I too need to make repairs and need more money. My employer says sorry you are "tapped out" at \$14.00 an hour. Great --- How to accommodate another Avista rate increase. Public is steered to SNAP or churches for help. REALLY - Charity and welfare - Is this really the solution. I just want to afford my life. Please I'm tapped out. What to do! Thank you for listening.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Consumer submitted a post card.</p> <p>The smoke, home, fires, rinsed, cooled a little! Yea. I am opposed to the latest Avista rate increase proposal. Already too high. In fact, I believe the rates should be reduced. Especially the basic rates. Avista is a business. It should be strictly a public civil service. So long as they manage on a business model, they will perpetually seek ever greater profits for their shareholders and higher paid employees which is where they should find any funds needed to deal with genuine needs. Otherwise where does it end? Avista provides good service otherwise.</p>
Tommy Walen	Mail	<p>Re: Docket #150204. Rates should be reduced as recommended by the UTC staff and Office of Public Council. Spokesman Review 7/29/2015. The company is not a good steward of rate payers dollars. Non direct costs such as 12 Vice Presidents, excessive advertisement and shareholders resources spent on community public relations instead of investment in needed capital improvements are just a few examples. It is difficult to know what is really the bottom line as so much information is considered confidential. It is discouraging to see the company be able to raise rate annually, usually higher than the yearly cost of inflation. Please say no this year.</p> <p>I am against the electric very large 6% increase. I would be okay with a more reasonable increase of 3% that is more in line with inflation. The 6% increase is very extreme month raise for seniors on a limited/fixed income. Increase needed to be limited.</p> <p>I absolutely object to any rate increase, it's not needed and completely unnecessary. This is just Avista's way of taking more money out of an already strained household to make more money for their shareholders. Please reject their proposal.</p> <p>Thank you, Carrie Pennell</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p>
Abby Byrne	Web	<p>I am against the electric very large 6% increase. I would be okay with a more reasonable increase of 3% that is more in line with inflation. The 6% increase is very extreme month raise for seniors on a limited/fixed income. Increase needed to be limited.</p> <p>I absolutely object to any rate increase, it's not needed and completely unnecessary. This is just Avista's way of taking more money out of an already strained household to make more money for their shareholders. Please reject their proposal.</p> <p>Thank you, Carrie Pennell</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p>
Linda Watts	Web	<p>I am against the electric very large 6% increase. I would be okay with a more reasonable increase of 3% that is more in line with inflation. The 6% increase is very extreme month raise for seniors on a limited/fixed income. Increase needed to be limited.</p> <p>I absolutely object to any rate increase, it's not needed and completely unnecessary. This is just Avista's way of taking more money out of an already strained household to make more money for their shareholders. Please reject their proposal.</p> <p>Thank you, Carrie Pennell</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p>
Carrie Pennell	E-mail	<p>I am against the electric very large 6% increase. I would be okay with a more reasonable increase of 3% that is more in line with inflation. The 6% increase is very extreme month raise for seniors on a limited/fixed income. Increase needed to be limited.</p> <p>I absolutely object to any rate increase, it's not needed and completely unnecessary. This is just Avista's way of taking more money out of an already strained household to make more money for their shareholders. Please reject their proposal.</p> <p>Thank you, Carrie Pennell</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p>

Brian Gemmell	Web	I believe its time that the commission and Avista do something about their rates because they are getting overbearing for low and fixed income people.
Jim Wade	Web	Email/RS just read in the spokane news paper this morning that they want a rate increase starting next january .please take a look at the request..they just got one last month....they says it is to fix and upgrade but that is what they said last year...what do they do with their profits. give it to their ceo...i thought that what profits were for...i do think they are putting it to us again..thanks jim wade, mead wa..
Tom manfred	Web	Just read in this mornings paper that Avista wants another rate increase.Are you kidding me????????????? Mr Kouchi, In response to your form letter,I do not agree with what you say.Lets get started with there executives compensation.The CEO received 5.5 million in compensation in 2014.Mark Thies,senior vice president,1.7 million,Dennis Vermillion,senior vice president 1.8 million,Marian Durkin,senior vice president 1.5 million,Karen Feltes,senior vice president 1.5 million.All of this on the backs of the rate payers. They want to raise the basic charge.I've lived in the same house for 35 years,not one time in 35 years has Avista ever touched the electric meter.Only once have they checked the gas meter and that only took all of 3 minutes. They give the city of Spokane a fully equipped park on the bank of the Spokane river.They have given away new Toyota trucks.They sponsor Avista baseball stadium.All on the backs of the rate payers. They have a monopoly in there area. We cannot change providers of our electric or gas. The commission should look at the other providers in the area.Vera water and power,check there rates.(You'll find it much cheaper and they buy all there electricity) I hope the commission will look deeply into this and will lower the rates. I am retired on a fixed income and can't afford rate increases every year. Sincerely Tom Manfred
Greg Schwarz	Web	PHONE/RS I believe Avista needs to receive a fair rate of return but the monthly base charges \$8.50 to \$15 is contrast and contradictory for consumers to reduce their bill and hurts the ones that generate renewable energy. This yearly request and what they are seeking is the opposite of the Governor's initiative to reduce carbons and emissions.
Bridget Dagg	Web	WEB/RS User submitted via the web on 02/10/2015 09:24:00 AM Please explain your complaint in detail. Avista Corporation is AGAIN requesting a rate increase, including substantial increases (over 50% each) for base charges for electricity and gas. Consumers in this area are at the mercy of this monopolistic business - we have no alternative for our energy needs other than Avista. It is no secret that the wages of working people in this country have stagnated.

and Spokane is no exception. I feel fortunate that I have received 2% raises over the past 7 to 8 years, but those raises are eclipsed by Avista's constant rate increases. Please do not allow Avista to increase rates again, especially the egregious 50%+ increase in the base charge for gas and electricity. We need a break!

Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?
No

What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?
Perhaps Avista should tighten their belts as ratepayers in this area have had to do. A break from rate hikes would be welcome. And what other business is allowed to charge a base rate on top of charges? It would be like walking into Macy's and having to pay \$5.00 to enter the store before making any purchase.

While we understand energy rate increases are inevitable over time, Avista requests them far too frequently. We are particularly upset about the proposed basic charge increases: more than 60% increase in electric basic charge, and more than 30% increase in gas basic charge. I am getting a 2% raise this year. How does that work? What other industry is allowed to do such a thing? Would you patronize a grocery store if they added a "basic fee" to your tab? We don't have a choice to select an alternate provider. Please, require Avista to tighten their belts to raise the bottom line instead of putting all responsibility on the backs of rate payers.

I see in the Spokesman Review that Avista is seeking rate increases again. My concerns expressed previously are still valid.

However, this time I'd ask this question. Why are these types of increases that deal with infrastructure in particular not funding via debt financing or equity financing via stock offerings? Other corporations do not always raise product prices because they have competition offering similar products. So, if they do not have enough capital they go to the market place and place stock offerings or raise capital through debt financing.

Avista does not have competition as they are monopolistic and can raise prices for their products at will, save whatever the regulatory body can to minimize increases.

So, is there any chance for you to raise this point and force Avista to go to its shareholders or debtors to raise the capital they need for infrastructure related projects in particular? Why does the rate payer have to bear the burden each and every time.

Please edify me.

How many times do they need to propose a rate increase. There is absolutely no reason for more than one increase in a years time. How is it even ok to consume less energy and yet my utility bill is going up. We have an empty house that our thermostat and water heater are all set on vacation

Gordon K. Milbrandt

E-mail

Alicia Barnes

Web

mode and our bill goes up every month! How is that even possible? Someone has to put a stop to Avista and their rate increases!

Robert Flowers

E-mail

Dear Mr. Kouchi:

It was just a few months ago, wasn't it, that we went through this same rate increase request by Avista? It seems their strategy is to wear down the UTC and the public until they get everything they want. Their repetitive requests for additional rate increases in staccato fashion are wasteful of public funds, the UTC staff and commissioner's time and the public's time and effort.

In previous correspondence I have sent to you regarding Avista rate increase requests, I have explained why I strongly disapprove of Avista's reasoning for repeated increases in natural gas and electric rates. Essentially, Avista wants the user to pay for all of their infrastructure rehabilitation and repair, their expansion to new markets as well as incidental expenses adjunct to their operations (not to mention the hefty pay and benefits that go to Avista's management. Avista's latest propaganda about executive pay: "Salaries and bonuses of all officers are less than one-half of a penny of every dollar paid in rates." Is right out of 1984 Double Speak – If they posted their total rate income beside this statement it would send a much different message). I am guessing Avista does not use normal accounting practices and, therefore, believes that all their expenses must be provided by the ratepayer and, in this case, they have no responsibility to share these costs (and lower profit).

My question to you is: How many times will the UTC allow Avista to reapply for the same rate increase that was just denied by the UTC? Avista's intent is clear, theirs is a battle plan of attrition. The expense, waste and lost time dealing with these repeated requests is obvious and, most distressing, Avista doesn't face a penalty for doing it. Please forward my complaint regarding Avista's wasteful repeat filings to the UTC board for their consideration.

Thank you.

Dear Mr. Kouchi:

Avista is at it again. Now, they have come up with a plan to get Washington rate payers to fund a solar generation facility and in the process offer the ratepayer a pittance relative to the overall generation revenues this facility will accrue over time. I have pasted the relevant information below for your use.

Let's call a scam a scam. Avista wants its ratepayers to fund their solar array and for that investment the ratepayer "might" expect to get a break on their bill of about \$418 dollars with no

guarantee that this will happen and no guarantee that the final year, the fifth year, before Avista takes full possession of the ratepayer gift of \$1,400, of any return at all.

Avista stands to benefit long-term from this solar array. Solar panels are generally good for 10 – 15 years before needing to be replaced. This means from five to 20 years of additional income for Avista using the ratepayer's original investment to fund their solar generation. A nice package if you can convince the public that it's a good deal.

I am firmly in support of solar and other renewable energy generation programs to provide power for my electric needs. However, schemes such as this new Avista "opportunity" are clearly designed for the benefit of Avista and not the ratepayer. If Avista wants to build a solar array and wants their ratepayers to foot the bill, Avista needs to give the ratepayer the benefit of their investment over the life of the unit, not for just a couple of years.

I urge the UTC to deny Avista's scheme to deceive the public into funding their generation capability increase without providing the public a fair and adequate return for their investment. Please forward this message to the UTC Commissioners.

Thank you.

Robert K. Flowers
Spokane, WA

General enrollment for the Avista community solar program will open to Washington electric customers on June 1. Please come back to register then.

Demand is expected to be high. To ensure equal opportunity and access, Avista will conduct a lottery with interested parties enrolling between June 1 and July 17. Participant allotment notification will take place by August 7.

About Community Solar

Solar energy is in the news a lot these days. This may have prompted you to think about "going solar." But what if putting solar on your own home isn't for you? Too much shade? Too expensive? Don't own your own home? Thinking of moving soon? All of these can be barriers to installing solar on your own. However, that doesn't mean you can't go solar. Like a community garden that provides a garden space for an apartment dweller, a Community Solar array lets renters, condo owners, or those who don't want to buy a whole system get the benefits of a solar array shared by the community.

What is community solar? Community Solar is a different model for solar energy. Instead of putting a solar array on your own home, which requires home ownership, the right sunny location,

a load bearing roof and fairly large upfront investment, Community Solar brings together a group of participants to build one larger solar array.

How does the program work? Avista pays to build and maintain a large solar array at an Avista site in Spokane Valley. The location was chosen for its prime exposure and cost-effective proximity to existing electrical infrastructure.

The array generates electricity to the Avista electric grid and subscribers receive state production incentives and energy generation credits on their bills based on the number of panels purchased. Who is eligible for the program? Any Avista Washington residential or commercial electric customer can purchase shares of the Community Solar array.

How much does it cost? One panel costs \$1,400.

Will I make my money back? With generous federal and state incentives through 2020, you can expect to recoup the initial cost in less than four years. This is not a guarantee, but a reasonable projection based on estimated generation incentives and energy credits.

Number of panels Price Total estimated incentive through 2020

1 \$1,400 \$1,818

How do I sign up? Open enrollment begins June 1. Due to the projected interest in this project, this program will be set up as a lottery system. There are 1,512 panels available and Avista will fulfill requests based on a random drawing until all of the panels are accounted for.

Mark Reither

Web

I am tired of the communities and customers of Avista giving their Managers and executive officers huge bonuses through these rate increases. I believe they should start thinking of their customers and the limited finances most are living with and the commission actually look at their requests instead of rubber stamping them as they have done for many years. I realize that money talks but why doesn't the commission actually look at values and not the papers that the utilities present that are inflated. I am against these increases and will continue to be until reality sets in.

John Williams

Web

When I see some of the infrastructure improvements the continuing rate increases are supposed to be going to, I will rethink my position. All we see are raises and bonuses. The civic donations are nice, but do nothing to relieve the rate payers, many of whom are really strapped.

Dear Mr. Kouchi:

Thank you for your response to my comments.

First I would like to bring to your attention a complaint I filled back in August, concerning lack of adequate line fuses in our area. I can't find the complaint number, but it was handled by your Tamara Cahill. It is technically closed; however, the promised work has yet to be done!!!

<p>Champions of customer no service.</p> <p>Who's fault is it that Avista has purchased losers in the past...Oh, not a problem, we'll just raise rates and then salaries. (Why are they buying companies outside of the area, unless they have a direct impact on the electricity and gas they provide in this area?)</p> <p>Infrastructure: You are a 100+- year old company and you don't have a comprehensive maintenance program factored into each annual budget?</p> <p>I understand they are going to install electric meters that will transmit the readings monthly, thus eliminating the meter readers. Does this huge cost saving show in their current request for a rate increase? Just wondering.</p> <p>John</p>		
<p>I am not that knowledgeable about utility rates, but I found the following article relevant, www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/A-Possible-Solution-to-the-Utility-Revenue-Shift particularly this statement "Rather than build a new substation at a cost of \$1 billion, New York City-based utility Con Ed plans to invest in demand-side management programs (distributed solar generation) and substation upgrades to reduce its load by 52 mwh by 2018 at significantly lower cost to ratepayers.
</p>	<p>Web</p>	<p>Charlotte K Omoto</p>
<p>Subject: Avista Rate Increase Request of Feb 9, 2015</p> <p>Dear Sirs:</p> <p>I urge you NOT to approve the rate increase request by Avista Utilities of Spokane, of February 9, 2015.</p> <p>We hear continually about how they need MORE MONEY to do this that or the other thing.</p> <p>The truth is that their profits are soaring as the cost of natural gas has dropped over the years. They have NEVER reduced our rates, even though they pay less for the gas than in previous years.</p> <p>This utility, like every Private Corporation, thinks only of their shareholders' gains, and not about the general public.</p> <p>It has become nearly impossible for those of us on fixed incomes to continue to pay for heat, lights, and water: Washington Water Power just raised it's rates by almost 10%. Apparently, that upstream water just keeps getting more and more expensive.</p>	<p>E-mail</p>	<p>Anthony Boccaccio</p>

We are TIREED of being sucked dry by these people. It's time to tell them to start running their business more efficiently or to pay their shareholders a smaller dividend so that the rest of us can live a descent life.

I hope you will say NO to this increase.

Thank you for your time and attention

Sincerely

Thank you for your excellent reply.

I will comment again. We consumers do not understand why Avista keeps raising our rates, but continues to sell energy to California and others. We don't understand why we should pay for infrastructure so that Avista can sell our cheap energy for a large profit. Utilities should not be private and run by stockholders who are constantly requesting more and more profits. It hurts the non-investing public. It should be a PUBLIC utility without stockholders.

Thank you

Tony Boccaccio

Thank you for your detailed response.

Nonetheless, I maintain that Avista should be a PUBLIC utility, without shareholders who demand higher and higher profits. We non-shareholders end up holding the bag. It's unfair. That's why Congress regulates the necessities of living, or at least it did until the Republicans under Regan took the first steps to kill the unions and deregulate the airlines and telecommunication industry. It's been downhill since then, and Big Business has bought our government. Why else does it take 700 million to 1 billion dollars to run for president... But I digress:

I take issue with this paragraph:

Infrastructure costs – Many of the facilities (i.e., transformers, distribution poles, substations, transmission lines, etc.) are 40, 50 and even 60 years old, and costs have increased substantially. For example, the cost of distribution poles fifty years ago was roughly nine percent of the current replacement cost. Rates are set on the basis of a company's expenses in a given test year, plus the opportunity to earn a reasonable return. Any increases in rates must be approved by the UTC.

This paragraph, like most "statistical responses" constantly offered to the public has a simple fallacy which you people use all the time to convince us "stupid consumers" that rate increases are always necessary. First, the cost of pole distribution 50 years ago cannot be compared to the cost today without a "mean weighted average" of a standard cost of living between now and 50 years ago. Without that, you are comparing apples and oranges. The comparison is fallacious yet constantly used to promote your "case" in favor of the utilities. For all you know, the cost of a loaf of bread is 50 times greater today than it was 50 years ago.

Additionally, the cost of natural gas and petroleum has dropped 40% in the last 6 months. Yet, the companies say they are losing money and want more profits. Even our ambitious State Legislature is asking for an additional gas tax to keep sales tax revenues where they were when gasoline was \$3.80 or more per gallon.

We are sick of being treated like a pump....need more water...pump harder and harder and harder until the well is dry. Your policies and cosy relationship with government and corporation has weakened the well and the will of the people. I hear everywhere this in so many words: "Gov't is bankrupt. It has failed us. I don't trust it. It sleeps with the rich and cares little about us. The middle class doesn't exist any more. I'm sick of this. I'm leaving the US...."

Should I go on?

I've said enough. You won't listen anyway, but at least I feel good about speaking out.

Just tell me: how many rate increases has Avista asked for in the last 20 years? And how many of those did you deny?

Tony Boccaccio

Web

Avis

I'm concerned that Avista seems to ask for rate hike's about twice a year. The Natural Gas bill this winter was higher than we have ever had and it was a mild winter. I know people who can't pay there utility bills and there help from Avista is zero to none. In the past I wrote to Avista with my concerns, high bills the consumer paying there maintenance cost's ect. The response I received was rude and basically said we have to protect our investors. What..I could care less about there investors. So by raising rate's we line someone else's pockets..just wow. It's the same as everything else the rich get richer the poor get poorer and the middle guy gets to pay for it all. Oh wait there is no middle guy any more and the Elderly lady sits in the dark and freezes because they have to protect there investors. Please stop giving them the ok to raise rates. Thank you for your time.

Jack McGrath

Web

Here we go again! Avista is back with their hand out asking for another rate increase. It's not bad enough that they constantly raise their natural gas and electricity rates, but they now are asking to raise the base rate for both again, just for the right to be connected to their supply? I don't use any natural gas during warmer weather, but my monthly bill keeps going up due to the increased base rate. I can't use less than nothing to save money and they are digging deeper into my retirement income. I haven't had a raise since I retired from teaching and Avista has received raised every year since then. Enough! They ask for the moon knowing that they will settle for a lesser amount and we are supposed to feel like that was a win? How about a rate reduction for a change. Or better yet, dissolve their company and make it a public utility, so there are no investor profits that must be guaranteed every year. I'm sure I'll get another chance to write you before Avista must reluctantly settle for yet another increase.

Avista is back asking for another annual rate increase and also an increase in their basic rate for both natural gas and electricity. During the warmer weather I don't use any natural gas, but the basic rate increase will still cost me more money every month just for the right to be connected to their service. Trying to save money on my bill is becoming an exercise in futility, I end up paying more each year and am using less. It seems the less I use the more they increase their rates. I read that Avista made a 72%+ profit increase during the last year, hardly what I would call fair and reasonable, in turn rewarding their CEO with an more than five million in annual compensation. I haven't had an increase in my retirement check since I retired 8 years ago, while Avista and its investors have made increasingly more money every year. How about a rate and basic rate reduction or at least a freeze for a change? They are experienced at basic bargaining techniques... ask for a 20% increase and then "settle" for much less. Enough! time to stop the treadmill before all the gerbils are dead.

Chris Yockey

Web

ONLINE COMPLAINT DATABASE/RS
06:47:00 PM
Please explain your complaint in detail.
User submitted via the web on 02/11/2015
Avista sent a mass email to its customers on 2/11/15. This email announced that it plans to ask for a rate hike again. The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has approved multiple rate hikes consecutively in these last years. Avista has made millions and increased profits yearly for more than a decade. At what point do you, the guardians of the public, plan to tell Avista to stop making its profits off hard working people? They have a monopoly that is Government sanctioned. Do your job and deny the rate increase that only pads the pockets of wealthy CEO's and stockholders.
Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?
No
What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?
Be honest and ethical in its business practices.

Raymond Harris

Web

PHONE (SH)
The problem I have is just about every year they approach the UTC for a rate increase. Most of the time its for equipment and this time around I guess it's to improve their

dams. The problem I have is the rates when they're increased to accommodate these things never go away. So they're paid for but the rate stays the same. So in essence they're making a lot more profit than they should. And it's all at the rate payer's expense. So I think this is something that the UTC should look in to because if the rates stay up even though the equipment is paid for, to me its ripping off the rate payers.

Avista has 75% increase in profits
 CEO stock options plus pay total \$5.5 million
 Purchased Alaska Utility

Commission needs to draw line in sand. NO Rate Increase.

I live across the street from cheaper power. Unfortunately, one of our rentals is across the street from a different cheaper power supplier too. Avista uses the same public water as these other electricity suppliers, but they don't manage that resource as well as the utility companies surrounding them, so Avista rates are higher than their neighboring power suppliers. Our yearly increases continue (even through the recession) because Avista has no competitors for us to turn to.
Given the high salary their CEO is paid, and the high volume of power they distribute, you would think they would operate smarter and more efficiently than the other utilizes, but nope, they just can't get it together. So every year our rates go up. Dividends go up (higher than most utility companies) and upper management salaries go up (higher and faster than local wages), but efficiency, well that seems to be going down.
How can they operate so arrogantly as to ask for an increase every year? Are we, the public surcharging them more every year for the use of our water? No, they never even acknowledge the fact that they use our water. Monopolies and kings don't express gratitude, they only demand more. Avista, as a monopoly, can operate above the discontented froth of the commoners. Avista's power is not of a higher quality than my neighbors power across the street. But Avista uses its power of another type, that of a monopoly, to take advantage of the commoner. That's the power of Avista, monopolistic greed.

How does Avista have the gall to ask for yet another rate increase? (Please see enclosed articles). "Customers" are about to revolt against this monopoly. Enough is enough.

RE: Avista's rate increase proposal
Concern: I understand that Avista needs to upgrade and modernize their infrastructure...but "all" at the budgets of their users?! Their leadership receives "big compensation" ...especially for the Spokane area. Their shareholders purchased stock "without a guarantee" of consistent raises in dividends. Buying stock is a risk, not a guarantee. I understand that stockholders/investors are needed...but at what price to the consumer? My husband and I are retired and on a fixed income. We have taken steps to make sure that our home is energy efficient. We wear "layers" in the winter and keep our home "rather cool". We welcomed a mild winter to have a lower utility bill. NOW....it seems that due to customers using

Web

Jerry bishop

Mail

James Parry

Web

Diane Floyd

	Andrew Hovren	Web	<p>good conservation, we must pay for the fact that Avista didn't meet it's usual usage. What a cycle we are in :(Avista says that it makes cuts. It must again look at lowering or stabilizing it's shareholders dividends and it's top employee compensation. Thank you for listening.</p> <p>I am against any rate increases for Avista. The company made record profits last year and they are paying their CEO way more than he is worth! This company has not demonstrated that they are beholden to anyone other than their shareholders! They have no concern for the ratepayers except to get as much money as they possibly can each month from us! I am still wondering why a utility is even allowed to be publicly traded on the stock market? Avista should be non-profit and any excess money returned to the ratepayers! I am still trying to figure out what idiot thought this was a good idea! I can afford it but there are so many people that cannot and they need to be taken into consideration. Do the right thing and send the right message to Avista that we are not a money pit!!!</p>
Eric Larson	Web	<p>I'm a retiree in my 60s. My income hasn't gone up for last 5 years. Last year, it actually went down (mostly due to almost zero percent interest rates on my retire savings). Avista's request for a rate increase is obscene. Their CEO (Scott Morris) made nearly \$5.5 million last year. They're telling us all but \$550,000 of Morris's salary came from the profits (??). That's a bunch of BS. Rate payers are the ones who pay for the entire balance (we generate the profits by paying the high rates). This tells me that Avista's profits are way too high. Executive pay & blue-collar pay needs to be closer together. Paying 10% returns on Avista stock is obscene when long-term bonds are paying only 2% or less. Please deny Avista's rate increase. Many of us in Spokane just can't afford it.</p>	
Lawrence William Nelson	Web	<p>Aviata has been receiving rate increases for eight years in a row. I am on a fixed SSI income, the rate increases are making thing tough for us. The City of Spokane has increased its rates as well, making it even harder. I feel like I am being pushed onto the street. Making things worse, the SNAP program's funding has been cut in half.</p>	
Catherine Isabel	Web	<p>I read in the paper that Avista is asking for another rate increase. I think the continuous rate increases are ridiculous. Avista's CEO is being paid 5.5 million dollars. I think that it is appalling that rate payers are being asked to pay for the glutinous salary. Making the thought of such a high salary even worse is the fact that people are dying of hunger and exposure to the cold.
I am making this comment because most people do not bother to get involved. I am retired and on a fixed income. Getting assistance is difficult, the process is like the Spanish Inquisition. The assistance that is available is not adequate and often comes too late, I often do not see the assistance until March. This state is very expensive.
I have kept my thermostat at 58 degrees this winter in an attempt to reduce my electric bill. I find the experience of being in a utility co-op much more democratic and consumer friendly. The high pay and corporate greed is why this country is going down the hill.
I would like to receive a letter with information on when and where public meetings will be held for Avista's proposed rate</p>	

		increase? 	
Debra S. Henry	Web	PHONE (SH) Those people out here that are on SSI, like me, and with the pay raise Avista is wanting, that's going to make all of us people homeless. And Avista needs to know that. They don't care about us poor people, they only care about the rich people and what they can afford. Also, I would like to be able to go out and have dinner in a restaurant and go to a movie but they keep raising it up for the last eight year and I haven't been able to do that.	
Gary W Williams	Web	PHONE/MP Customer called to comment on the Avista rate increase. He is not happy with the increase as it is impacting residents at the apartment complex that he manages. Some people are using the exact same amount of energy and are seeing their bills double. Some can't afford their bills. He is not in favor of the rate increase. He would like to speak with someone on the phone number listed above.	
Gary Vandenberg	Web	PHONE/RS Customer says that the company should not receive another rate increase. They are spending too much money and the CEOs are making too much. They should be limited to just one increase a year instead of multiple increases throughout. The company is out of control with their spending. They have brand new trucks and it is not fair to the consumers to have to "foot the bill" for their mismanagement. He would like the UTC to protect the consumer more and tell the company no to their rate increase requests.	
Mark Hendren	Web	Do not approve Avista's rate increase - they are a bloated top heavy bunch of technocrats! PHONE (SH) The first place part of our tab goes to pay the CEO over half-million dollars in wages every year. And they've got a monopoly going so there isn't any competition so there isn't usually a problem getting the increase. Two, the power dam was built by taxpayer dollars not Avista's dollar and they're not maintaining them properly because they need millions of dollars to upgrade them. Where has the money gone that they've got over the last years from rate payers. That's millions. And they're always on TV advertising and since they're a monopoly they don't need to advertise, that's ratepayers money. And they advertise how to save money and then turn around and then they say they need an increase to cover the loss. My heat is down to 62 degrees or lower and my bill is still \$105 to \$110. Figure that one out. Additional comments from this Avista customer, received 9/11/15: Every time they give us a break in prices it seems like a month later it goes up twice what the discount was. Every year they seem to want an increase and this year natural gas is down. But they want to increase that too. I used to have a small business and couldn't raise prices all the time but seems like Avista can raise	

	<p>them for whatever amount they want because they are a monopoly. No competition so they can do what they want.</p> <p>More new homes and buildings are using natural gas and electricity and that is more revenue for them.</p> <p>Rates go up if we don't use natural gas but also go up if we do, it is a no win situation. The more you use the more it costs you and the less you use the more it costs you.</p>
<p>Dorothy E Thomas</p>	<p>E-mail</p> <p>I am writing this email to oppose the proposed Avista rate hike that is being considered. Our income has remained flat for the last eight years, yet Avista keeps raising rates during all of this time. It is time for Avista to take a hard look at how they do business and tighten their financial belt, just like we have had to do. I say an emphatically "NO" to this proposal!</p>
<p>Vicki Ojdrovic</p>	<p>March 22, 2015</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>"A stitch in time saves nine."</p> <p>If Avista had been proactive in their infrastructure support instead of waiting for the roof to cave in they wouldn't need to spend as much money as they are calling for at this point in time.</p> <p>How do I know they don't improve when the need requires? I live in a rural county (Stevens) and have had decades of conversation with Avista representatives regarding our power surges, low voltage problems and the actual outages in our area.</p> <p>Now I would like to give you some of the reasons we have these problems as related to me by Avista employees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I chose to live in the country • The squirrels blow out the lines • The wind takes out the lines <p>Really? That's how they are going to convince a customer that these are things beyond their responsibility/fiduciary obligation? And as I mentioned to this employee; they have wind, squirrels and weather in Spokane.</p> <p>The national average for outages is twice a year. Our BEST year is a minimum of 4 or 5.</p>

I have written before (see attached). I believe I am playing the part of Don Quixote, but it is so frustrating to plead for reasonable rates.

I would also like to mention that ever since ENRON executives came to Washington to "teach" Avista how to get residents to "pay more for nothing" rates have gone out the roof. And we understand now what ENRON was all about.

Proactive suggestions:

- Have Avista stop wasting money sending "naughty" notices to customers monthly telling them they are using more electricity. First of all, they are using some faulty formula because this winter was so mild we used two less stock heaters, two less heat lamps for pump houses and animals, less electricity for household needs.
- The CEO received 2 cents per customer a mere 5 years ago for his multi million dollar salary. (I was told this by the Avista PR guy) Now, in the paper he is getting over 10 cents per customer. REQUIRE Avista to spend any increased budget toward infrastructure and REQUIRE Avista to use it annually, not after the walls come down.

What is to stop shareholders and the CEO and the myriads of presidents and vice presidents to pad their salaries when given these increases? They have been successful in doing this for a decade.

Unfortunately, it has not been the UTC which is supposedly protecting the public.

Sincerely,

To Whom It May Concern,

This is a formal request that the UTC deny Avista Corp's request for a rate increase. They have already received rate increases within the last few years. They have recorded record profits as a result of these rate requests and have done nothing to invest in alternate clean energy or improved customer service while garnering their record profits.

While I recognize the huge responsibility they carry, I cannot come to terms with the huge rewards they unilaterally provide their top people without also rewarding the backs on which they make this money, the average citizen.

Thank you for considering this letter in your decision making.

Please see the below opinion page submission. It is said better than I could.

Avista, UTC in vicious cycle

Must be nice for Avista to seek rate increases based on those of other utilities. Who do they compare themselves with? Do these other companies have the low-cost power associated with an abundance of free natural resources?

Each time the Utilities and Transportation Commission approves rate increases, they begin a vicious cycle of "they got an increase, all we want to do is use them as a comparable." Then they use us and a circle is formed.

Why does a monopoly get to budget forecast? Make them recover cost, not anticipate expenses. The UTC should tell them no once in a while. Maybe the company will not get a 9.9 percent rate of return. Who gets that in the economies of the past eight years?

My bank tries to convince me that a 1 percent return on my cash is good. Maybe that is the message that we should be sending to a private company promising high returns that is a monopoly.

Avista makes too much money, pays out too much in salaries and dividends, then goes to the UTC, not me, and makes its annual appeal for more. If the company came directly to the ratepayer, you can rest assured that it would not be an automatic yes.

Bill Tibbits

Liberty Lake

Please do not give Avista more money to give to their CEO, board, and investors. Until they fix our infrastructure with monies they should have in reserve they should not be rewarded for inefficiency.

Larry Blanchard

E-mail

In the S-R article of 3/22, Kelly Norwood is quoted as saying, on the subject of the chairman's pay, "The rest is paid by shareholders and comes out of company profits."

And where do the profits come from? Most from the rates paid by, you guessed it, customers! Kelly must think the customers, and maybe even the regulators, are stupid enough to fall for that.

If this shows the typical self-serving logic and lack of ethics prevalent in the corporate world,

			<p>should anyone be surprised? Reminds me of the "It doesn't cost anything, it's government money." school of logic.</p> <p>I suggest that the regulators cut Avistas "rate of return" by the inflation-adjusted decline that the average customer has endured over the last 10 years instead of granting yet another rate hike.</p>
<p>Scott H. Rasmussen</p>	<p>E-mail</p>	<p>E-mail</p>	<p>As usual Avista has filed its yearly increase request as promised years ago, and as usual their request is unwarranted.</p> <p>Please don't offer to negotiate a smaller rate increase as the customers are well aware of the dividends the stock pays and the lack of cost control at Avista.</p> <p>As far as the wages being competitive we all know that's a outright lie as their total employee package is only comparable to a surgeon. Please keep in mind the average wage and benefit package for this area before using their comparative numbers!</p> <p>The commission has been put in place to keep requests like this where they belong, in the garbage. Please don't site the avista's right to make a fair profit as it been exceeded already!</p> <p>Do your job and save both jobs and the customers from further gouging by spokane's little Enron. Put Ken lay (Scott Morris) in his place especially after avista's childish remark about requesting a rate increase every year.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
<p>Bill Tibbits</p>	<p>E-mail</p>	<p>E-mail</p>	<p>Maybe the reason that energy use is declining is that Avista gets their annual rate increase request approved and most ratepayers can't afford these "modest" increases.</p> <p>Must be nice to ask for increases based on "other" utilities. Who do they compare themselves with? Did these other companies have the low cost of power associated with an abundance of free natural resources. Another consideration is that each time you approve increases it begins a vicious cycle of "they got an increase and all we do is use them as a comparable". Then they use us and a circle is formed.</p> <p>Why does a monopoly get to budget forecast? I thought only insurance companies and banks could get away with that accounting trick. Make them recover cost not anticipate.</p> <p>Tell them NO once in awhile. Maybe they will not get a rate of return - 9.9% - who gets that in the economies of the past eight years. My bank tries to convince me that a 1% return on my cash is good. Maybe that is the message that we should be sending to a private company, promising high returns, that is a monopoly.</p> <p>Don't you dare think that you can speak for me. Avista makes too much money, pays out to much</p>

	<p>in salaries and dividends then comes to you, not me, and has their annual appeal for more. If they came direct to the ratepayer you can rest assured that it would not be an automatic yes.</p> <p>Tell them NO once in awhile and at least give us the illusion that you are protecting our best interest.</p> <p>Must be nice that your only two allies are a wholly owned, government rate controlled monopoly newspaper and a government agency the Utilities Trade Commission.</p> <p>Kind of brings a tear to my eye.</p>	
<p>Jim Nyist (sp)</p>	<p>Phone</p> <p>He left a message on my VM. He stated that he is speaking on behalf of all of Avista's customers. He is outraged. Everytime we turn around, Avista is asking for another increase. The CEO makes \$5.5 million a year. Avista has record profits. People are freezing in their homes because they can not afford to turn up the heat. He is fed up. The commission needs to think about the people.</p>	
<p>Jacquelyn McCowen-Rose</p>	<p>Web</p> <p>Consumers on fixed incomes who do NOT over-use gas or electricity (only 2 of us at home and are very careful) cannot continue to pay endless increases. We have other bills (mortgage, medical, phone, insurance) to pay and WE do not get pay increases on a yearly basis. We understand the need to repair infrastructure, but do NOT understand endless huge salaries, bonuses, etc, nor that repairs are so expensive when the dollar is strong, interest rates are down, and also the cost of gasoline. Therefore, we must protest against Avista's latest rate hike request as unreasonable, too soon after the LAST one. Thank you.</p>	
<p>Leonard Kruger</p>	<p>Web</p> <p>Avista wants to increase its rates by another 20 percent. 70 percent of the residents in Spokane are in poverty. I am on a fixed income. These people are ridiculous. All these bills are increasing but I am not getting any more money to pay the bills. Everyone is mad. The company has stopped placing a booth at the local fair because everyone is unhappy with them. The company shouldn't be treating its customers like this. I go to SNAP once a year to get assistance with the bills but now it may not be enough. The company says I'm using more energy now. How can that be I've replaced my light bulbs with new efficient bulbs. The company executives are being greedy. Businesses are being hurt and this company does not care. Local businesses can't even turn on the heat, it costs too much. SNAP assistance is not enough, I can only apply once per year. There is nothing wrong with Avista's dams, why are they asking for money to fix them?</p>	
	<p>Below are the customer's comments phone call at 10:48. The letter stated that the increase proposed was 7%. That's not true, the increase is actually 25%. I do not trust the foreign ownership of this company. The company is taking advantage of us and it has you people at the commission wrapped around it's finger. Customer was not clear about information on public meetings.</p>	

Avista doesn't deserve rate increase. They're corrupt and their customer service is poor. They keep increasing my bills, I can't afford to pay

Wesley Crosby

Web

Description:

User submitted via the web on 03/24/2015 03:33:00 PM

Please explain your complaint in detail.

I live in Mountain View Estates, a 110 unit CONDO community of which I am president. I own a residential unit there and have 3 additional garages that are unfairly rated as Commercial accounts! We read that Avista is asking for a raise in rates. BUT Avista "RAISED" our rate January 1st, 2015 WITH OUT NOTICE, on basic rates for residential-\$8. to \$8.50 a 6.24% increase. We have some of our residential garages that are unfairly rated as Commercial with a raise January 1,2015 from(2014)\$15 to \$18 a 20% increase. METERS on residential garages are "UNFAIRLY" rated commercial.FALSE and DECEIVING information was advertised in article in the Spokesman-Review on Sunday, March 22, 2015. "Executive Pay" saying customer rates pay for just the CEO's \$550,000 and balance of the Four Million-Nine Hundred and Fifty Thousand (\$4,950,000) is paid from the "COMPANY PROFITS"!! WELL it sure appears that that is false as your UTC commission approves rate increases based an budget that includes appropriate profit that pays this CEO and Other Million dollar executives, including stockholders, out of such profits!! Yes they have other investments aside from electric and gas revenues. UTC does not, as I understand it, control their other assets which maybe it should. Example: Avista COE signed to sell the highly successful Spokane Industrial Park several years ago so as that he would get a super large bonus from the profits as he was leaving the Company! The real loss was the AVISTA customer rates had to increase to make up for the loss in Avista company's annual profits at the expense of greedy Management! Keep the increases in line with necessary budget items and maintain common sense. Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?

Yes

If 'Yes', what was the result?

I talked to several persons and they all said similar answers that they were just following your approvals and the answer was the same. Oh I think the UTC and just already approved that raise. I BELEIVE THE UTC COMMISSION SHOULD ADDRESS "PROPER NOTICES TO NOTIFY CUSTOMERS! SECONDLY, I STRONGLY FEEL THAT THE COMMISSION NEEDS TO RE ADDRESS THE CLASIFICATION OF RATING A RESIDENTIAL GARAGE AOS A COMMERCIAL RATED CUSTOMER! \$18 BASE IS ALOT TO PAY IN ADDITION TO THE USAGE OF COMMERCIAL RATES TO HAVE A RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER TURN A LIGHT ON IN HIS GARAGE OR USE HIS GARAGE DOOR OPENER WHEN IT IS ADJACANT TO HIS OR HER'S RESIDENCE. I could appreciate it when Avista has to run an additional separate 150 Or 200 feet service line but in most cases they are willing to extend the service to get the revenue. PS: You need to allow users to expand these windows so we can copy

what we have written on your forms!!!!PLEASE SEND ME A COPY!
 What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?
 Notify customers in advance as it appears deceptive on the utilities part! Speaking and coming out saying you have submitted to the UTC for a rate increase and the same month implementing a raise that was possibly approved sometime back and not having employees aware of what is really going on. This, to me, demonstrates a lack of a expensive CEO and his staff, proving that they have the wrong interest at heart and should have adjustments made accordingly!
 Results:

Darlene White Mail
 When does it stop? Older people like myself and many of my friends live on our social security each month. We pay rent, would like to buy food and watch a little tv. Try making it on \$1,000 a month like a lot of seniors do.

Chad Solberg E-mail
 Let me start with a quote directly from the Spokesman-Review:
 "In rate cases, public utility commissions set the "return on equity" for each utility. It's the return Avista can earn by investing in the infrastructure that serves electric and natural gas customers.
 "You can think of it as their profit," said Lisa Gafken, an attorney for the Office of Public Counsel. "Return on equity is a completely geeky topic, but it's the big issue that drives most rate cases."
 Commissions are charged with setting rates so companies can recover their investment costs and earn a reasonable return."
 "They do a pretty in-depth analysis," she said. "They look at the industry and comparable companies, determining what investors are demanding in terms of their return."
 So...let me get this straight - Washington State allows a PRIVATE company with shareholders to ALWAYS earn a return by investing in infrastructure. You realize that Avista has also realized they will ALWAYS be investing in infrastructure to ALWAYS get a "reasonable" return - in this case an unheard of 9.9% rate of return - in perpetuity? Right? You do realize this? It almost sounds like a Ponzi scheme. No bank, very few stocks, and no investment firms can guarantee this kind of return, but Washington GIVES it to Avista. It is almost comical....scratch that, it IS comical. Investors do get to demand the rate of their return in the real world, but seldom do demands equal reality, but I guess Washington State is not the real world, and for Avista, demands DO equal reality. What if they demand 20%, 30%, a 100% return? Ridiculous. Investment costs should net a ZERO return - customers should bear these costs, but utilities companies should not be allowed to MAKE MONEY off of things they are required to do to stay in business! Market fluctuations of product should be the sole determiner of profit or loss for a utility company. When did Avista last have a loss? Who knows!!!! The State ALWAYS gives them a profit based on what they demand! You see how this works - Hypothetical - sales are flat and Avista is off 3% from last year and actually LOSES money. Quick, they say, let's invest in infrastructure and tell

the state investors demanded a 4% return this year. The rate increase is approved and Avista comes out 1% ahead, and viola! money made. I wish I was in that business. Please email me the requirements for starting a utility company in Washington. I will always make money, so please sign me up! I am serious. Please email them to me.

Be strong for once and tell them NO! A 9.9% return IS NOT reasonable - but Avista knows this - it is a game. They know you will say no, but you ALWAYS give them something - I mean an 8 year streak can't be wrong. Hell, they already have next years rate increase paperwork ready to go. How about a .1% return. Or even copy property tax laws and cap it at 1% per year! Now that IS reasonable. No State should allow energy to be privately controlled, but in Washington's idiocy, it does. What is Avista going to do if their earnings are a paltry 1%, quit making money and pack up and leave? No. They won't. Trust me. They won't.

Please, stop this dog and pony show and be firm. Or let the 8 year streak continue - Avista 8, Washington State 0, Customers - ALWAYS SCREWED.

Sincerely,
Chad R. Solberg

Comments to Avista from Sunday, 3/22/15 news release on rate hikes:

According to the article, Chairman, CEO, President Scott Morris received quite a substantial raise between the years 2013 and 2014. I wonder how much higher is will be in 2015. Maybe we can come to some kind of compromise. Why not halve the rate increase that is to come between persons who will have to foot the bill on the rate increase and President Morris.

I understand that the infrastructure needs upgrading. However, what kind of management do we have at Avista that upgrading has to be done every single year?

If these rates keep going up, how many people will be left footing the energy assistance program because we will keep having a higher percentage of customers who will need to get assistance?

Honorable Commissioners,

Please say to Avista's rate hike.

The State Attorney General's Office has said that a increase is unnecessary, in fact, a rate decrease would be warranted.

Please listen to the consumers when they say enough is enough!

Sincerely,
Adams County Commissioner

Request Information
Request ID: 123137

Carol Echtenkamp
E-mail

John Marshall
E-mail

Marla Dee Miller
E-mail

User submitted via the web on 03/28/2015 04:46:00 PM

Please explain your complaint in detail.

"WE", meaning many fed up Spokane residents, want AVISTA a investor owned company "OUT OF HERE"! NOW! WE WANT A PUBLIC CO-OP! Avista is a Monopoly we do not need. Here is "ONE" Cut Copy and Paste from a news source in another city in America: Across the country, cities are showing a renewed interest in taking over the electricity business from private utilities, reflecting intensifying concerns about climate change, responses to power disruptions and a desire to pump more renewable energy into the grid. Dismantling investor owned monopolies." (End of Cut Copy and paste). "We" want the Federal Gov't via the Federal Attorney General to come in here to investigate Avista AND Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission who conducts themselves as "bought off puppets"! The whole thing is so corrupt there is not a honest person out there who should not be deeply ashamed. Total exploitation of human beings for money..GREED! WE are NOT stupid. Avista pays it own maintenance bills, NOT US! That means al equipment, repairs, ALL. they don't get to decide what they want to do and stick it to us! We are sick of the "CORPORATE THINKING the IMPLEMENTATION/EXPLOITATION/DISREGARD OF AVISTA TOWARD THEIR CUSTOMERS. THIS HAS US NO LONGER 'LIVING" BUT EXISTING AS SLAVES TO THE GOOD OLD "U.S. OF CORPORATE AMERICA". Enough is Enough. Anger and resistance to slavery can accomplish unheard of things..so can the raising of many voices. 'NO MORE'!

Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?

Yes

If 'Yes', what was the result?

Asked why without notice comfort billing raised approximately fifty dollars MORE a month?

Was told "pay it or be disconnected". Rude, arrogant..condescending representative.

What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?

Accept that residents are ready to demand a Federal Investigation into ALL involved. We are not here to support shareholders or pay for bonuses (employee's) repairs or maintenance; THAT all comes out of Company profits, not our empty wallets. The Franchise Contract should not be renewed, WE WANT AVISTA OUT OF SPOKANE! They are another corporate Monopoly that is totally self-serving, double talking, rationalizing their greed with public speaking skilled manipulators. The Federal Government needs to come in for a complete audit. The Federal Government needs to investigate every Agency that reinforces, condones and enables this financial exploitation of customers. WHO in their right minds allowed this investor owned parasite into Spokane in the first place? Enough is enough.

Sandra Kingsman Web

They ask for an increase every year but don't take into consideration that people in this area are on a limited income and have a hard time paying their electric bills now. We can't keep paying more and more. Neighbors who have Inland power and the same size/style of home pay way less than

			what my bills are. We have had lots of outages, where company employees get overtime but no discount to us. They just hired a new boss and paying over him 5 million, I only live on \$1000 per month and can't afford to have my electric rates go up.
Florene E Moore	Web		Please do NOT approve the rate increase request for Avista in Washington. They say they have large costs to update dams. They knew this was coming, so they should have put the money aside in savings. Paying their Executives such huge rates of compensation makes the rest of us feel that they are not using their money wisely. The rate payers, like me & my neighbors, do NOT have large income increases. We CANNOT afford any more raises in rates.
Dan Griffith	Mail		Customer is part owner of a small farm. As owners, they bear the cost of the farm's infrastructure improvement. He believes Avista needs a little "skin in the game" to modify the practice of providing large bonuses to managers. <copy of letter saved under "Notes" tab.>> <<copy of additional letter, received 9/24/15, saved to "Notes" tab>>
Bonnie	Mail		Consumer simply mailed a copy of Letters to the editor about Avista's rate case. Issues included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fat raises and bonuses. - No competition. - Executive pay. - What Avista is doing to cut costs.
Richard Fuller	Mail		Customer is 78 years old and on a fixed income. Mr says Avista rates are increasing faster than inflation rate. He is opposed to Avista's proposed rate increase.
William Foreman	Web		Letter saved under "Notes" tab Your website says that you regulate company's like Avista to provide fair rates for customers while allowing a fair profit to the company. Avistas profits were up 74% for 2014, yet they are requesting ANOTHER rate increase. How is this fair to ratepayers? Any other company would use their profits to upgrade infrastructure but not Avista. And you keep facilitating this behaviour. It isn't fair in the least to ratepayers such as myself. Thank you, Bill Foreman
Stuart Dagg	E-mail		Dear Sir or Madam; I have contacted your office before with the same complaint; why can't private, monopolistic utilities, such as Avista in Spokane, be divested, as Ma Bell was. It would seem in the best interest of the consumer, the argument made for breaking up the telephone monopoly, to provide a more COMPETITIVE MARKET ENVIRONMENT. Areas around Spokane enjoy the benefits of an

energy cooperative, such as Inland Power. Why can't there be an alternate energy choice in Spokane? We are held to the whims and mercy of a for-profit-company that spends little time being concerned about the stagnant wages facing the common worker.

Below is an article recently published in the Spokane's Review espousing how profitable Avista is while seeking another rate increase.

Thanks for your time,

Avista chairman earned nearly \$5.5 million last year

Feb. 27, 2015 Compensation for Avista Corp.'s top executive nearly doubled last year, as a result of bonuses and increases in pension values. Scott Morris, chairman and chief executive officer of the Spokane-based

I have contacted you office before with the same comments; why can't private, monopolistic energy utilities, such as Avista be divested, as ATT was? The argument made then, for breaking up the telephone monopoly, was, by doing so, would create a COMPETITIVE MARKET PLACE to benefit THE CONSUMER. Why was that so important then, but not considered now? I submit the same argument exist today with the publicly held energy monopolies.

Some parts of Spokane and communities in the Spokane area enjoy the benefits of an energy cooperative - nonprofit and lower cost - such as Inland Power and others in the state. Why can't there be an alternative energy choice in Spokane? Free the consumer in Spokane and create a competitive marketplace where the players (Avista and Inland Power) have to abide buy the pressures of a competitive/capitalistic consumer market. In the alternative, there is no incentive by monopolies to be concerned about the inelasticity of energy, local wages and other regional economic conditions.

Two articles recently appeared in the Spokesman Review regarding Avista: www.spokesman.com/archives/ - One, espouses how profitable Avista is while seeking another rate increase; Feb. 26, 2015, "Avista's 2014 earnings up 73 percent". The other, Feb. 28, 2015, "Avista's top executive earns \$5.5 million", outlines compensation packages for the top company officers. You can download both articles by using the aforementioned web address referenced above.

I do not support another rate or "basic charge" increase. We paid handsomely to have gas brought from the alley to the home. There was no "basic charge" for hooking up to gas. only a steep hook-

up fee. What was the fee for if not to pay for access in perpetuity? Just think about this....I go to the store to buy a loaf of bread only to find out that the purveyor has added a "basic charge" to the bill just to have the loaf of bread in the store. I don't get it.....what other company do you know of that has the enviable position to charge a "basic fee" regardless of consumption.

Could you enlighten me, and others who live under an energy monopoly, as to why non-profit cooperatives, who currently serve other energy consumers in the State of Washington, are not given the opportunity to enter the marketplace where monopolies prevail?

Sincerely,

Dear Mr. Kouchi,

I read through the report that was compiled almost 20 years ago and have to ask the question; is it still relative? You would have to agree, the past 18 years have been tumultuous times for our country, state and local economies (The Great Recession, housing and energy crisis, etc.) which has altered the landscape to something quite different than it was in 1998. Wages have stagnated while the real purchasing power of the dollar has dropped. The cost of living (housing, food, energy, medical, etc.) has steadily eroded discretionary income to the point that people save little or go without.

I appreciate your comments, but you did not touch on my question regarding the wisdom of allowing investor-owned energy utilities complete control over a commodity that is inelastic. It's pretty nebulous to conclude that " we would have more to lose than gain with restructuring" I take that passage to mean that the legislature is bowing to pressure by the utilities and not addressing what is best for the customer.

The report indicated that the majority of energy proffered in the state come from consumer-owned utilities while one-third are investor-owned. They all maybe monopolies, in their own service areas, but not all monopolies are created equally (consumer-owned/non-profit vs investor-owned/profit). I am much more comfortable with the idea of a consumer-owned utility handling my energy needs than the alternative; how do you feel?

In the report, I tried to find specific language that gives exclusivity rights to investor-owned utilities in the state (Avista/Spokane). I was not able to; however, I did find language to the contrary, "No utilities are granted exclusive territorial franchises in Washington." If that's true, then, why can't there be competition in Spokane? The report says, "most electric providers may serve any customer in the state,

regardless of historic service territory." If the law allows for electric providers to serve any customer; why can't consumers in Spokane, Seattle or any other local, served by a investor-owned or consumer-owned utility, have an opportunity to decide (vote) who serves them?

The UTC allows for public input (I'm doing that now). In all "fairness"; shouldn't communities have the right to choose who serves them energy?

Thanks for taking the time to respond - the information provided was very enlightening.

Stu

Description:

User submitted via the web on 02/28/2015 08:16:00 AM

Please explain your complaint in detail.

oh boy..avista came out last month and filed for a rate increase..wrong..than they came out and showed a 73% profit increase over last year..now today in the spokane paper the ceo make 5.5 million..what is wrong with this picture...so please dont ok their rate increase..it is wrong..why should we the people pay for their improvements. it not that is what profit is for to reinvest in the company..

Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?

No

What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?

no rate increase till they use what they have in the bank...

Description:

User submitted via the web on 02/28/2015 10:59:00 AM

Please explain your complaint in detail.

Gentleman, recently there have been articles in our Spokesman-Review showing that Avista Utilities had a 73% increase in profits for one (1) year alone! Now, today the paper shows that their top executive earned 5.5 million in compensation in 2014. At the same time Avista has filed for both electric and gas rate increases. This is SHAMEFUL, UNETHICAL, IMMORAL, and SICKENING!! Please do NOT give them the rate increases they are demanding. Thank you.
Roger L. Branz

Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?

No

Web

Jimmy Wade

Web

Roger L. Branz

What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?
RETRACT their proposal for any rate increases for 3 years and lower ALL executive salaries!!

Customer filed a public comment with the Washington Attorney General's Office.

Gentlemen, Recently I filed a complaint with the Washington State Utilities Commission over the massive profits made by Avista this last year. Even with the sale of one of its subsidiaries they took in large amounts of revenue including their high rates to regular electric & gas customers. They showed a record PROFIT of over 73% this year. They are now asking for increased rates on both electric & gas again!! Their corporate officers are making obscene salaries and the CEO alone took in 5.5 MILLION. This is absolutely sickening, immoral, unethical and should be illegal. Please defend the ratepayers of Washington at the hearing. Roger L. Branz

Description:

User submitted via the web on 03/02/2015 10:18:00 AM
Please explain your complaint in detail.

Avista Executive pay. The pay of these Executives is atrocious. Every few months they file for more rate increases. The reason the Execs are getting this atrocious pay is because the shareholders love the job they are doing bilking the rate payer. Are the board members in their pockets or what. I am fuming mainly because of the scam of asking for a very high rate increase, and of course getting less. Right behind that rate increase comes another request, it is getting pretty old. You need to get the Attorney General involved in this scam. Executive pay of CEO 5.5 Million for the size of avista is atrocious.

Did you speak to a supervisor from your utility or transportation company?

No

What do you think the company should do to resolve your complaint?

Quit bilking the rate payer with rate increases one behind the other with the Commissioners Blessing. And also start having the meetings at Spokane City Hall. There is no place there for the low income rate payer to park free, and parking is also very limited. Avista and the City council Love each other but that is no reason to have the rate payer complaint meetings there. try the Lincon center where people can park free, and stay away from the congested city center, where there is only paid parking. I sometimes wonder if the Spokane city Council chambers is a way to keep people away from meetings
Sincerely

I have already commented on the new proposed rates. I just wanted to add that Spokane is not Seattle or Los Angeles or New York. We are a small community with very low incomes for most people

E-mail

Melvin L
Erickson

other than City county State and Avista CEOs if a bigger company needs this Avista CEO,I say let him go there,not stay here and bilk ratepayers so he can take home 5.5 Million for 2014.Enough is enough.

We moved here from Chelan County, The PUD's in Douglas & Chelan counties seem to manage their electrical fees and infrastructure alot better than Avista. No one should be getting a Million dollar salary than ask for more money from rate payers for infrastructure upgrades. They are gouging the consumer, period. Tell them to lower all salaries by half and they will have the money they need to fix aging structures. They just raised rates on January 1, 2015. Enough is enough. Poor management is not a reason the utility payer should have to pay. I could do a better job for half the salary!

On February 9, 2015, Avista Utilities filed for an increase in electricity and natural gas rates. I urge the Commission to reject this request. The cost of natural gas is at a very low point, and Avista is in a position to lock in a favorable price for future purchases. This also applies to the natural gas used for the non-hydropower electricity generated by Avista using natural gas fired plants.

I am also very concerned about Avista's request to increase the "basic charge" for electricity from \$8.00 to \$14.00 per month and for natural gas from \$9.00 to \$12.00 per month.Back when these charges were \$5.00 per month each, I contacted Avista and was told essentially that I had to pay those prices just to have their meters on my property. When I fill the fuel tank on my vehicle, I am not charged a surcharge for the pump in addition to the fuel purchased. I do not see why Avista is allowed to charge for both the meter and the energy. It seems that Avista should have to provide the meter if they want to sell energy to me. I realize that this is largely academic, as Avista is a government approved monopoly pretending to operate in the free marketplace.

What is not academic about the "basic charge" is that working families who have gas and electric service currently have to pay \$204.00 per year to Avista before receiving a single unit of energy. Now Avista wants those same working families to pay \$312.00 per year before receiving a single unit of energy. This is government sanctioned thievery, as a dwelling unit is not legally habitable without utilities service, and the utility service is a state-sanctioned monopoly.

In other words, working families will have to pay \$312.00 in tribute to the energy monopoly just to live in their homes, prior to receiving any energy product from that approved monopoly.

I strongly urge the Commission to not only deny the request to increase the "basic charge", but to eliminate it entirely in the interest of consumer protection under the law and in the interest of Washington's working families.

If Avista needs money so bad why are the giving the CEO 51 million a year. Can't see why they need to raise the rates. No to increase.

The customer doesn't believe the company should continue to request increases and pay their CEOs such a large salary. The customer is a senior on a fixed low income and the company doesn't

Cass Hania

Web

Brian Dykman

Web

Larry Sheets

Web

think about their customers enough. Their customers are going to be out in the cold because the company continues to get increases that the customers cannot afford.

Karin Morris

RE: Avista (GRC), Dockets UE-150204 and UG-150205

Pre-Hearing date = March 12, 2015

6.7% and 6.9% proposed rate increases

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing to let you know that I am strongly opposed to any future Avista rate increases at least for the next 2 years. These requests are totally out of line with inflation and keeping up with very modest salary increases in the workplace. Also, I do not believe the public has been given enough information to make a comment on this issue - which could be a contributing factor as to why you don't get a lot of public comments for the record and which may have a direct impact on your final rulings.

Please know that many people over here live on very fixed and low incomes and that is very concerning, including myself. No one should ever have to choose (and financially suffer from) due to their inability to pay for basic support services; the rate increases granted to them over the past few years are creating financial hardships for many people over here in the Spokane area.

I have included a few recent news articles from our local newspaper, the Spokesman-Review. These articles say they have made extremely high record profits in 2014 and their top staff are making exorbitant salaries.

For these reasons, please deny any immediate Avista future rate increases. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

February 27, 2015

Avista chairman earned nearly \$5.5 million last year

Becky Kramer

The Spokesman-Review

Compensation for Avista Corp.'s top executive nearly doubled last year, as a result of bonuses and increases in pension values.

Scott Morris, chairman and chief executive officer of the Spokane-based utility, received nearly \$5.5 million in total compensation in 2014, compared to \$2.9 million in 2013.

Morris' base salary grew 3 percent to \$723,461, according to the company's preliminary proxy statement filed Friday with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

He also received two cash bonuses. Morris received a \$191,506 bonus from last summer's sale of Ecova, Avista's energy management subsidiary. And he received a cash award of \$1.1 million because the utility met or exceeded goals related to things such as customer service satisfaction, earnings per share and targeted times for restoring power after outages. He also received \$238,340 from the company's 401(k) match, cashed-in vacation time and sale of Ecova stock.

The biggest increase in Morris' salary came from \$1.6 million gain in the value of his company pension plan, based on actuarial tables. The stock market's strong performance was reflected the increase in value, said Jessie Wuerst, an Avista spokeswoman.

Morris only receives part of his total compensation as "take-home" pay, she said. About \$1.5 million of the 2014 compensation package reflects future stock awards that Morris could earn if Avista meets certain targets over a three-year period.

Morris, 57, has led Avista since January, 2008. The company provides electric and natural gas service to more than 600,000 electric and natural gas customers in Eastern Washington, North Idaho and Oregon.

A typical household pays about 24 cents each month on their bills for Avista's top five executives' salaries and cash awards, Wuerst said.

"This perception that because bills are going up, all this money is going into Scott's pocket is just erroneous," she said.

Avista stockholders also contribute to executive pay through stock awards, Wuerst added. Stock awards are paid from the company's shareholder equity, which is the sum of its stock value and retained earnings.

Executive pay is scrutinized by public utilities commissions in Washington and Idaho, which decide whether Avista can raise its electric and natural gas rates. Earlier this month, Avista filed a request in Washington that would raise combined electric and gas bills by nearly \$12 per month for a typical household. The company is also seeking an \$8.50 increase in basic monthly fees.

Though executive pay accounts for a small portion of customer bills, it's a topic of interest to Washington Attorney General's Public Counsel Division, which advocates for residential and small businesses in rate cases, said Lisa Gafken, an assistant attorney general.

In 2012, the Public Counsel Division challenged the amount of executive pay reflected in Avista's customers rates. The challenge wasn't successful, but it started a discussion at the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission about executive pay, she said.

Avista and other utilities survey what peer companies are paying their executives, and adjust their pay according. So, the raises can become a self-perpetuating cycle, Gafken said.

Other top executives at Avista also earned more last year. Total compensation packages for 2014 include:

Mark Thies, senior vice president, and chief financial officer, \$1.7 million.

Dennis Vermillion, senior vice president and environmental compliance officer, \$1.8 million.
Marian Durkin, senior vice president, general counsel and chief compliance officer, \$1.5 million.
Karen Feltes, senior vice president and corporate secretary, \$1.5 million
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February 25, 2015

Avista reports higher 2014 earnings

Becky Kramer

The Spokesman-Review

Tags:Avistacorporate earningsutilities

Last year was a busy one for Avista Corp.

The Spokane-based utility celebrated its 125th anniversary, bought an electric utility in Alaska and sold off a subsidiary.

Those transactions are reflected in the company's 2014 earnings, which shot up 73 percent, the company reported today.

Avista reported income of \$192 million, or \$3.10 per share, for last year, compared to 2013 earnings of \$111.1 million, or \$1.85 per share.

The company's 2014 income included a one-time gain of nearly \$70 million from the sale of Ecova, an energy management subsidiary. Avista also saw a small bump in income from the purchase of Alaska Electric Light and Power, which serves the Juneau area.

High demand for electricity and natural gas during the first nine months of last year, along with lower energy costs and interest rates, also helped the company's balance sheet, Avista officials said.

However, warmer weather during October, November and December reduced demand for power during the fourth quarter, which led to lower-than-expected quarterly earnings, officials said. For the fourth quarter, Avista reported earnings of \$32.2 million, or 51 cents per share, compared to 2013 fourth quarter earnings of \$31.7 million, or 53 cents per share.

Weather continues to play a role in the company's financial outlook

Mild temperatures in January and February led to a loss of low-elevation snowpack, said Dennis Vermillion, Avista's vice president. But, so far, the outlook for hydropower generation still looks good for the Clark Fork River, he told analysts during a conference call.

Avista's two largest dams are on the Clark Fork River, where flow forecasts are 101 percent of average for April through September. Cool spring nights should help preserve high-elevation snow in the watershed, Vermillion said. The Clark Fork generates about 75 percent of Avista's hydropower.

For the Spokane River, where Avista also operates dams, the flow forecasts are 75 percent of average for April through September, Vermillion said. Get more news and information at Spokesman.com

February 26, 2015
Avista's 2014 earnings up 73 percent
Becky Kramer

The Spokesman-Review

Tags: Avista Clark Fork River corporate earnings dams Ecovast snowpack utilities

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High demand for electricity and natural gas during the first nine months of last year, along with lower energy costs and interest rates, also helped the company's balance sheet. Avista officials said company earnings also benefit from rate increases to recover the cost of expensive capital investments.

However, warmer weather during late fall and early winter reduced demand for power during the fourth quarter, which led to lower-than-expected quarterly earnings, officials said.

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Weather continues to play a role in the company's financial outlook.

Mild temperatures in January and February melted the region's low-elevation snowpack, said Dennis Vermillion, an Avista vice president. But, so far, the outlook for hydropower generation is near normal for the Clark Fork River, he told analysts during a conference call.

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			<p>hydropower. For the Spokane River, where Avista also operates dams, the flow forecasts are 75 percent of average for April through September, Vermillion said. Avista also continues to pursue annual rate increases.</p>
Mary Arlt	Mail		<p>Letter from consumer (see notes tab). - Stunned by Avista's request for increase in electric an gas rates. They said they needed it for aging infrastructure upgrades. - Spokeman review stated that Avista's earnings are up 73%. - Scott Morris (CEO) earned \$5.5 million in 2014 and four other executives are earning \$1.5 to \$1.8 million. Scott Morris can't do upgrades with a 73% increase in earnings. - Many are on assistance and supplement basic foods with the weekly trip to the food bank. I am on a retirement plan with the state that doesn't even give a COLA. - Spokane is a community with lots of public assistance programs and lots of children on free and reduced lunch programs. - Businesses and churches are having a hard time finding funds for increasing budgets. - Morris and his executives don't need millions to live in Spokane. I truly hope you continue to scrutinize executive pay. To increase the rates and to increase the basic rate fees is so wrong - crossing over to immoral.</p>
Kat McGunagle	E-mail		<p>Hello, Recently Avista corporation requested a rate hike stating that it needs to upgrade its equipment. A couple of days later the newspaper had an article that indicated Avista has made record profits. Please do not allow Avista to raise its rates. There are thousands of people on a fixed or lower income. Even if they use comfort billing that does not help with higher rates. Avista does not need a rate hike. Sincerely,</p>
Tom Wagoner	Web		<p>Avista is requesting yet another Utility rate increase soon. I urge the Commission in light of the recent CEO's earning's to deny or reduce substantially their request. Seniors and others that are income handicapped stand to lose the most if this increase granted. Thank you.</p>
James Nystuen	Web		<p>Everytime I open the paper, Avista wants to raise rates. Not fair when CEO gets 4.4 million and stockholders get their ahre. Spokane is not a rich community. This needs to STOP!!!</p>
ED RIEDERICH	E-mail		<p>AVISTA AGAIN ASKED FOR A RATE INCREASE...</p>

			IF AVISTA HAS MONEY TO BUY A POWER COMPANY IN ALASKA.....THEN GIVE YOUR SELF A BONUS...THEN YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE TO ASK FOR RATE INCREASE THE UTC NEEDS TO TELL THESE PEOPLE NO...NO ANY RATE INCREASE THE UTC NEEDS TO VOTE SEPARATELY...NOTE AS A GROUP
Undecided			
	Julie Honekamp, SNAP	In person	Ms testified at the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley. In addition, she provided literature (saved as attachment under "Notes" tab)
	Yolanda Lovato	In person	Ms spoke at the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley.
	Philip Duggan	In person	Mr attended the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley, but did not comment. From: Philip A. Duggan SAP P. O. Box 3033 8 2015 Deer Park, Washington 99006 ~ASN, ~r~ rP ~ To: Washington Utilities & Transportation Commission ~~~ P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250 Date: September 24, 2015 Re: Avista, Dockets UE-150204/UG-150205. Comments/Suggestions
			Dear Commissioners: I attended the public hearings in Spokane and Spokane Valley on September 15 and 16th Very little information or details was given about the major capital investments in the filing. Of the four major capital investments listed in the Avista brochure the first three would seem reasonable and desirable. The fourth, however, raises some concern as it involves technology that would impact the public (in homes, businesses and commercial establishments) in new ways, unlike any previous public-utility relationship. If Avista is going to invest in and deploy Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) in Washington, and particularly if this infrastructure is going all the way to private homes and businesses in the form of digital transmitting meters (DTM or Smart Meters) caution, safeguards and restraint are necessary. Even if these rate increases are approved for these several reasons it should not imply a grant of authority to install or require installation of digital transmitting meters for gas and/or electricity at the end user's home or business. That should be a different issue that has not been fully or even partially vetted in this community.

Briefly, there is the issue of a lack of an easement in homes and properties for the electromagnetic frequencies (ems) that would impinge therein as well as the potential health damages that may occur to some or all occupants therein. This would be even more exacerbated if later Energy Star appliances were to be required, which transmit data to the smart meter, further magnifying the emf pollution. There is the issue of safety, aside from health safety, as digital transmitting meters have been involved in a number of recalls and fires and have not been UL approved. The environmental issue needs to be considered, such as the effects of electromagnetic energy transmission on the flora and fauna of the area, much of which is agricultural.

Unfortunately the public, including Avista customers, have not been informed about these issues and been given an opportunity of informed consent to the application of advanced meters (digital transmitting meters or Smart Meters) on their property. Hopefully, they will before this program is implemented and further funds allocated. Another problem with advanced Smart Meters is that though they may be technologically advanced (but as a result expensive and prone to malfunction), this technology of information gathering could be misused and is a threat to the well-established common law rights occupants. The information could be hacked and "the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures..." could be violated or compromised by hackers or others misusing the data (see Article 4 of the Bill of Rights). The Utilities and Transportation Commission should not allow this, even for an investor utility. The existing basic analog meter technology has been used reliably, for many decades.

Before 1 any fundamental changes are applied to the end user the issue should be thoroughly vetted, especially by those most directly affected by the change in conjunction with expert independent opinions. The commissioners might also want to view the professionally produced video on the subject, which runs 1 hour and 41 minutes: Take Back Your Power (Takebackyourpower.net).

Another issue that should be considered is the Avista expenditures and federal expenditures for energy assistance programs. Before approving a rate increase it should be determined if possibly Avista is unnecessarily contributing or excessively contributing to the energy assistance program and whether these funds in turn could be used to offset a rate increase. Also, the ratepayers through donations in Project Share with their bills may be unnecessarily donating or excessively donating unknowingly for illegal immigrants whereas the federal government should be paying for the problems it creates instead of passing the costs off onto the people in local communities.

At the crux of this issue are federal immigration policies and a failure to enforce the immigration laws, and many communities are adversely impacted as a result. I have been told by an expert source that in the energy assistance program the applicants cannot even be asked about their legal status to even be present in this country. Thus, "illegal immigrants" are getting assistance but we don't know how many or how much they are getting. This is an unnecessary cost to Avista since without the illegals it would need to donate less. It needs to be determined what percentage of households or of the 43,000 people getting low-income energy assistance are households with illegal aliens. In other words, what percentage of the low-income energy assistance is going to illegal aliens or "refugees" who are participating but not being paid by a federal agency? If the participants cannot be asked about their legal status at this time (and they should be) then a best statistical estimate should be made. For example, if 10% of the low-income energy assistance is going to illegal aliens and unreimbursed "refugees" then a bill for this amount should be sent to probably Department of H&HS or ICE. If they don't pay enlist the help of the local member of congress to get payment.

This issue is particularly troubling since the Independent Auditors Report for Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP) shows that for 2014 Avista paid \$4,960,670, which was an increase from \$4,657,211 for 2013 (pg. 36). However, federal payments to SNAP (current period from the previous period) have declined through Department of Commerce-Community Services (pg.48). In most places illegal aliens are increasing not decreasing. If 10% of the low-income assistance funds, for example but it could be higher, are going to illegals or used for illegal aliens then the federal agencies should pay entirely this 10% as well as additional amounts they pay for low income Americans or those lawfully here. In this scenario Avista would get a 10% reduction or refund of their payment. For 2014 this would amount to \$496,067, which could be used to offset some of the rate increase.

The federal government and its agencies have been passing off the costs of its failed immigration policies to local and county governments and to utilities wherein local tax or rate payers are adversely affected by being forced to indirectly pay for federal immigration policy. Its time to stop hiding costs of illegal immigration and distributing them through utility bills.

Thank you for your consideration, /s/ Philip A. Duggan

Lynn Kimball,
Aging and Long
In person

Ms spoke at the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley and provided written comments and literature. (Saved under notes as attachments)

	Term Care		
	Carol Weltz, SNAP	In person	Ms attended the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley, but did not comment.
	Lucy Lepinski, SNAP	In person	Ms attended the Sept 16, 2015 public comment hearing in Spokane Valley, but did not comment.
	Kevin Polito	Phone	Upset with the constant rate increases. Wants to be kept informed of the status of this rate case.
	Jon Etherton	Web	Has anyone ever looked at the possibility of breaking up Avista into two different companies one natural gas the other electricity? The company was once a broken up. If Avista sold off the gas business it would give an idea of how much the natural gas part of the company was worth, it would be good for the investors. It would be good for consumers, because the gas company could also compete in the electric business by providing solar panels, gas generators, and fuel cells. In regards to any gas or electric filings there would be competition. There could even be deregulation and have multiple electric and gas providers on the same lines.