

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

SARAH HAND AND GRETCHEN HAND,
a married couple

Complainant,

v.

RAINIER VIEW WATER COMPANY, INC.,

Respondent.

DOCKET UW 170924

**SARAH HAND'S EXHIBIT 56 TO
CROSS EXAMINATION**

EXHIBIT 56

TO CROSS EXAMINATION OF BOB BLACKMAN AND RACHEL STARK

July 25, 2018

Email exchange between Rainier View customer,
Tina Case, Virpi Salo-Zieman at DOH,
and Robert Blackman re: Complaint over water quality

Anna Lee

From: Salo-Zieman, Virpi (DOH)
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2017 10:08 AM
To: James, Robert (DOH)
Subject: FW: Question about water

Just FYI – keeping you in the loop. This complainant appears not to be living in Southwood system or near the area that the news story was about.//Virpi

From: Bob Blackman [mailto:Bob@RainierViewWater.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2017 9:55 AM
To: tcprofiler@yahoo.com
Cc: Jimmy Jensen <Jimmy@RainierViewWater.com>; Salo-Zieman, Virpi (DOH) <Virpi.Salo-Zieman@DOH.WA.GOV>
Subject: RE: Question about water

Good Morning Tina,

I am the General Manager for Rainier View Water Co. First, I can assure you that Rainier View takes water quality concerns very seriously. I was surprised to hear that someone in the office told you the water was safe and hung-up. This is not the protocol for handling water quality complaints and concerns. The person taking the call should have noted the complaint on your account and forward you on to the Water Quality Manager(Jimmy Jensen). The Manager would determine what steps need to be taken to assure you are receiving safe drinking water. This would typically include a site visit and then decide whether or not flushing the water mains would alleviate the problem.

We own and operate over 20 water systems, so I need to verify your address to determine which water system you are receiving water service from. Our records show a Tina and Jeffrey Case located at 24003 84th Ave E. If this is correct you are on the Chateau Woods Water System. This system receives all its water from two wells that have low levels of manganese (well #1- .03 mg/l and well#2- .02 mg/l). The Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Manganese is .05 mg/l. We are below and MCL, however even with the low levels of Manganese you may see some discoloration and sediment in the water.

It's important to note that Manganese is a Secondary Contaminant, meaning it is not considered a health risk. So, even if we exceeded the MCL it is not mandatory to treat. Manganese treatment on a system of this size can be fairly expensive, somewhere between \$250,000 and \$300,000 and these costs would be rolled into the rates. There is a fine line between keeping the rates reasonable and the level of service that meet everybody's expectations.

I would recommend flushing your Hot Water Tank annually. The heat in the tank breaks down the minerals in the water, which will settle in the bottom of the tank, causing a build-up of minerals that may show up in the rest of the house.

Please call me (253-537-6634 x 1213) or Jimmy Jensen (253-537-6634 x 1239) and we can arrange to have someone come to your residence and help with your concerns.

Sincerely,

Bob Blackman
General Manager
(253) 537-6634 X1213
www.rainierviewwater.com

From: Salo-Zieman, Virpi (DOH) [<mailto:Virpi.Salo-Zieman@DOH.WA.GOV>]
Sent: Thursday, April 27, 2017 7:12 AM
To: Bob Blackman
Cc: Jimmy Jensen
Subject: FW: Question about water

Good morning Bob and Jimmy,

We have received a customer complaint on discolored water, white particles in the water, and lack of response from you in probably Southwood water system. Unfortunately, Ms Case did not include a phone number for easier contact or address to confirm the location, but she is referring to other complaints in the same area and so maybe you know. Would you please follow up with her and let me know what is going on.

Thanks,

Virpi

From: T C [<mailto:tcprofiler@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2017 6:38 AM
To: Salo-Zieman, Virpi (DOH) <Virpi.Salo-Zieman@DOH.WA.GOV>
Subject: Re: Question about water

Hello,
Thanks for the reply. No, they haven't replied via email. Other neighbors report the answers they get are the same we received. "the water is safe, let it run" (if it continues to run, the water gets darker), and one neighbor was told that the water company has been out to our area and flushed pipes (her words) and hoped this would help after reports of white particles and chunks came from their bathroom shower heads and kitchen sinks. We get the discolored water, but it's not as bad as others describe. Thankfully, but still sets alarms off for my family since we shouldn't have to live like this.

They say it's safe to drink, but who would drink brown chunky water? Seriously.

Yes, you may forward this to them. They won't reply to us via email. I did call as noted below and told. "The water is safe." Then the lady hung up. I guess they get a lot of calls, as she didn't even ask me my name.

-Tina Case

From: "Salo-Zieman, Virpi (DOH)" <Virpi.Salo-Zieman@DOH.WA.GOV>
To: "tcprofiler@yahoo.com" <tcprofiler@yahoo.com>
Cc: "James, Robert (DOH)" <Bob.James@DOH.WA.GOV>; "Hayes, Corina M (DOH)" <Corina.Hayes@DOH.WA.GOV>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2017 10:27 AM
Subject: FW: Question about water

Hi Tina,

Corina forwarded me your email concerning brown water at your tap. Brown water is often related to iron or manganese which are not health risks, but it is still not advisable to drink visible turbid or highly colored water. It may be fluffed off biofilm or something else and so you should run the tap until the water clears out and then fill up your glass. I don't know what the white chunks could be.

I am quite surprised that the water company has not returned your calls or addressed your complaint. Typically, they send an operator out to make sure everything appears as under normal operating conditions for the area. They take a few basic water quality tests and compare those results to their baseline water quality. If

you would like, I can share your email with them and request direct contact with you. It would be best to get them involved so that they also are alerted about a neighborhood that is not satisfied with their water quality.

If you are served by their Southwood system, I know they have been trying to install treatment plants to the sources with highest raw water iron and manganese. I don't know which one of their sources would likely be providing water to your particular neighborhood -- They have 24 active wells around the service area. Five of these wells have treatment plants in place (for removing iron and manganese) and three additional treatment plants have been approved for construction. I know that they took one of the Fir Meadows wells offline until the treatment is in place (this is the well that was impacting the area that was part of the news story last fall).

Please let me know if you are ok with me sharing your email with the water company and request them to contact you. I can also contact them for you. I would like to know which neighborhood you live in first so that we can target the investigation more appropriately.

Sincerely,

Virpi Salo-Zieman, P.E.

Regional Engineer, NW Regional Operations
Office of Drinking Water, Washington State Department of Health
20425 72nd Ave S, Suite 310, Kent, WA 98032
Tel: (253) 395-6761 Fax: (253) 395-6760
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw/>

Public health - Always working for a safer and healthier Washington

From: T C [<mailto:tcprofiler@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2017 8:43 AM
To: Hayes, Corina M (DOH) <Corina.Hayes@DOH.WA.GOV>
Subject: Question about water

Hi there. My family moved to Graham, WA later 2015 and have noticed brownish colored water. We were told it was safe, but reluctant to trust that as more families in our development have complained and even had other things coming out (white chunks) and such into water. Rainier Water company has had bad press from 2015-2016 about fixing brown water problem that still is a problem. Our house is mild compared to others, but I want to know what regulations have been done by this company for public disclosure and want to know if they meet those standards, I don't think people should have to spend hundreds on drinking water via bottle because we don't have drinking water from or spouts.

Also, the amount of sediment and particles, causes blockage over time according to DOH research that I have visited. As a citizen and homeowner, I'm alarmed.

What are things that we can do? That they can do? What assurance do we have they are making effort to clean water, instead of hanging up on us or telling us to leave when we have questions or ignoring our emails? I have only sent one email and have yet to get a response over a year now. I called once and was told it was safe and they hung up.

-Tina Case