

## Public Comments by Case

**Total Comments: 22**

**In Favor: 2**

**Opposed: 17**

**Undecided: 3**

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
No			
	Melinda	Email	<p>I was just given notice than John Poppe of Wa Water supply is requesting a surcharge for our neighborhood. Wa water has neglected the care and upkeep of our well and is not in compliance with the law in regards to meters at each house. This has led to many water outages of unknown origin taking sometimes weeks to find. For 2-3 years now we have been told we can't water outside, causing many plants to die. Now because of his long time neglect of our well he has had to truck in water for us and he wants to charge us! This should not be approved. We pay him to have an adequate source of water and we are without water many days per week, occasionally even up to 12 hours. We should not have to pay to clean up his mess.</p> <p>Melinda</p>
	Jenene T Wilmoth	Web	<p>We have been having water issues for a couple of years now. We all voted last year to approve a \$7/house rate increase for a new community well. Since then nothing has happened. And now we either have water going out every day or water that has to be delivered. We are unable to water anything outside of our home. We were told the well would be repaired by , memorial weekend. Since then no work has been done on the well. Had Washington water Supply dome what they agreed upon we would not be in the predicament</p>
	Guru Mani	Web	<p>Washington Water Supply claims that they want to increase the rate since they are trucking in water. This is because of the company's mismanagement. If they had acted on the issue on time this wouldn't have happened.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We have been having water issues for the last 3 years. And last year we all met with Washington Water Supply and decided to drill a new well. Based on the email thread from Washington Water Supply, it looks like they didn't act on it immediately. They reached out to a driller couple of months before the 2023 summer. If they had acted on time, we could have gotten the well fixed.</li> <li>2. Most of the connections in the community is not metered. So how can Washington Water Supply keep saying, it's the usage and not a leak. Last year, we had couple of leaks in the line and without meters how can we ensure its not a leak in the distribution line.</li> </ol>

	Amanda Hayes	Web	I am willing to pay the surcharge for water to continue to be trucked in ONLY if Washington Water Supply agrees to provide receipts for the amount of water and cost of, as the communication from John Poppe has been very inconsistent, and they are often dishonest about the amount of water being used and by whom. He is often very punitive if people speak out against him and encourages us to blame our neighbors for the lack of water and point the finger at each other rather than acknowledging his lack of timely maintenance is the reason for the lack of water.
	Remko Oosterhof	Web	We have been having issues with water all summer and have seen no action on repairs. Our water is metered and we use less than the standard household amount of water with a family of 4.. We had water issues last year as well and the year prior... We have found leaky irrigation systems on houses with no meters and other issues as well... The water system is not being maintained properly.
	Andrew Till	Web	Information from WW is rare and limited. Last year we were told a new well would be drilled, this year the only talk is rehabbing the old well. We are paying a fixed monthly rate for a service, reliable access to clean drinking water, yet we fill with water shortages all the time, including lack of any water. Based on the contract, we should have access to over 400 gallons per day, we are expected to live using more than half that. We cannot use any water outside, so no watering plants, no pressure washing, no washing cars, no pools....
	Jordan Jensen	Web	<p>John Poppe and Washington Water Supply has done an absolutely horrible job running our community well. We have had issues with the well not producing enough water for the community for years now and he keeps putting off doing any of the work needed to fix it. The community had agreed to pay for improvements on the well last summer. John had all winter to fix the problem (which had existed for a few years) and didn't do it. He waited until the summer when drillers are hard to come by and people are desperate need of water. I don't believe that the members of the community should have to pay for his negligence and poor planning. Over the summer John has turned our water off on a regular basis. For much of the summer we have had outages at least weekly, and in some cases we have only had access to water for a few hours a day for the entire week. This has led to the health department telling us to boil our water. John Poppe has told the community we are not allowed to water outdoors all summer long and when we run out of water he is always accusing people of secretly watering outdoors. This has led to unneeded conflict in our community. When people have threatened to seek legal help, John has said "do your best"</p> <p>I am 100% against the community funding this, and I would request that he has to continue trucking in water until he gets the well fixed!</p>
	Mike & Linda Moore	Web	We own a rental property located in Maple Valley which is serviced by Washington Water Supply-a community well serving 43 homes. For the past 3 years the water supply has dwindled and on many occasions water is randomly turned off for long periods of time-often 24 hrs without notice. Our tenant of 5

			<p>yrs moved out because of this and our real estate agent has said we cannot re-rent the property with water issues-so we are losing rental income each month. The problem with the water service is lack of maintenance and possibly the water source is no longer enough to provide for the homes. John Pope of WWS has repeatedly said he is unable to get a well company out to service the well and constantly states the water is off because of leaks or someone using water outside so he trucks in water to support the system. Rather than repair/replace the system he wants to charge extra to truck in water! NO WAY is that right. His lack of maintenance on the system has caused this issue. He should be forced to repair/replace the well system to support the community water needs inside AND outside of homes, not charge the users for his lack of maintenance. We want to charge him for our loss of income!</p>
	Bob Hansen	Web	<p>We have an unmetered water connection that is shared with our neighbor, we do not have our own connection. Last summer John said that he would have the well fixed, if this would have been done with any sense of urgency we wouldn't be in a position to have water trucked in. We should not have to pay a fee for John Pope's lack of concern to supply us with a consistent water supply. Up until all the complaints started this year I hadn't seen any communication that his was trucking water in. Unfortunately, the only time Washington Water Supply expresses any concern is when there is a complaint. Also of concern is that he has not mentioned that he is trying to find any other vendors to repair our well. John and his Company needs to be held accountable to fix this problem on his dime and install meters at all our properties</p>
	Satomi Miyakawa	Web	<p>I've received notice that our rate will go up as a result of Mr. Poppe supplying additional water, but little effort is made into finding out the cause for the loss of water. Meters were supposed to have been installed by 2014, but many of us are without meters. Even with the supplied water, it is insufficient for indoor use and effort is made to conserve water even indoors. We are ordered not to water outside. At the moment, I truck in my own water from gracious friends to supply water for my vegetable garden as well as livestock. I am of the opinion that the owner will put in as little as he can before retiring. The system is old. This affects the resell of my house. Banks do not loan on a house that doesn't have sufficient water.</p>
	Morgana Manley	Web	<p>To whom it may concern, For the past 23+ years that we have lived in this house there have been many issues with the community well and with the unacceptable level of repair, maintenance and communication surrounding it. The current well production issues were recognized last year, water use was restricted during the summer months, and Mr. Poppe failed to take the necessary steps at that time to remedy the situation, to repair/refurbish the well and restore to normal water production levels. I do not believe a surcharge should be approved when Mr. Poppe is the one who failed to obtain the necessary repairs to the well. Up until about a year or so ago, the communication regarding low water levels, leaks, scheduled maintenance, repairs, or pump shut offs was nearly non-existent. My husband and I had to ask several times over a period of months this last year to get my name added to the email distribution so I could have some warning when the pumps would shut off because the reservoir levels were too low. Communication from Mr. Poppe is a little better now but still seems, quite often, unprofessional in tone, whether in verbiage chosen or issuing threats to shut off water service to anyone using water outside, pitching neighbors against neighbors like they're school children. A</p>

		<p>surcharge does not seem equitable when Mr. Poppe has not fulfilled his obligation to maintain a fully operational well that provides the full output it was originally designed to do. As far as I know only 1 new home has been added to the community in the last 23+ years. I believe, from my observations living on this well system for such a long time that there very likely is a significant leak somewhere. If I recall correctly it was 2 winters ago there was a significant leak that took 3-4 weeks or more for Mr. Poppe to find. After all these years, why aren't all the houses metered? Wouldn't that help a great deal in finding leaks? There was a leak in the road across the street from our home a few years ago that Mr. Poppe was aware of but did not fix for a couple years. It seems that the paying customers to Washington Water Supply, Inc. are the only ones living up to their end of the bargain. Washington Water Supply, Inc. accepts its customer's monthly payments and in exchange is supposed to provide us with water. Why should we be charged a surcharge to cover costs of trucking in water when Mr. Poppe could have avoided the need for it by fixing the well last year.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter, Morgana Manley</p>
	Matthew Ciarvella	<p>Web</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed surcharge of \$60 per month on the regular monthly bills for the Echo Glen Water System, as filed by Washington Water Supply. While I understand the need to ensure the quality and quantity of water provided to meet state standards, I believe that implementing such a substantial surcharge is not a viable or equitable solution.</p> <p>The situation facing the Echo Glen well is not a recent emergency. The performance of the well has been degrading for years. We first began experiencing routine shortages in June 2021. Since then, we have experienced these outages continually, throughout the entire summer of 2021, winter 2021 and 2022, summer 2022, spring 2023, and into summer 2023. In June 2022, the residents organized a meeting with Washington Water Supply to discuss the continual outages.</p> <p>During that meeting, residents expressed a general opinion that one of the main issues facing the well was that not all homes in the water system were metered, and this was making it impossible to identify leaks in the system, or when a user's water usage exceeded a reasonable amount. According to John Poppe, 20 of the 43 homes in the water system were currently metered. John said that water meters would not be the solution to this issue and that the well's output was falling well below what was needed to maintain community needs. According to the State Department of Health Drinking Water's assessment, the Echo Glen well has an expected capacity of 67 gallons per minute.</p> <p>At the June meeting, John said the capacity of the well had fallen to 8 gallons per minute and that ultimately, the well would need to be replaced given that it was originally built in 1970. At that time, residents agreed collectively to a new well. As an interim step, John said that a rehabilitation effort would also be made to clean the existing well and prolong its lifespan. To the best of my knowledge, this rehabilitation effort was never performed.</p>

During the outages in May and June 2023, communication with John indicated that the well output has fallen even further, down to 5 gallons per minute. During these outages, average household use was measured at 140 gallons per day, while usage at 170 gallons per day began to exhaust the system. These numbers are well below the average use of other communities; one statistic I found from the nearby Covington Water District estimated the average household usage for a family of four at 280-300 gallons per day.

While I appreciate the effort and cost that Washington Water Supply has made to keep its customers supplied with water, the increasingly common water shortages are not new developments. These issues have been ongoing for years and residents have been in continual communication with Washington Water Supply about the problems. It seems that Washington Water Supply has delayed taking any action on the problems facing the well until it became too severe to ignore and as such, the situation now requires emergency measures.

It does not seem fair or reasonable that residents should bear the brunt of the costs associated with Washington Water Supply's inaction. Had the well situation been unforeseen, it would be more than understandable that extraordinary measures would need to be taken to stabilize emergent conditions. But this problem has been building for years, and Washington Water Supply has had ample opportunity to respond before the well degraded to its current state. As it was Washington Water Supply's inaction that caused this problem, the onus should be on the company to bear the associated costs. Simply put, if John Poppe had addressed the well issues in a timely fashion, we wouldn't have needed emergency water deliveries in the first place.

According to the proposal that Washington Water Supply shared with residents, the company intends to seek 100% of the cost of the water deliveries. Washington Water Supply intends to collect \$60 per month for 6 months (Sept 2023 through Feb 2024) or \$6000, whichever comes first. For 43 homes in the system, this works out to \$2580 per month. For the proposed six months of collections, this would mean Washington Water Supply plans to collect \$15,480. Is Washington Water Supply's \$6000 limit based on anticipated received amounts and not billed amounts because Washington Water Supply anticipates not all residents will pay the surcharge? If so, it seems like the planned surcharge will be inequitable by default as it is likely residents paying the surcharge will be subsidizing those who refuse or are unable to pay. Furthermore, given this timeline will generate funds beyond the expected need, how will residents be guaranteed that Washington Water Supply will not simply retain any extra funds it receives, rather than refunding extra money?

When asked for clarification on these concerns, Washington Water Supply has not responded.

In light of these concerns, I respectfully urge the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to

			carefully consider the potential implications of approving the proposed surcharge for the Echo Glen Water System. While I appreciate the effort Washington Water Supply has made to resolve the continued outages, it is unacceptable to hold residents accountable for an emergency solution when they were not the cause of the emergency. I implore you to explore alternative solutions and prioritize the best interests of the community when making your decision regarding this proposed surcharge.
	Remko and Amber Oosterhof	Web	We are on a meter.
	James Provine	Web	This is a 1 person household why would I need to pay as much as others with mutible people All persons using the water should be metered as I am and pay for the proper usage ! Why would a one person household have to pay the same amount as non metered person . My usage is very small in comparison! If everyone was metered it would be very quick and easy to find leaks and you would know who is using all the water. It would also be more fair and acurate for billing to start with a minimum. We shouldnt have to pay to truck in water over and above the normal recomended usage when we cant regulate the usage properly and charge accordingly.
	Cindy Patterson	Web	We are unable to water outside the home. We have a home maintenance project, that is under warranty, with a small window that requires pressure washing that we cannot do. Trucking in water is only for water inside the home. Does not solve the problem.
	Joe C Gstettenbauer	Web	<p>We are new to the area (moved into our home in October 2022) and to the Echo Glen Water System. Since we have moved here, we have always paid our water bill in a timely way, but since April 2023 we have not received full water service from Washington Water Supply, Inc. There have been many days when our water supply has been off for 5+ hours. Based on what we hear from our neighbors, this water shortage issue has been going on for a few years now and we are wondering why the water well rehabilitation was not done earlier. From what we here from Washington Water Supply, the well was supposed to have been rehabbed in late May, but due to an employee injury, the company that was contracted to do the rehab work hasn't been able to do the job. It seems that little effort has been made to find another company to complete this well rehab, so this water shortage issue continues.</p> <p>We are told by Washington Water Supply that we need to use 130 gallons (or less) per day. Our household is small (2 people) and I'm guessing that we use less than 130 gallons (the water line to our house is not metered). Also, we are told to boil water for drinking, etc., so we also have an expense of purchasing drinking water, since we can't always boil water. Because we are not supposed to do any outside watering, the plants and vegetation around our home are very dry which creates a potential fire hazard.</p> <p>I also want to point out that because of the erratic water supply, we have had a rather significant plumbing expense. Once when the water supply came back on, the water pressure blew out a piece of plumbing to our</p>

		<p>water heater (located in our garage). The cost to repair the damage was over \$1900. We've also heard from another neighbor who had to repair some water faucets in their home because of this water pressure issue.</p> <p>In my opinion, if Washington Water Supply had done their due diligence as far as rehabbing the well in a timely way a few years ago, we would not be having this problem now. The proposed rate surcharge seems unreasonable at this time.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>I've already commented once regarding Washington Water Supply's proposal for a \$60 per month surcharge to our (Echo Glen) monthly bill. The surcharge seems high since Washington Water Supply hasn't fulfilled its contractual obligation to supply the users with a constant / steady / adequate supply of water, even though we pay our monthly water bill on time. Also, some of us who are on this system have encountered additional expenses (damaged plumbing, purchase of bottled drinking water, etc.) as a result of inconsistent service.</p> <p>If a surcharge of some amount is granted to Washington Water Supply, I would ask that the Commission make a stipulation that Echo Glen well rehabilitation occur by a specific date (within the next couple of months). If the rehabilitation does not occur within the specified time, then the surcharge should be revoked or a rebate be given to all Echo Glen water customers.</p>
	Jon Clements Web	<p>John Poppe has mismanaged our communities well to an egregious extent. Every time the community runs out of water John immediately blames the community members for leaks on private properties, consuming too much water, or really anything he can think of. There have been multiple times that the outages have been caused by leaks in the main water lines which John has found and fixed himself.</p> <p>Last year, John informed the community that we could have a new well drilled and our water rates would increase by around 7 dollars a month for 10 years to pay off the new well. John put this to a vote within the community and out of the 42 homes on the well, 41 of us voted in favor of the new well. John proceeded to sit on this and do nothing. John then decided to attempt to rehab the well rather than replace it, but was so delayed in getting the process started that summer has rolled around yet again, and we are frequently stuck without water, or requiring John to have water delivered for the community.</p> <p>John has brought water in on several occasions in the past without charging us for the deliveries, this is the first time that he has attempted to charge us for them. John has been bringing water in to supplement the extremely low output of the well which he has known has a serious problem for a bare minimum of 3 years now.</p> <p>Additionally, John is notoriously terrible at communicating with us. When the water is shut off we are never informed beforehand, even for planned shut offs for repairs. He frequently uses community members to</p>

			<p>maintain the well or to spread his rare communications rather than coming out and doing the work himself, or even having more staff members who can manage the system.</p> <p>All of this could have easily been avoided had John been proactive in either getting a new well drilled, or rehabbing the well earlier. Because of this, I firmly believe that John should be responsible for the cost of the deliveries.</p>
<b>Undecided</b>			
	Dave Sutfin	Web	
	Jason E Wilmoth	Web	<p>We are one of the ~45 homes on the well owned by Washington Water Supply (WWS).</p> <p>The first issue came up approx ~3 summers ago. Plus or minus a year. We had that hot long drought and the well went dry that week. After that point in time the water service has degraded exponentially. Slowly at first and rapidly as time went on to the point where water outages were daily at random times.</p> <p>WWS has had 3+ years to address the issue, even with the community backing a cost increase to pay for rehab costs. WWS has had no sense of urgency to address the well capacity and only started trucking in water recently after the community demanded supply (we have been paying all this time Afterall).</p> <p>It seems more effort is spent by WWS to recover water trucking costs than address the root issue. They have mis-managed their well so badly that they had no choice but to truck in water to avoid a humanitarian, safety and health issue.</p> <p>I have a hard time considering paying surcharges because WWS neglected their well for so long and the rehab to put it back to proper capacity is not even scheduled. Not even scheduled after 3 years from the first sign of issue!!!!!!</p>
	Kenneth Michael Wood	Web	<p>I have no issue with paying what is fair, but the proposal left room for ambiguity on who is completely paying the bill. There is a possibility that some home owners can refuse to pay forcing payment on the rest. As an aside, we have been on restricted status for well over 3 months (closer to 6) and we are having a difficult time getting proper updates.</p>
<b>Yes</b>			
	John Earl	Web	<p>Washington Water Supply Company Docket No. 230598 Scheduled for August 10, 2023 Property Address: 21060 231 Ave. SE No Meter</p> <p>This comment is concerning the surcharge that has been requested by Washington Water. It seems to us that a surcharge is fair if it is for an improvement of the well (new infrastructure) or a short term request while repairs are being done, not an open ended charge for an ongoing problem that has not been fixed. How long</p>

will the surcharge be applied? The problem with the well is not new (this has been going on for several years), just not repaired in a timely manner. The main problems with Washington Water is very poor and vague communication and delayed maintenance of the well. If funding for these repairs was the reason, why have our rates not increased since 1996? We have been on the well for 35 years and during that time phone calls are not always answered or returned, surveys are sent out and we never hear the results, and lastly at a meeting last year we thought we were getting a new well and now we find out it is a repair of filters instead. At what point will Washington Water be required to fix the problem, and what is the plan if the well driller will not commit to a schedule? The following are examples of problems:

- Several years ago, it was discovered that someone on Maxwell Road was illegally tapping into our water supply. Is that going on now? Has anyone checked? How long was this going on before it was discovered? Could someone else be illegally tapping into the system?
- Without meters it is very hard to find out if there is a water leak on someone's property or the well infrastructure itself (as what happened in January of 2022, when we had almost one month of interrupted service, and it took that long to find the huge leak).
- On our road (231st Ave SE) we had a water leak on the main water line creating a continuous stream down the side of the road for 2 years. Echo Glen was notified but did not fix it for about 2 years.
- Another problem with the well is the number of families on it. When we moved in, one family per property was the norm. Now there are extra living arrangements on many properties which we are sure add up to more water use per property.
- Currently, we are experiencing decreasing water output due to silting of the pump intake in the well. At this time daily output is less than 115 gal./day/ at each property. This is not a new problem, it has been an ongoing problem for several years and after a meeting last June 2022 we thought we were getting a new well, but that did not happen and were told the filters needed changing and now that is not being done. Why are we not getting a new well? All we are being told is we are using too much water, but who? Without meters it is difficult to find out where the extra water is being used.
- If this delayed maintenance is due to lack of funds, why have our rates been the same since 1996?
- Meters would solve the problem of where overuse of water is happening. Why has this not been done?
- The following is an example of the e-mails we receive from John Poppe

----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Poppe  
Date: Fri, Jul 21, 2023 at 7:50 AM  
Subject: Echo Glen Water Consumption Summary  
To: Shelly Cline

Good Morning Shelly,  
Please forward this email to water system customers:

1. All mechanical and electrical systems operating.
2. Well pump operating 24/7 with daily water production about 5000 gallons.

		<p>3. July 19-20 water consumption by customers increased from 5000 gallons per day to more than 16000 gallons per day. That 24 hour time frame it costs the Echo Glen water system \$800 in trucked water fees.</p> <p>4. Based on the consumption records, water consumption increased 3 times the normal consumption.</p> <p>5. The average cost of importing water cost each customer an extra \$20 that day.</p> <p>Please do not water outside the home and conserve water.</p> <p>Respectfully, Washington Water Supply, Inc.</p> <p>This type of communication that we get from Washington Water Supply forward to us from another user. Item #3 was meaning what? Is it our responsibility to look for leaks or report our neighbors? It seems from 5000 to 16,000 gallons per day is a huge jump. Something the Washington Water Supply should be looking into with their service technicians.</p> <p>Without reviewing all the invoices, I am somewhat confused with the numbers below. Is it \$4,000/month or \$2580/month ( \$60/month ea. Times 43 customers). Is it \$60 a month till you recover your costs? Looks like you will bring in water for the foreseen future since it looks like well rehab is not starting anytime soon. Also, what is the plan for the customers won't pay the surcharge? I think the surcharge is probably fair if you had a more comprehensive plan to fix the problem. Get the well system fixed and install meters and adjust the monthly rate to cover costs, operation and expenses. Meters would allow you to charge us on volume used.</p> <p>Note: I am out of town and sorry I will not be present.</p> <p>Thank You John Earl</p>
	William Weber	<p>Web</p> <p>It's been going on for like 10 years now. A new hole is going to be drilled to create a new well. New meters put on all the water mains to each house. There are to many houses on the well up here on the hill. It needs to be resolved.</p>