

Public Comments by Case

Total Comments: 256

In Favor: 0

Opposed: 256

Undecided: 0

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
No			
	Raymond J Carolus		<p>Dear commission Members:</p> <p>I have received a letter from Cascadia Water for a rate increase, please refer to the attached copy. I am writing to you because I believe the rate increase to be exurbanite. The letter covers costs from several water districts purchased by Cascadia Water. Our property is in the Island Mainland System (for Northwest Water Services). The immediate rate increase requested is a whopping 84%.</p> <p>Cascadia recently purchased Northwest Water Services, formally a North Whidbey Island water district company and immediately combined it with their Skagit and Snohomish districts. They have also acquired several other water districts, one of them as far away as Eastern Washington. Their combined list of operating expenses includes nine that are not part of our district, refer to check marks on the attachment. This has led me to assume that our district is being asked to pay for expenses out of our district.</p> <p>We purchased our property in 1999. We paid for water hook up to the Silverlake Water District still owned by the original property developer. Water rates had been stable since 1977 until the district was acquired by Northwest Water Services from the developer. They raised our rates following their purchase. Shortly thereafter they installed meter bases and added usage rates to their base rate. However, their incremental rate increases were within reason but still questionable based on the former owner's history of no charge for maintenance or upgrades. Cascadia Water appears to be a sock it to you, monopoly expecting to fatten their pocketbooks based on their newly acquired investment. Please consider holding them accountable to be a real service company serving their customers first.</p> <p>It seems to me that the ground water rights should belong to the property owners in their districts, not for sale to corporate monopolies. Maybe water district customers would be better served by a cooperative owner and management system.</p>

			Sincerely, Raymond J Carolus
	Stuart Kiehl		<p>Water is necessary for life. To increase for profit the price on many of us on Social Security is shameful and greedy and must be not allowed. This extreme attack on the community and the public interest for obscene increased profits to a few should be stopped immediately</p> <p>The application should not only be rejected, but the applicant should be reminded that to hold hostage the Public Interest as they are attempting is not acceptable, and as a reminder and remedy no increases of any kind will be permitted for x amount of years. Fill in the blank with a number, I propose three years for no rate increase of any kind as a gentle reminder.</p> <p>If their lawyers screech that their clients cannot provide water with no increase, then we vote whether to make this Public Utility truly public and no longer private for profit and take it over.</p> <p>Sincerely, Stuart Kiehl</p>
	Russell Underwood	E-mail	<p>I am submitting my comment for the subject rate case (UW-240151). I am 84 years old and live on a fixed income. I oppose the large 94% rate increase that Cascadia Water is seeking for the residents of Monterra. My disposable income shrinks each year due the our inflationary times. I understand that business expenses have increased but not 94%. I don't believe that the increase will make our local water system better. Please reject this large rate increase. Thank you.</p>
	Bob and Patti Stallone	E-mail	<p>Good morning, My wife and I just moved into Cascadia Water's service area last October so we are "newcomers" in this area. We understand the cost of everything has and is still going up thanks to our inept government. That's another story. However, a 75% increase in the cost of delivery is something we have never seen in our lifetime. It smacks of mismanagment which I know you will not discuss with customers at this hearing but it is the only logical conclusion that applies here. To allow this increase all at once is extrodinarily unfair and this company should be thoroughly investigated to discover what prompted them to ask for it. Needless to say, we are vehemently against this increase going through without some serious justification provided to the customers. Thank you for listening. Sincerely,</p>

			Bob and Patti Stallone
	Janie Cribbs	E-mail	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am extremely disappointed and angry at the proposed rate hike by Cascadia Water. A 75% rate increase will make water beyond a luxury for many of us here on Whidbey Island and have a chilling effect on our monthly finances.</p> <p>With price hikes on everything including gasoline, regular working folks are left with few options and although no one takes water for granted, we already had our bills doubled a few years ago with added surcharges for extra use - like watering our vegetable gardens!</p> <p>I do not think this is fair and if they want more money for improvements they need to apply for grants or other state applications - not pass it all off onto the consumers who depend on having water for drinking, household use and gardens.</p> <p>I hope this will be considered in their application and taken to heart that we are sincere in our comments and fears.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Janie Cribbs</p>
	Rosemarie Lueke	E-mail	<p>I am a resident of Monterra Subdivision in Clallam County. I was able to move here because of the affordable housing and utilities. I know we dealt with this same issue in 2021, and it was scrapped because of the unreasonableness of having us pay for capital improvements to other systems owned by Cascadia, that had no substantive value for Monterra water supplies. Based on the information provided to me, i feel like this is a repeat of the same thing! Yes they've purchased numerous new systems, and NO, we in Monterra should not be footing the bill for all of that! NONE OF THE EXPENSES CITED ARE DIRECTLY CORRELATED TO MONTERRA.</p> <p>We have no options for another source of clean, safe water. This is essentially a monopoly. We are all on fixed incomes here, and when i budgeted to be able to live here, it was affordable. I agree with installing meters, however, the base rate is ridiculous! Most of us are 1 or 2 in a household, not doing loads of laundry for others, pools, hot tubs, etc....but now our water bill is a huge part of my monthly expense!</p> <p>Please consider denying Cascadia's EXORBITANT RATE INCREASE OR.... Approve a lower or reduced rate increase that reflects the true cost related to the customers in Monterra.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p>

			Rosemarie Lueke
	Karen and Marvin Klein	E-mail	***See Attachment
	Connie and Jeff Spring	E-mail	***See Attachment Please find below statements from the customers indicated below. We request you seriously review and consider them. Thank you.
	Michelle and Richard Polver	E-mail	***See Attachment
	Mark Nudelman	E-mail	Hello Melissa, I received this notice from Cascadia Water and did not receive something previously about the rate increase. I would like to say that Cascadia has always done a wonderful job and has been responsive when we have questions. That being said a 75% increase does seem excessive. I'm unaware as to why they feel they need this increase to improve the infrastructure or if this is just an opportunity for them to increase the bottom line. No such information has been forthcoming. Best, Mark Nudelman
	Rebecca Bender	E-mail	Rate Increase UW-240151 Peninsula System for Estates/Monterra For the record we in oppose this outrageous 94% rate increase on June 1, 2024 due to insufficient details in the filings. Cascadia's capital expenditures was premature prior to the company taking this on and other their many other operations. Our concern is what additional increases will be following if this one is allowed. What are the company's future capital plans? Was the metering done to decrease operational expense? Are the automated meters deployed or are they still under way? Questions exist on unanswered expenses...reservoir construction, generators, metering, management salaries & other operational costs from other Cascadia operations allocated to the Peninsula system. Attended the April 22, 2024 meeting in Port Angeles The need for additional information will take time. The May 23rd Commission meeting to decide the rate increase needs to be rescheduled for everyone to be fully aware of the details involved. Our attorney Judy Endejan is currently out of town and will need to have time to prepare for this meeting. Our Peninsula group includes 4

			systems & 1 in Jefferson county. The commission needs to separate us from the other 29 systems. 14 of the systems are on the Island...the largest. 94% increase in a monthly bill is a outrageous.
Robert Koski	E-mail	Gentlemen	<p>Cascadia recently purchased our water system due to the owner Marty Pedersen's severe health issues.</p> <p>Now we the former Pedersen system users have been notified by Cascadia of a 65% rate increase. No reasons have been given to us that justify this, nor have we been advised of any reason for the increase. No assessment of our system, its state of repair or its current or future needs has been forthcoming.</p> <p>Their stated plan seems to be to consolidate all systems into one rate structure that spreads operational costs evenly across all users.</p> <p>This means that systems like ours requiring less input to repair or maintain will be subsidizing those that require more input. This is unfair to our system.</p> <p>This rate increase request is outrageous.</p> <p>One other consideration to this is that we do not have access to irrigation water in our neighborhood.</p> <p>Robert Koski Former Pedersen system user, Olympic Peninsula. Dungeness Bay Plat</p>
Tim Norman	E-mail	To whom it may concern,	<p>A rate increase of over 100% is uncalled for. I am not sure exactly where the money is supposed to be allocated however, the cost of expanding should fall on the new developments or new customers being added. I should not have to pay for the expansion of your company, that is what investors are for.</p>
Donna Vanderheiden	E-mail	Dear Commissioners:	<p>My neighbors and I have reviewed the outline of the Cascadia Water Rate increase request and have found it to be both unreasonable and unfair.</p> <p>This is simply because Cascadia operates multiple distinct water systems, each of which has its own unique needs. By structuring the rate increase as a single request, this fundamental fact is ignored. Our water tower is located on Inglewood Drive. Our costs should not be shared by water suppliers in other western states and counties.</p>

		<p>The outline of reasons for the rate increase, includes multiple maintenance items that impact only one of the multiple systems that Cascadia operates. These include the major overhaul of the CAL waterworks, consolidation of the Del Bay system, extension of the Bacus Road system, adding chlorine analyzers on Pelican Point, the new reservoirs for the Estates system and WB Waterworks, installation of disinfection on the Rolf Bruun system and the new well on the Sea View system. Clearly, these items should only be one time assessments to that particular water system's users.</p> <p>Standard maintenance items, like the replacement of pumps, pressure tanks and control boxes are known and expected expenses, which Cascadia should have considered as part of its prudent management. The meter upgrade and replacement is standard prudent management, which will ultimately result in reduction of Cascadia's expenses.</p> <p>Likewise, the installation of telemetry systems will result in lowering of Cascadia's operating expenses.</p> <p>None of these changes is primarily for the benefit of the system users, but rather for the efficiency of Cascadia and will increase Cascadia's profitability at the expense of all the water systems users.</p> <p>Further, since the last rate increase, Cascadia has gone on an expansion spending spree. Purchasing 6 systems across most of Washington State. From Clallam County in the West to Grant County in the East. Now, Cascadia wants to consolidate those far flung disparate systems into a single billing and rate structure. While this will simplify Cascadia's accounting system, we fail to see how this will improve service to individual water system users.</p> <p>Perhaps Cascadia wants to consolidate the systems it has purchased, these systems are in fact physically separate systems with different needs and challenges. Why group Island County water systems with any of the Mainland, Olympic Peninsula or Grant County Systems.</p> <p>Sincerely, Donna Vanderheiden</p>
	<p>Cathlene Michaels- Brader</p>	<p>E-mail please do not approve Cascadia's application to raise rates by 75%. Do not approve of the conglomeration process for Cascadia. This will cause a monopoly in whater rights. Not allowing the local community a say in what needs to be done in this particular area. We are a community that has a mean age of 65 which means that we are a community that is on a fixed income and can not withstand this amount of increase of expenditure.</p> <p>Supervisor Result: We where told as a community that the application that they submitted had all ready been approved and that we do not have a choice in the matter.</p>

			<p>Customer Resolution: I propose that they do a 10% increase over 7 or 8 years, so that we as a community can accommodate the increase of expenditure. We are a community that the majority is 65 and on a fixed income.</p>
	Allen Balla	E-mail	<p>So here we go again. 94% asked for increase I assume they are shooting high and hoping a 50% will sound real good to us. Listen, I get it they made some improvements but that's the cost of doing business. I make home improvements and it increases my equity, but I don't ask my neighbors to pay for it! They need to ask us first if the improvements they want to make are justified (they did not). Help us as you are all we have, Allen Balla</p>
	Stuart Kiehl	E-mail	<p>Water is necessary for life. To increase for profit the price on many of us on Social Security is shameful and greedy and must be not allowed. This extreme attack on the community and the public interest for obscene increased profits to a few should be stopped immediately</p> <p>The application should not only be rejected, but the applicant should be reminded that to hold hostage the Public Interest as they are attempting is not acceptable, and as a reminder and remedy no increases of any kind will be permitted for x amount of years. Fill in the blank with a number, I propose three years for no rate increase of any kind as a gentle reminder.</p> <p>If their lawyers screech that their clients cannot provide water with no increase, then we vote whether to make this Public Utility truly public and no longer private for profit and take it over.</p>
	Sharman and Glen Richardson	E-mail	<p>Hello Melissa:</p> <p>Thank you for your recent letter regarding Cascadia and their recent declaration for raising our water rates. I am unsure whether we will be able to be in the virtual meeting, so wanted to express our sincere concerns about the proposed water rate.</p> <p>Our question is if this is normal for a company to do, understanding this is probably their right as owner, but is there no way to - with your help - to lessen the impact? They may be promising to fix our ailing system, but we lived with Greg Roats'(the previous owner) promise for years and he did nothing.</p> <p>This increase coupled with the potential drain of our aquifer for the Miller State Park usage PLUS increased housing in our area causes us to wonder about the impact on all of us who live in lower Diamond Point neighborhoods.</p> <p>We think of you as our safeguard for potential self serving owners of water systems and ask you for your help to</p>

			<p>mitigate unwanted scenarios - decreasing water for long time residents, potential disasters from fires (lack of water pressure) and extreme price hikes on household budgets.</p> <p>We are reasonable folk in this area but we have been asked for years to give and give with no return and no assurances.</p> <p>Thank you, Melissa, for receiving our note of concern and expressing these fears to the water commissioners, Sharman and Glen Richardson</p>
	Russell Underwood	E-mail	<p>Madam,</p> <p>I am submitting my comment for the subject rate case (UW-240151).</p> <p>I am 84 years old and live on a fixed income. I oppose the large 94% rate increase that Cascadia Water is seeking for the residents of Monterra.</p> <p>My disposable income shrinks each year due the our inflationary times.</p> <p>I understand that business expenses have increased but not 94%. I don't believe that the increase will make our local water system better.</p> <p>Please reject this large rate increase.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Russell Underwood</p>
	Dave Bennett	E-mail	<p>***SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>Commissioners,</p> <p>Please consider my attached letter considering the proposed rate increases by Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Dave Bennett</p>
	David Armstraong	E-mail	<p>helped arrange sale of our small water system (Del Bay Inc; 35 hookups) to Cascadia/NWW in later 2020. As part of the sale agreement, buyers committed to major upgrades to our system that were completed last fall 2023. While we understood that rate increases would follow over time, we never anticipated increases on the scale of >100% that Cascadia now requests the UTC approve. New monthly water bills will grow by 107%...this seems exorbitant and will certainly adversely impact a number of households on small, fixed incomes.</p> <p>While Cascadia lists a number of completed and ongoing upgrades across their substantial network, it never occurred to us that we would be responsible for higher rates that effectively cover their entire water network. The</p>

		<p>impact is especially significant since it comes as a one-time action effective June 1, 2024, rather than incremental increase over a longer period of time.</p> <p>I urge the Commission to approve a lesser rate increase based on careful analyses of the underlying need Cascadia must have submitted to the Commission. In their cover letter to customers, Cascadia states that the rate increases will generate \$1,788,793 in revenue to them. We have no sense how that amount tallies against the costs they're incurring. Please be vigilant in your audit of their financial data used to justify this extraordinary request.</p> <p>Sincerely David Armstraong Freeland, WA</p>
Pamela and Denny Filan	E-mail	<p>My husband and I reside on Tilbury Lane in Oak Harbor and we totally agree with what our fellow neighbors are stating regarding our increase for our water from Cascadia.</p> <p>More than doubling our water bill every month will put a burden on us. We are on social security and have limited funds each month. With all of the other increases we have faced this year this is definitely one of the biggest. We simply cannot afford this increase. We are asking you to reevaluate your situation and not put the burden on all of your customers. Thank you.</p>
Amy Fenlon	E-mail	<p>I am writing to express my concern regarding the Cascadia Water's request for a rate increase for my neighborhood's water system on Bacus Hill, Sedro Woolley, WA- we are on a local community well of about 50 homes, formerly owned by Northwest Water Services. Cascadia Water purchased our small water system, along with 4 others in the last 2 years- a huge expansion of their corporation in a short period of time. They now want to raise our rates by 75%. They report that the rate increase is "to recover costs" ... They list one improvement specifically identified to Bacus Hill, and 4 other general improvements that could be attributed to Bacus Hill, though some of these are infrastructure costs that will likely provide cost savings for their company in the future. Eight of the 13 improvements listed, are stated to be improvements to other water systems, and four seem to be major infrastructure improvements specific to the Island County system. We are asking, as Bacus Hill residents, if we are being asked to bear a heavy financial cost of these other system improvements of the last two years. Cascadia Water is also stating that they want to "consolidate the Northwest Water Services system (of which Bacus Hill is part) into their Island/Mainland rate structure". They state that "it will provide long-term benefits for all of its customers by developing a larger customer base." They report "revising and consolidating rates...will promote more efficient use of billing and SPREAD COSTS EVENLY AND MORE BROADLY ACROSS EACH</p>

		<p>RATE STRUCTURE- That sounds like it will be a cost saving measure and improved efficiency for the company which will lead to increased profits, but how does it benefit the Bacus Hill customer?</p> <p>Cascadia Water states that they are asking for an average monthly increase of 84% for their Island/Mainland System, of which they propose Bacus Hill will be a part. The increase of the base rate for a 5/8" or 3/4" from \$43 to \$56 a month, may be reasonable. But the first cubic block rate, up to 500 cu ft, (dropped from 668 cu ft) is proposed to go from \$1.30 to \$5.52 per cubic ft; and the 2nd block rate of 501-10009 is going from \$2.40 to \$8.72 per cubic ft. And all of these cubic blocks are being reduced by 25%.</p> <p>Bacus Hill is a rural largely 20-acre plot neighborhood on Bacus Hill consisting of forest lands and gardens sequestering carbon to help the environment. A reasonable amount of water is needed to maintain this habitat and to keep enough moisture in our grounds to deter possible wildfires which are a growing concern these days. We are not an urban neighborhood and should not expect to have water consumption similar to them. It is with great sadness that, what we consider as a basic need, "water", has become a commodity, with an expectation of profits. Ground water in Washington has been determined to belong to the people of Washington. A private company providing the delivery of water which the people own, should not be given the opportunity for rapid growth and profit, and expect to pass these costs on to their customers. We, as customers, have no other option to get water elsewhere in a free market- this is a monopoly on our water, and we are being held hostage to it.- we cannot live without water.</p> <p>I recommend that the Bacus Hill water system continue to be maintained as a separate water billing system. If the other water systems have had costly system improvements, the costs of those should be paid by the system that will feel the benefits, not water systems that have needed little improvements.</p> <p>We understand that rate increases are inevitable; but increases should be gradual and reasonable for customers to adjust to over an extended period of time.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Amy Fenlon</p>
Stefani Christensen and Sue Meister	E-mail	<p>***SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>The attached letter is for UTC staff to answer questions (per UTC public Zoom on May 15, 2024) and include in the open UTC Commissioner Meeting packet on 06/27/2024. The 107% increase in base water monthly charges, for our Tel One water system (from \$49 to 103.28), is much more than the generalized average 75% rate increase mentioned in Cascadia's Rate Proceeding notice. The rate increase takes effect on June 1, 2024.</p>
Kent Renshaw	E-mail	<p>***SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>Urgent Appeal to Maintain Stable Water Rates for Rural Communities - Cascadia Water Rate Request Docket# 240151 (please see attachment).</p> <p>I Am an 89 year old low income senior and have resided in the same house since 1991. When my Del Bay community decided to sell our water system to Cascadia Water, we were led to believe that we would have stable affordable rates. This proved to be untrue and our rates have sky rocketed.</p>

			<p>The proposed rate increase asked by Cascadia Water will strain my income to the point that I will probably have to sell my house and find a residence with lower water charges. My alternative will be to buy bottled water, drive to my son's house in Renton to wash my clothes, take sponge baths instead of showers, and let my garden die from lack of water.</p> <p>I ask you to turn down Cascadia Water's request for a rate increase. Withdraw their request for a rate increase,</p>
	Lee Shissler	E-mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT
	Michael McComb	E-mail	<p>I have been a customer of Aquarius Utilities- now Cascadia Water since September 2010 when I started construction of my house on North Street. In 2010 I was required to pay \$5,674 to connect to the water system. This included a \$500 fee to upgrade the meter from a 3/4" service to a 1" service. The Clallam County Building Department required a 1" service to my home because I was required to install a fire prevention sprinkler system. Since I have never had a fire, I have never utilized this extra capacity nor do I intend to.</p> <p>The proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for a 1" service from the current \$32.08 to \$88.00 per month is unacceptable. There is no financial justification for this increase especially since I use no more water than my neighbors just down the street who have 3/4" services.</p> <p>My February water bill was \$53.98. Under the new proposed rate using the same amount of water my bill would be \$103.76.</p> <p>The proposed billing change would almost double my current water bill adding over \$500 to the amount I spend for water each year. As a retiree living on a fixed income this represents a significant addition to my cost of living. If you multiply \$500 dollars per year by the number of Cascadia Water customers at Diamond Point , that equates to a significant revenue increase for Cascadia Water. What justification other than greed could support this request. If Aquarius was not a profitable company and I'm sure they were, why would Cascadia have purchased them?</p> <p>Thank you for listening to my complaint. It is my hope you will deny or severely reduce the requested rate increase and restore the more fair billing method of how much water you use instead of how big your meter size is. It is my understanding that you will be in the area on April 22, 2024. I would definitely be interested in attending any meeting you might schedule. The Gardiner Community Center just off of Highway 101 often accommodates meetings for the community. Possibly you could have it there.</p> <p>Michael McComb</p>

Adam Shantz	E-mail	<p>I wanted to reach out to you to let you know that these very steep rate increases affect our quality of life and our community at large. It would be one thing if policy allowed for a manageable increase for both the consumer and the water utility and capped it at a certain threshold increase over a period of time. As it is, there is little transparency, required on the part of the utility in terms of the cost of maintenance and improvements of the utility's infrastructure and, therefore, they can raise our usage rates by an alarming amount, apparently, every other year. Something reasonable needs to be done. We were here two years ago and here we are again. We intend to fight it again and we do have a representative in place and are retaining council, but the underlying issue is that the utility can just raise our rates by unscrupulous amounts. Please help us and be a voice for a more stable policy regarding water usage costs.</p>
Mark Long	E-mail	<p>I live in Blue Ribbon Farms, Sequim Wa. Since the water system was purchased by Cascadia or rates have increased greatly as they try to put us into a large water system consisting of other older systems with expensive problems that are not even on the Olympic peninsula. They have spent large amounts on replacing parts of our system that were hardly used and without inspections that may have allowed repairs rather than replacement. Cascadia has informed us that we will be getting another huge rate increase on the order of 75 to 100%. We need the overseers of this private business that is choking us to do their over site job and bring sanity to these outrageous rate increases.</p> <p>Mark Long</p>
James Allen	E-mail	<p>UTC Commisioners,</p> <p>I would like to comment on docket #240151. I have been a costumer of Silver Lake Water since 2018. The water system changed hands several times since 2018 and is currently part of Cascadia Water. I received notification that Cascadia Water was petitioning to raise our rates by 84%. The justification cited was inflation and capital improvements. Throughout the time I have been a costumer the rates have climbed but the quality has not improved. It is the worst water quality I have ever experienced in my life. We know many people on Whidbey Island using various water systems and this is the most expensive water in the area. Based on the currently available inflation figures an 84% increase is outrageous. In the notification I received there was no mention of any capital improvements for the Silver Lake system having been done, or for any being planned. Because of the poor water quality I was forced to install and maintain a costly four stage filtration system. On top of that I do an additional filtering of my drinking water. Based on my experience with the companies who have owned this water system since 2018, it appears that they are only interested in maximizing their profits. They have never invested any revenue back into system improvements. I can see no justification for raising the rates for the Silver Lake system. I feel that it would be more equitable for them to assign a special assessment to the systems that they are investing the capital improvements on. I don't think that the Silver Lake customers should be paying to improve other systems while we suffer with substandard water quality. My wife and I are retired and living on a fixed income and an 84% jump in our water bill would be very difficult for us, especially in these inflationary times.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p>

			Jim and Myra Allen
	Terri and Ron Jones	E-mail	<p>We are members of the Water Consumer Advocates of Olympic Peninsula. We strongly oppose single tariff pricing and the current unrealistic rate increase proposal. It is not fair or appropriate for our community to pay for capital improvements to other water systems outside the Olympic Peninsula.</p> <p>We expect the UTC to decide on rates that apply only to our local water systems and are realistic increases.</p> <p>Thank you, Terri and Ron Jones</p>
	Debbie Crumb and Maryann Meersman	E-mail	<p>Greetings!</p> <p>We are writing in opposition to Cascadia Water, LLC's request to the UTC for a tariff revision (UW-240151).</p> <p>According to the UTC's website, the proposed Cascadia Water general rate increase would generate approximately \$1,788,793 (75 percent) additional annual revenue. Their last general rate case became effective 07/01/2021.</p> <p>According to an undated mailing we received from Cascadia Water on 03/15/2024, the proposed rate for the Peninsula System (for the Estates where we live and for nearby Monterra), the average monthly bill impact from the proposed rates for 5/8" meter size (which we have) would be an increase of 94%. Yikes! Off the top of our heads, we can't think of any commodity as common place as WATER that has increased in price by 94% in less than three years.</p> <p>We realize that Cascadia Water recently made some infrastructure improvements to the system which were costly. They had to upgrade the water storage facility because their existing underground tanks were out of compliance with the Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water.</p> <p>But requesting such a steep increase in less than three years is unacceptable. Please conduct a CAREFUL review of Cascadia Water's request and consider a rate increase that is much more rational, reasonable, and gradual.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration in this matter.</p> <p>Debbie and Maryann</p>
	Andrea Marsden	E-mail	<p>Hello Melissa,</p> <p>I got your contact information from the lady who is organizing the Water Consumer Advocates of the Olympic</p>

		<p>Peninsula. I live in Sequim and am part of the Estates system.</p> <p>I received Cascadia Water's letter describing their application to the UTC to increase their rates. It turns out, they want to increase Estates' rates by 100%.</p> <p>I understand the need for additional revenue, especially with inflation and the cost of everything going up, but cost increases also affect homeowners and consumers. If you add 100% more to the cost of water for us, we will need to cut back in other areas (food and healthcare come to mind), or not pay our water bills. There is only so much that consumers can afford - we are not endless sources of money for companies to tap into whenever they need more revenue. As far as I am aware, the Estates system has no alternative to a source of water aside from Cascadia's system. To me, it seems unreasonable to expect water consumers to shoulder a 100% increase in the amount we pay for something that is required for all living things. In addition, I already pay \$24/month (\$288/year) as a base rate just to be part of the Estates system, whether I use any water or not. What does Cascadia use that money for? They want to double it AND increase the rate for gallons used. I'm sure you've seen their block rate figures - for the first block (0-500 cubic feet), they want to raise the rate OVER 100%, from \$1.00 to \$2.83, and the subsequent blocks are the same, increasing by more than 100%. The example Average Monthly Bill Impact is not accurate at all, especially for the summer months when everyone in my neighborhood waters their garden and fruit trees.</p> <p>I would like to see more information from Cascadia on how they have "prudently managed operating expenses" and what they are going to be doing to further reduce their operating costs.</p> <p>There are a large number of retired citizens living in my neighborhood, who are all on limited incomes. I think a 100% increase is unreasonable and unfair. We didn't ask Cascadia to buy other, smaller private water systems, and before they did, they should have made sure they had the finances to cover repairs and maintenance of these new systems. We do not have an alternative to Cascadia's water system, so without UTC help, we are screwed.</p> <p>Thank you very much for reading this. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration and discussion at the UTC of this rate increase, and hope you agree with me that it is unreasonable.</p> <p>Kind regards, Andrea Marsden</p>
Barbara Brugman and Masanori Hashimoto	E-mail	<p>“Your current water rates will not change because of this water system sale and transfer.” This is what Lehman Enterprises, Inc. (Lehman) represented to the UTC and to Lehman customers in a letter dated August 30, 2018. At that time, Lehman was seeking UTC permission to be absorbed by Cascadia Water, LLC and Cascadia’s ultimate parent, Northwest Natural Gas Company, Portland, Oregon. The August 30, 2018 letter is available on the UTC web site.</p>

We customers, of course, realized our water prices wouldn't stay the same forever. And indeed, in mid-2021, Cascadia embarked on a series of rate increases. In fact these were hefty increases, heftier than one might expect given Lehman's letter of assurance from three years earlier. Between July 2021 and the end of 2022, Cascadia boosted the base rate by 68%, from \$17.50 to \$29.35 a month, and increased by 200% the rate for Block 1, from \$0.75 to \$2.25 per 100 cu ft of water usage. Any Cascadia customer who used even a meager amount of water would be paying at a 200% higher rate in the Block 1 usage category than before the company ownership change. Those were very substantial rate increases for Cascadia Water's customers.

But on top of those recent price increases Cascadia Water is now asking for additional, and truly crushing, rate increases. The current proposal means that we customers would be paying an additional 91% more for the base rate and 145% more for Block 1 usage - - the proposed rate change from June 2024 to July 2024.

Even more dramatic, compare the water prices in effect a short three years ago (June 2021) with the July 2024 increases now being proposed. Looking at that 3-year period, Cascadia's rates would rise by 220% for the base rate and 636% for the Block 1 usage rate. This is a truly out of control rate escalation and will be onerous for Cascadia's customers.

We understand that the recent acquisition of new service areas and some investments in the infrastructure adds to the Cascadia's cost of operation. And we customers would hope to benefit from improvements in water quality and reliability. So, we would understand the occasional modest price increase in our water charges, commensurate with an improved quality of service. But Cascadia has called for price increases that are not modest; they are excessive.

To put matters in perspective, we note that even during the recent high inflation years of 2018 through 2023, the cumulated inflation rates amounted to less than 25 percent over the five year period, much less than the water rate increases Cascadia has proposed. Between 2018 and 2023, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by some 20 to 22 percent cumulatively, and the Producer Price Index (PPI) by 20 to 23 percent, according to the data published by Bureau of Labor Statistics, US. Department of Labor. Similarly, the price indexes for the gross domestic product rose by some 22 percent, according Economic Report of the President (2024).

We recognize that Cascadia is a private business whose owners or investors stand to gain by growing their water company into a more valuable asset. They evidently have made business decisions that these investments make business sense. We customers might benefit, but only if our water quality/reliability improves. Personally, we are unaware of any quality improvements to date in our own water area (Lehman) but remain hopeful.

Water is the most essential item for sustaining life. Other food items also are essential, but there is a key difference. When the price of, say, milk is increased at our neighborhood store, we can look for lower prices in other stores and/or search for substitute items for milk. Since Cascadia is the sole supplier of water in our neighborhood, however, we cannot look for a less costly supplier. Yes, we can reduce the use of water, but the extent to which we can do so is limited.

We request that the UTC reject the new rate increases Cascadia Water has proposed and scrutinize the need for any rate increases at all, given the generous 2021-2022 increases currently in effect.

			Barbara Brugman and Masanori Hashimoto
Michael McComb	E-mail	<p>I have been a customer of Aquarius Utilities- now Cascadia Water since September 2010 when I started construction of my house on North Street. In 2010 I was required to pay \$5,674 to connect to the water system. This included a \$500 fee to upgrade the meter from a 3/4" service to a 1" service. The Clallam County Building Department required a 1" service to my home because I was required to install a fire prevention sprinkler system. Since I have never had a fire, I have never utilized this extra capacity nor do I intend to.</p> <p>The proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for a 1" service from the current \$32.08 to \$88.00 per month is unacceptable. There is no financial justification for this increase especially since I use no more water than my neighbors just down the street who have 3/4" services.</p> <p>My February water bill was \$53.98. Under the new proposed rate using the same amount of water my bill would be \$103.76.</p> <p>The proposed billing change would almost double my current water bill adding over \$500 to the amount I spend for water each year. As a retiree living on a fixed income this represents a significant addition to my cost of living. If you multiply \$500 dollars per year by the number of Cascadia Water customers at Diamond Point , that equates to a significant revenue increase for Cascadia Water. What justification other than greed could support this request. If Aquarius was not a profitable company and I'm sure they were, why would Cascadia have purchased them?</p> <p>Thank you for listening to my complaint. It is my hope you will deny or severely reduce the requested rate increase and restore the more fair billing method of how much water you use instead of how big your meter size is. It is my understanding that you will be in the area on April 22, 2024. I would definitely be interested in attending any meeting you might schedule. The Gardiner Community Center just off of Highway 101 often accommodates meetings for the community. Possibly you could have it there.</p> <p>Michael McComb</p>	
Vicki Colburn	E-mail	<p>Thank you for speaking with me last Friday about the consumer's concerns about this rate case.</p> <p>I want to follow up on the information discussed relative to the request for the hearing to be rescheduled. I believe that I gave several reasonable, factual reasons that clearly support this request.</p> <p>There is no emergency or urgency noted in this rate case. Cascadia enjoyed unrestricted time to gather their information, complete their financials and independently choose a filing date. They are also supported by their</p>	

		<p>parent company's fully staffed regulatory department, in house legal and a host of other full time, well trained staff.</p> <p>On the other hand, the water users for the most part are retired, seniors. They do not have access to a similiar support system. It is important for the positions presented by the water users and the arguments for the Commissioner's review be well documented and factually correct. In order to do that, we believe that rescheduling the hearing to a mutually convenient time will best serve all.</p> <p>After reviewing other recent water cases I noted with interest - UW-220218 started 3-30-22, heard at 2 or more open meetings, continued on 5-26-22, closing 8-2-22; UW-230132 started 2-28-23, had open meetings, was continued on 4-13-23, suspended 6-16-23, reopened 11-28-23 closing on 12-8-23. Given just those 2 recent cases, our request does not seem unique or unusual.</p> <p>Certainly working together to agree on and select a reasonable hearing date will help all avoid unnecessary scheduling shifts, multiple open meeting dates and the general confusion this is sure to cause.</p> <p>I would also like to restate the request for the UTC to schedule time for an on-site visit and consumer meeting for the Peninsula's project Cascadia choose to include in this rate case. The Peninsula's Estate System appears to be an entirely new system, pump house and support equipment. That would seem to be a major project with a significant capital investment. Before beginning to review this rate case, it would seem appropriate to expect all major projects to be treated the same, which is UTC site visits for all - especially major projects.</p> <p>Should you have any questions, need to clarify anything or wish that I document all of the items we discussed so that they can be included in the case file, please let me know.</p> <p>I would appreciate knowing the status of this issue and confirming our ability to resolve it by this Friday, 4-12-24.</p> <p>Thank you for your assistance and I look forward to your reply. Vicki Colburn</p>
Terri and Ron Jones	E-mail	<p>We have just learned that there is a meeting next Monday April 22 in Port Angeles about the Cascadia Water on Whidbey Island. Also there is no meeting about Cascadia Water systems for water consumers on our Olympic Peninsula. This plan is not acceptable, is not just, is not reasonable.</p> <p>A 75% plus increase in our water rates without a forum to hear the basis for this increase is unjust. The Water Consumer Advocates of Olympic Peninsula will not be overlooked and unrepresented.</p>

			<p>We expect fair representation, equitable treatment, open communication, and advance notice of a meeting with Cascadia Water and UTC in our location to discuss this rate case.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Terri and Ron Jones</p>
Jean Heessels-Petit	E-mail	<p>Subject: Estates Water System / Cascadia rate increase - UTC 4-22-24, 6pm scheduled meeting in Port Angeles</p> <p>I am deeply concerned by UTC's scheduling the 4-22-24 Port Angeles meeting on short notice and without informing all of those involved/affected. Please keep me informed re: future meetings.</p> <p>I am the homeowner at 253 Greywolf Road, Sequim, WA and am directly affected by Cascadia's request for an exorbitant rate increase.</p> <p>Jean Heessels-Petit</p>	
Teri DiMartino	E-mail	<p>Hi Melissa,</p> <p>Thank you for talking with me this morning. Below is the email I tried to send last night.</p> <p>Dear Melissa Castaneda-Kerson:</p> <p>I am writing to let you know that I am extremely disappointed with the UTC sudden meeting notification with Cascadia water company. Had Vicki Colburn not alerted me to this meeting, I would not know about it. There's no public notice in the Daily Peninsula Newspaper or on Cascadia's website.</p> <p>Why was Port Angeles selected for a meeting location and not Sequim? Do not schedule any meetings for this rate case at Cascadia's main office on Whidbey Island. Please see the attached screenshot of the distance between my home and Cascadia's office</p> <p>Will the meeting be recorded and available via Zoom?</p> <p>Please email me a meeting agenda before April 22.</p> <p>Going forward, I don't support a rate increase for Sequim rate payers, and please include my email on future correspondence regarding public meetings.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Terri DiMartino</p>	

			82 Buds Way, Sequim, WA 89382
William H. Foster, III	E-mail	Dear Commission Members, My comments on how I do Not Support the request as filed by Cascadia Water, LLC for a water rate increase, for the following reasons. - It appears that the old "Pedersen Water" system here in Clallam County, Sequim, WA is just along for the ride to pay rate increase, with Cascadia Water, LLC asking for approval for an increase in rates of 75% - 85%, without any system improvements for the Pedersen Water system. For Cascadia Water, LLC did not install for Pedersen Water system stated improvements in the Cascadia Water, LLC IMPORTANT NOTICE Letter to all customers, like: a. Standby generators to minimize service disruptions due to power outages, none for Pedersen system. b. New submersible pumps, booster pumps, pressure tank, and control box in Water system well sites, "helping to ensure reliable water delivery to our customers" (as written by Cascadia in their 'Purpose of General Rate Proceeding", yet none for the Pedersen Water system. See Attached Letter for Full Copy of Comments Letter - Above is just page one (1) of four (4). William	
Stefani Christensen	E-mail	See attached Word document. Cascadia Water rate increase of 107% for Tel1 users is unacceptable. Cascadia does not have the background or experience to manage island water systems. For profit water systems, buying small rural water wells, then rising rates is unfair. Our meeting request on April 17 was to attend a meeting in Pt Angeles, a 90 mile drive, with ferry and afternoon traffic. Very costly to attend in time and money. Allow Tel 1 and other very small water systems on the island to purchase our wells. NW Water (parent of Cascadia) is a for profit private water company. The current administrators/owners of Cascadia do not have a background to determine water use on an island with a critical aquifer recharge area. Why is arsenic in Tel one well water? How will future water testing be accomplished? Water use on an island is very different. The company needs to meet with Cascadia Water LLC rate payoers and request the WA UTC attend the meeting.	
Dale Birge	E-mail	These comments are one person's attempt to rein in exorbitant rate increases for commodity services and life needs such as water. Many of the people in my area on the Olympic Peninsula are on a fixed income and will not be getting anywhere near a 75% income increase. Nearly doubling a monthly charge for a necessity is one of the reasons we are in an inflationary period in our economy. I strongly request the rate if ineded, be kept to an affordable single digit value. Not one that challenges the budget of seniors and those with fixed income.	

Kathleen Keehn	E-mail	<p>April 22, 2024</p> <p>Public Statement - Utilities and Transportation Commission Meeting- Please include my written statement in your public records.</p> <p>I'm here to talk about the outrageous 75% increase proposed by Cascadia Water in Diamond Point.</p> <p>I was shocked to see Cascadia Water propose a 75% increase in our water bills. My water company, Aquarius, was purchased by Cascadia Water several years ago. When this happened, we learned that Cascadia is owned by Northwest Holding Company, which is owned by BlackRock and Vanguard. What would those mega-opolies want with our little community water utility? We just learned when we received notice of a 75% increase for our water bills starting in June 2024.</p> <p>Let me share some history. In a public meeting about 15 years ago, Greg Roats, then owner of Aquarius Water, admitted this water system experiences 20% water loss. We were gob smacked! How can any company survive a consistent 20% loss? Following this revelation, Mr. Roats suggested we pay him to do a "study" on the feasibility of installing new water pipes that wouldn't leak. After all, his dad had kluged this system together using reclaimed pipes removed from other water systems. Our community supported this study because we don't have working fire hydrants in our neighborhood! After charging us \$250.K for the study, he discarded the idea as he never had any intention of fixing the leaky system.</p> <p>I live across the street from Washington Water service. I already pay 1/3 to 1/2 more for my water than my neighbors on the other side of the street. Now the delta will even be greater, and we are made fools by having to support this new form of exploitation. Cascadia Water claims they are investing in the infrastructure, but we still do not have working fire hydrants! We are given notice of a "public hearing", but we realize this is just a formality because the decisions for large increases were made long ago.</p> <p>As it has turned out, BlackRock and Vanguard have capitalized on COVID, buying a huge percentage of American residential homes and utilities. In 2021 these behemoths bought 20% of the nation's private homes, utilities, and local business buildings. Now in 2024 they are buying a whopping 44%! At this rate they could own almost everything by the year 2028! This will eliminate private home ownership and private property altogether! And our elected officials are helping them do it! See article included with statement.</p> <p>Imagine my surprise to learn that the North Olympic Development Council, NOPC, is populated with elected officials! Clallam County Commissioner Mark Ozias is the president! This looks like an NGO, non-government organization, steering a global climate agenda that we, the people, have not approved! It seems to be a complete conflict of interest for these public officials to be accepting salaries from our tax dollars and supporting the German based, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, (ICLEI) as board members for NOPC! ICLEI is a foreign organization that had attempted to gain control of Sequim over a dozen years ago but was kicked out by the Concerned Citizen's for Clallam County, aka 4C's. We didn't want this global agenda then and we don't want it now. They should all be ashamed for selling out their constituents! See article attached.</p> <p>We have learned that the Sustainable Development Goals include United Nations Climate Mitigation for homes that are not net-0 carbon friendly. Current estimates to bring a private home into "compliance" could cost as much as \$42K! This will ultimately regulate folks right out of their homes! Why are our elected officials promoting</p>
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			<p>this? Where I grew up, what I learned, when governments collude with corporations in secret, to the detriment of the people, that's called fascism. We don't want that here in Clallam County and we won't pay salaries and benefits to officials as they betray us!</p> <p>There are laws preventing monopolies from becoming too large and controlling. For some reason, these laws do not apply to BlackRock and Vanguard. There are also "conflict of interest" laws that apply to public officials. Unfortunately, those laws are not just ignored, they are being thrown in our faces.</p> <p>I respectfully ask the Utilities and Transportation officials why they would consider such an increase when we already pay a premium for water, and we have no working fire hydrants? Furthermore, should we all have to pay premium water prices because BlackRock and Vanguard overpaid for a leaky kluged together water system?</p> <p>Kathleen Keehn</p>
	Corby Somerville	E-mail	<p>This is a Public Comment regarding Docket UW-240151.</p> <p>The most important duty of the Commission is the protection of the public in a monopoly marketplace for public utilities. When utility companies attempt to engage in price gouging, the Commission should not allow it. The present rate case involving Cascadia Water, where increases up to 94 percent are proposed by the company, raises several questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If Cascadia is so unprofitable, and if such drastic rate increases are being requested in order to achieve profitability for the company, how has Cascadia been able to finance the acquisition of at least eight small independent water companies over the past five years? 2. Cascadia has submitted a 'claim of confidentiality' in order to conceal certain financial information, including: "the confidential organization chart of NW Natural Holding Company" and "the confidential (unredacted) version of Cascadia Water's general ledger." Further, Cascadia has represented: "The confidential information is sensitive information due to the competitive market for water utility acquisitions and the identification of employee names and compensation data, and as such, comprises valuable commercial information. Disclosure of the confidential information could negatively impact Cascadia Water's ability to negotiate future acquisitions ..." (Emphasis supplied.) It is evident that Cascadia has continuing ambitions to expand their holdings and acquire even more independent water companies. These acquisitions should be financed by stock shareholders. Are the present rate-payer customers being made to finance those acquisitions? 3. Cascadia wishes to conceal 'compensation data.' How can the Commission assure the public that the proposed rate increases are not related to unreasonable executive compensation schemes? 4. Without disclosure of accounting information how can we be assured that Cascadia is not co-mingling capital improvements with maintenance costs? Rate-paying customers should not be burdened with paying for capital investments. Capital improvements accrue to owners' equity and those balance sheet investments should be made by stockholders. 5. Previous Cascadia rate case UW-200979 requested unreasonable increases. Cascadia petitioned to combine costs between Whidbey Island rate-payers and those on the Olympic Peninsula. The Commission however directed Cascadia to: "allocate that (sic) revenue requirements appropriately between the Peninsula customers and

			<p>the island customers.” Once the Commission decides (on principle) that Peninsula customers should not be burdened with Whidbey Island costs, shouldn’t that be a final determination? How can we be assured that this extraordinary rate increase is not another attempt by the company to achieve the same outcome as they requested before?</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Corby Somerville 22 April, 2024</p>
Randall Wingett	E-mail	<p>Randall Wingett April 23, 2024 Subject: Questions for Cascadia pertaining to Rate Case UW-240151 Mr. Culley Lehman: please respond to my questions below. Ms. Melissa Castaneda-Kerson: please add this correspondence to docket UW-240151. Dear Mr. Lehman, I am a resident within the Estates Water system, and I attended the UTC’s informal customer outreach meeting held at the Port Angeles Library at 6:00 PM on April 22. I was not aware of this UTC meeting until I received an email from Vicki Colburn on April 18 informing me and 148 water consumers. It is my understanding that a few Estates water consumers had received direct email notification from the UTC about this meeting. My first question for you: Why didn’t Cascadia notify Estates water consumers of this UTC meeting? Doing so would have demonstrated Cascadia’s desire to meet the objective as you stated on your website: “Cascadia Water operates long-time family-run utilities, and we’re very connected to the communities we serve.” Following are my questions on the status of the upgraded Estates Water infrastructure. I would appreciate your response to all these questions as soon as possible:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the status of the new above ground water reservoir? I received an Estates Reservoir Update PDF dated January 21, 2024, announcing the project, but have not received a follow-up status report. The Estates Reservoir Update document states: “For more information and background on this project, please visit the Community links section of our website: “cascadiawater.com.” There are no updates provided in the Community Links section of the Cascadia website. The most recent document is dated 2/9/22. 2. When was the upgraded water system placed into service? I did not receive an email or other notification about when this would occur and whether to expect any interruptions to service or temporary changes in water quality or color. And I could not find the status of the Estates Water system upgrades on the Cascadia website even though the Estates Reservoir Update document states: “For more information and background on this project, please visit the Community links section of our website: cascadiawater.com.” 3. Are the new pumps installed and operating? How much additional pumping capacity are the new pumps providing, and how many additional Estates Water users can be served with this upgrade? 4. Is the manganese filter system installed and do these filters also reduce other minerals and contaminants? <p>Having lived here since 2017, we are familiar with the community well water leaving spots on windows, car paint</p>	

		<p>and accumulated mineral deposits around plumbing and fixtures over time, unless it is completely wiped off before it evaporates.</p> <p>2</p> <p>5. Is there a backup generator installed, tested and operational? Cascadia has included a back up generator in draft plans and discussions, but I have not found any invoice or documentation on the purchase of a generator.</p> <p>6. I have noticed a slight increase in water pressure and slightly less mineral deposits after washing a vehicle. Was this expected? Again, not knowing the status of the upgrades, this may be otherwise explained.</p> <p>7. Should the water pressure regulator valve at the street be checked because of the upgraded system? What should the water pressure be at the meter box? Who is responsible for checking and setting the pressure regulator valve? Any increase in the water pressure delivered has the potential for causing damage to sensitive plumbing systems and equipment (e.g., connected RV house water, refrigerator water dispenser and ice maker).</p> <p>8. Does the new above ground water reservoir and distribution system meet codes for natural or manmade disasters, such as a nearby explosion, small airplane impact, earthquake, fire or flood, deep winter freeze and vandalism? Of course, underground water reservoirs are much more protected from the elements and any of the above-mentioned scenarios. And I do understand that above ground reservoirs are much less expensive. However, I would like to be aware of any vulnerabilities to the upgraded infrastructure and the security of our water supply.</p> <p>9. Does Cascadia Water have a disaster plan, such as with a major earthquake? I am a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer, and during a recent meeting the subject of water supply during a major disaster, such as an earthquake was brought up along with the upgrades to the Estates Water system infrastructure. For example, in an emergency should first responders, including a Cascadia Water engineer or technician be unable to come to the Estates well site to check for damage and possibly shut off the water, it would be critical for our CERT captain and squad members to have some basic training on what to do. And if the power is out and there is no backup generator, is it still possible to get lifesaving drinking water from the reservoir?</p> <p>10. Why isn't the Cascadia Water website kept up to date, especially with posting important announcements like the status of the Estates Water system upgrades and UTC and Cascadia public meetings? As a former webmaster and technical writer, and a current social media content creator, in this era of instant information, this is one of the greatest deficiencies by Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your time reviewing and responding to these important questions.</p> <p>Sincerely, Randall Winget</p>
	Eric and Judy Bingham	<p>E-mail</p> <p>As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community.</p> <p>The following are some critical points to consider:</p> <p>1. Over-Extended Acquisitions: Considering the company's acquisitions from at least five other water municipalities, these failing assets can be described as dilapidated, outdated, and in a state of disrepair, thus resulting in exorbitant costs for restoration or modernization.</p>

		<p>2. This Was Reckless Planning: These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence!</p> <p>3. This is a Financial Burden: There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%?</p> <p>4. This is Inequitable Treatment: Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind.</p> <p>5. Local Context Matters: When assessing water demand, usage, and asset improvement costs in the Seaview community, we find that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't align with our unique circumstances. We encourage Cascadia Water to consider a more palatable rate structure—one that reflects the realities of our local water utilities, community, and population.</p> <p>6. Consider Our Fixed-Income Residents: Most homeowners in Seaview are retired and living on fixed incomes. For them, this sudden increase is not just an inconvenience; it's a financial burden! Many simply cannot afford such a sudden and significant increase in their water bills.</p> <p>7. Consider Meaningful and Adaptable Solutions: Rather than imposing a uniform increase, let's explore options that are both meaningful and adaptable. Perhaps tiered rates based on consumption levels rather than base-rate increases could better serve our community or extending the increase over a 5-year period allowing customers more time to adapt.</p> <p>In the spirit of collaboration, I kindly request that the board engage in further dialogue with the residents of the Seaview community. Let's work together to find a viable solution that balances financial sustainability with compassion for our neighbors. We propose a more gradual, phased-in approach to this rate increase, which we believe would be more manageable for your customers, while still enabling Cascadia Water to recover its costs over a longer period of time.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter. We believe that by working together, we can create a fair and sustainable water rate structure that benefits all stake holders at hand.</p> <p>Thank you for your time reviewing our request.</p> <p>Sincerely Seaview Water customers,</p> <p>Eric and Judy Bingham, Jack and Linda Breedlove, Dan and Marilyn Egler, Diana Lanham, Joe and Debora Toro</p>
Jack and Linda Breedlove	E-mail	<p>Dear Commissioners</p> <p>As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from</p>

Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community. The following are some critical points to consider:

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2. This Was Reckless Planning: These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence!
3. This is a Financial Burden: There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%?
4. This is Inequitable Treatment: Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind.
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Thank you for your time reviewing our request.

			Sincerely Seaview Water customers,
	Diana Lanham	E-mail	<p>Dear Commissioners</p> <p>As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community. The following are some critical points to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over-Extended Acquisitions: Considering the company's acquisitions from at least five other water municipalities, these failing assets can be described as dilapidated, outdated, and in a state of disrepair, thus resulting in exorbitant costs for restoration or modernization. 2. This Was Reckless Planning: These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence! 3. This is a Financial Burden: There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%? 4. This is Inequitable Treatment: Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind. 5. Local Context Matters: When assessing water demand, usage, and asset improvement costs in the Seaview community, we find that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't align with our unique circumstances. We encourage Cascadia Water to consider a more palatable rate structure—one that reflects the realities of our local water utilities, community, and population. 6. Consider Our Fixed-Income Residents: Most homeowners in Seaview are retired and living on fixed incomes. For them, this sudden increase is not just an inconvenience; it's a financial burden! Many simply cannot afford such a sudden and significant increase in their water bills. 7. Consider Meaningful and Adaptable Solutions: Rather than imposing a uniform increase, let's explore options that are both meaningful and adaptable. Perhaps tiered rates based on consumption levels rather than base-rate increases could better serve our community or extending the increase over a 5-year period allowing customers more time to adapt. <p>In the spirit of collaboration, I kindly request that the board engage in further dialogue with the residents of the Seaview community. Let's work together to find a viable solution that balances financial sustainability with compassion for our neighbors. We propose a more gradual, phased-in approach to this rate increase, which we believe would be more manageable for your customers, while still enabling Cascadia Water to recover its costs over a longer period of time.</p>

		<p>Thank you for your attention to this matter. We believe that by working together, we can create a fair and sustainable water rate structure that benefits all stake holders at hand.</p> <p>Thank you for your time reviewing our request.</p> <p>Sincerely Seaview Water customers,</p> <p>Eric and Judy Bingham, Jack and Linda Breedlove, Dan and Marilyn Egler, Diana Lanham, Joe and Debora Toro</p>
Joe and Debora Toro	E-mail	<p>Dear Commissioners</p> <p>As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community.</p> <p>The following are some critical points to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over-Extended Acquisitions: Considering the company’s acquisitions from at least five other water municipalities, these failing assets can be described as dilapidated, outdated, and in a state of disrepair, thus resulting in exorbitant costs for restoration or modernization. 2. This Was Reckless Planning: These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence! 3. This is a Financial Burden: There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%? 4. This is Inequitable Treatment: Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind. 5. Local Context Matters: When assessing water demand, usage, and asset improvement costs in the Seaview community, we find that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t align with our unique circumstances. We encourage Cascadia Water to consider a more palatable rate structure—one that reflects the realities of our local water utilities, community, and population. 6. Consider Our Fixed-Income Residents: Most homeowners in Seaview are retired and living on fixed incomes. For them, this sudden increase is not just an inconvenience; it’s a financial burden! Many simply cannot afford such a sudden and significant increase in their water bills. 7. Consider Meaningful and Adaptable Solutions: Rather than imposing a uniform increase, let’s explore options that are both meaningful and adaptable. Perhaps tiered rates based on consumption levels rather than base-rate increases could better serve our community or extending the increase over a 5-year period allowing customers

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Marilyn Egler	E-mail	<p>Dear Commissioners</p> <p>As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community.</p> <p>The following are some critical points to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Over-Extended Acquisitions: Considering the company's acquisitions from at least five other water municipalities, these failing assets can be described as dilapidated, outdated, and in a state of disrepair, thus resulting in exorbitant costs for restoration or modernization. 2. This Was Reckless Planning: These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence! 3. This is a Financial Burden: There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%? 4. This is Inequitable Treatment: Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind. 5. Local Context Matters: When assessing water demand, usage, and asset improvement costs in the Seaview community, we find that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't align with our unique circumstances. We encourage Cascadia Water to consider a more palatable rate structure—one that reflects the realities of our local water

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Elton Miller	E-mail	<p>***See Attachment</p> <p>Dear Sir or Madam:</p> <p>On behalf of the Pelican Point Community Association, I am writing to express our concern about, and formal objection to, the recent notice circulated by Cascadia Water, LLC ("Cascadia") of its request for substantial water rate increases following its recent acquisition of the Pelican Point Water Company. As detailed in that notice Cascadia is proposing immediate and permanent rate increases of 89% to 103% for its various classes of service in the Pelican Point system. We respectfully submit that those dramatic, permanent increases in the current rates are not fair and reasonable and will result in substantial and undue hardship to the members of our community. We acknowledge and appreciate Cascadia's recent operating and infrastructure expenditures to correct long-standing deficiencies in the Pelican Point Water system. We believe, however, that permanent rate increases of the magnitude proposed would be an unjustified and improper method of recovering those costs. We submit that a more limited, temporary assessment, amortized over the useful life of the improvements made, is the proper approach for recovery of the recent expenditures. We further request that any such assessment be phased in over a significant</p>

			<p>transitional period to allow our residents a period of time to adjust to any rate increase. Thank you for your consideration of our input and requests. Sincerely,</p>
George Springer	E-mail	RE: Cascadia Water Rate Request Docket # 240151	<p>To Whom it may Concern,</p> <p>After reading Cascadia proposal for a rate increase. We found the rate increase of 107% very high and unreasonable. Before the last 3 phase rate increase our average water bill was \$48.00. After the 3 phase rate increase. Our average water bill is \$93.00.</p> <p>In 2020 Cascadia asked for a 3 phase rate increase. Phase 1 April 1 2021 23.1% Phase 2 Oct. 1 2021 18.8% Phase 3 April 1 2022 15.8% Total Increase: 57.70% Now 2 years later a proposed 107% rate increase.</p> <p>In their recent Important Notice. Cascadia listed 14 reason for the rate increase. Please review the 14 reasons. Compare them to the last 3 phase 57.70% rate increase. The 2021 Important Notice states 7 reason for the last rate increase. Please review their new water systems acquisitions.</p> <p>Cascadia is asking for the increase to reflect additional revenue of \$1,788.793. Through sound financial planning they could reach the additional revenue. And not increase rates again for a 2nd time in 2 years.</p> <p>Good management would be to maintain existing water systems as mentioned in their letter. General maintenance as listed; replacement of various pumps, pressure valves, control boxes new well. Meter upgrades, pumphouse upgrades, install telemetry systems, install standby generators. Installing chloramine analyzers, install & replace above ground reservoirs. New well. All will make their system efficient and help reduce expenses.</p> <p>Since the last rate increase of 57.70 %. Cascadia Water has acquired additional water systems across the state. The acquisitions may not have been financially sound investments. Now upgrades & repairs are needed and the only way to cover expenses are to raise rates.</p> <p>Our only consumer rights are to appeal to the commission.</p>

			<p>107% rate increase is very unreasonable.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention,</p> <p>Rona Ishikawa George Springer</p>
Maralee Johnson	E-mail	<p>I would like to attend the zoom meeting 15 May. I am Maralee Johnson, 30 Spring View in Diamond Point.</p> <p>I appose the increase requested. Diamond point already pays a \$10.++ month assessment for the water tower that was built. It still has a long way to run. Diamond point was built with then used piping including, I been told, even some wood piping. I would like to know when this pipe will be replaced. Proper piping should also reduce the amount of water lost in system.</p> <p>If other locations of the Cascadia system need upgrades they should pay for them as we are doing with a monthly assessment.</p> <p>Any increase in basic water rates should be more gradual. Such as an increase every three to four years. not out of line with COLA.</p> <p>Maralee Johnson</p>	
Rick Smith	E-mail	<p>Hi Rachel. I had found both your email address and Scott's email address on the UTC site. Unfortunately that location had an incorrect address for Scott. That is always a good reason to send the first email to multiple recipients...so at least one person can straighten it out.</p> <p>I did not send you the WSP for Cascadia. What I sent you was just Jennifer's (DOH) initial review of Cascadia's WSP and a couple other documents I created for the last rate request. The WSP you are looking for is a pdf file named: Cascadia_Water_NoID_I_20200814_Water_System_Plan_Intial_Submittal.pdf.</p> <p>I agree with you that the water system plans are forward looking. It tells what is needed, what is planned and provides the estimated costs. I am including a comment from Commissioner Rendahl from the previous rate case. She refers to the WSP and the approval process that includes the rate payers. But I seriously doubt she wants a copy. It is 265 mb in size and 1,118 pages in length. And that is just for the Island water systems. It details some major, expensive repairs/projects that are needed on Whidbey helping explain why we didn't want to share paying for all of their work that is needed. It also explains why economies of scale do not apply. We are hoping to find the most recent version of the WSP to see what has been added.</p> <p>That is why I am asking the UTC why Cascadia/NWN can go forward with another rate increase on the Peninsula</p>	

		<p>without an ‘approved’ water system plan for the Peninsula and the meetings of approval Commissioner Rendahl was referring to for the WSP. When I asked Greg for the WSP he told me that the rate staff did not use it because it was forward looking. He eventually got a copy for the rate staff. A WSP is expensive so I wish it was required reading and Cascadia should not be allowed to make major investments that are not part of the ‘approved’ WSP.</p> <p>If Scott has access to all of the emails I sent to John Cup and Greg during the previous rate case, you will understand we used the details within that plan to help explain why the Peninsula systems did not want to be part of those on Whidbey. We are concerned that Cascadia and NWN are trying to go back to a single rate. That is not something we want for all the same reasons. So all those documents we sent to the Commissioners and the rate staff back in 2021 are still good.</p> <p>I doubt there is a WSP for the Peninsula. If we had one, we would know what is being planned for the various water systems Cascadia has purchased on the Peninsula. If we found one, we could compare it to the revenues and expenses in your workbook. Somehow the rate payers need the ability to control unnecessary spending....which leads to rate increases.</p> <p>As I mentioned to Scott at the recent meeting, we are requesting that the rate staff provide us with a breakdown of revenues, assets, and expenses for Estates and Monterra. In the video of the previous rate case meeting Commissioner Rendahl told Cascadia to keep the income and expenses for Island and Peninsula separate. Ideally we would like ~3 workbooks that separate revenues and expenses for Island, Peninsula and I assume the new system in eastern Washington.</p> <p>If we find the same issues with the other systems Cascadia / NWN purchased on the Peninsula I would imagine that we will find the need to have separate rates for the different systems on the Peninsula. If Cascadia has a WSP for the Peninsula that included all of the systems purchased over the past few years, and all the repairs and planned improvements needed by each one, perhaps it would help justify the rate increase they are requesting.</p> <p>We look forward to working with you and your staff.. If I find the current version of Cascadia’s WSP, I will let you know.</p> <p>Rick Smith</p>
Cathy O' Bryan	E-mail	<p>We wanted to voice our concerns regarding this 75% rate increase filing. We are senior citizens on fixed income and what increases we get in our income is usually in the 3% range. With inflation on every thing, food, power (17% requested by pse)and now water (75%.....!), home maintenance, property taxes, all the fees on services like phone, internet, etc, our pockets aren't that deep. It's no wonder people become homeless.</p>

Connie Jo Smith	E-mail	<p>I am a 73-year-old single woman, residing in the Monterra 55+ community. My address is 132 Cypress Cir, Port Angeles, WA 98362 and my contact phone number is 909.214.6505.</p> <p>I am writing you to convey my deep concerns to you and the Commissioners deciding this proposed water increase that I am STRONGLY OPPOSED TO THIS LARGE RATE INCREASE, especially when it will not benefit our Monterra community at all. Our Monterra rate increase is proposed to be 94% of the current rate. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. I am not opposed to a small increase to cover staffing and overhead costs relating to our water system but DO NOT WANT TO FUND OTHER EXPENDITURES TO HELP OTHER WATER SYSTEMS - they need to cover their own expenses.</p> <p>I say No to the proposed increase - especially such a large one that will impact myself and my neighbors who all are on fixed incomes and struggling as it is with ever-increasing prices of living expenses.</p> <p>I also request that this and all communications BE MAINTAINED AND INCLUDED IN THE PERMANENT DOCKET/FILE</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Connie Jo Smith</p>
Lily Todd	E-mail	<p>Melissa,</p> <p>I am a resident of Monterra, one of the water districts impacted by Cascadia's requested rate increase.</p> <p>I am also a realtor helping people buy and sell homes for 40 years and in 3 states.</p> <p>I have never encountered such a misrepresentation of facts and concepts.</p> <p>I am sure it is not and was not the intent of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to make us taxpayers finance a creative way for a company to make money. Each water district is a unique and separate unity. The different districts cannot be combined as one for any use just like homes in Port Angeles, Seattle and Spokane cannot be taxed the same rate if owned by the same entity. Like homes, these water districts were purchased based on their current conditions. If a district needs or will need in the future substantial work, the price paid no doubt reflected that.</p> <p>Requiring all users of water from Cascadia pay for a combined operating cost makes as little sense as making all taxpayers of the US pay the same income tax rate regardless of income.</p>

		<p>Each Water District is a separate entity with separate cost. Each Water District rate increase needs to be evaluated based on that unit's production and expenses.</p> <p>Lily Todd</p>
Hollie Ransdell	E-mail	<p>Melissa Castaneda- Kerson, Thank You for email of 5/1/2024</p> <p>I purchased my home in Sept. of 2020. I set up water account 9/11/20 I did not move in till June of 2021. At that time the Pederson Family LLC owned and billed in one bill, bi-monthly. The 9/11/20 , base rate was \$16. per month, .50 per 100 ft usage. Drain field \$ 55.00. Eight months later; May 4, 2021 , Bill, Base Rate \$21.00, usage \$1.00 per 100CF Jan 3, 2022 Base \$ 25.00 per month at one point Notice of Rate Hike of base rate, to \$ 30. a month 2+ months billed at that rate. Mid 2023, base rate back to, \$ 28.00 a month Drain field billed separately by, Cascadia Infrastructure Co. Cascadia purchases Pederson Water LLC ,11/1/2023 to 01/01/2024 First bill. Base \$ 28.00 a month</p> <p>My current bi-monthly bill for water only, is \$ 66.00 , I am one person, NO landscape watering. My drainfield bi-monthly, bill is \$ 66. 01/01/2024 to 3/1/2024</p> <p>And, Cascadia is asking for a 75% increase on base cost. I believe this is an LLC that has a monopoly on water in Olympic Peninsula, Whibey Island, Discovery Bay, Sequim Dungeness, Northwest consists of 8 Systems, Aquarius 's 4 Systems, Jamestown, Diamond Point, former LEHMAN which consists of 12 water ENTERPRISES, Sea View, Estates Inc. , Monterra Del Bay, These water systems are in Clallam, Jefferson, Skagit, Snohomish, Kitsap, Mason and eleven islands.</p> <p>Drain Field issues.</p> <p>According to Cascadia. A law was passed in ?, now enforced by Cascadia,. Mandatory inspection once a year of septic system that flow to community drain field. Cost \$178. Inspection took , literally, less than 10 min. My septic was inspected in 2021. And in 2023, 2024.</p> <p>My property tax statement has a Cline Irrigation charge of \$ 40.89 and a Cline Reserves of \$ 8.51 \$. A grand total of water, sewer, taxes, of \$ 88.00 a month, one person, ultra conservative of these services.</p>

			<p>In conversation with Secretary of Cline Irrigation Board . This is for office and salary of ditch walker. 99 % of the ditches in Sequim area have been piped. Ditch walkers are ? obsolete. The ditch walker, secretary, former Board members are all from one family and own cattle, veggie farms. They get some of the water used from, an open, non -piped irrigation ditch. This might be all OK. But.? Many Thanks for your hard work on this multi faceted issue</p> <p>Best Regards Hollie Ransdell</p>
	Janet Carlisle	E-mail	<p>Description: Cascadia Water application for rate increase held on March 23, 2034 should be denied not only for the horrendous 75% increase proposed but the four page outline to rate payers. It was deceptive in implying that it was approved. Only on page FOUR did it assert that rate payers could file a complaint. I believe the State Auditors office should look into any and all Cascadia Water filings past and present. Supervisor Result: Yes May 3rd Avery Booth, who was most helpful in giving me the date of the hearing and advising how I may Zoom the hearing. Customer Resolution: Refile when they get their act together and not combine us into one Utility Company as they are trying to do.....Keep us separate so we can continue to know what is done for rate payers in their best interest.</p>
	Hollie Ransdell	E-mail	<p>Description: Cascadia applied for a rate raise of 75% on base base now is \$28.00 and an increase on CF 100-500 price from \$1.10 to \$2.28. Lehman LLC, first owned 11 wells/districts on Whidbey and live on Whidbey Island ,WI base is \$29.35, CF \$2.25. Whidbey has gray water and needs a new filtration system.. Cascadia/Lehman has purchased several other small water district Approx. 30 total This feels like a monopoly & conglomerate. In my area , there is no other water co. Application for rate raise should be denied. II have never known of any improvements nor any info on what needs improving in Dungeness Bay Pats Supervisor Result: NO ANSWER. E, Phone ETC> Customer Resolution: Application to raise rates should be denied. An accounting of how current billing monies are spent, In Dungeness the where, on what. What exactly needs fixing or improving .</p>
	Charles Schultz	E-mail	<p>I can not believe that Cascadia is acquiring more water systems knowing in advance they will be needing to replace and or rebuilt these systems and want all customers to pay for these repairs/upgrades. It is unbelievable that they can use this as their business model purposely buying broken systems and expecting we the customers to</p>

			foot the bill for repairs to those systems. We just went thru this with them on our Blue Ribbon Farms system less than 2 years ago. We as customers want fair treatment from this water company. Please deny their unfair rate increase.
Julie Hembree	E-mail	Description:	I received a letter from Cascadia Water (who purchased the Pederson Family LLC) regarding a 75% increase of water rates for our water. I vehemently oppose a 75% increase. I understand an increase to update our system may be in order, but this company is buying up all the small systems and then without making any updates locally, is attempting to increase our costs by 75%. I don't think this update is fair or reasonable. In the letter, nothing was stated about improvements to our local system. Supervisor Result: Customer Resolution: Deny the 75% increase and work with the company to reduce the amount.
Paulette D. Ache	E-mail		Cascadia Water is requesting a proposed rate increase ranging from 65% to over 107%. The new cistern that the water company has put in our neighborhood is just over my fence and is visible to the left of my house and lurking over it when viewed from the road. This eyesore has devalued my property immensely. I requested that the company plant large trees around the cistern but was told that isn't going to happen. Now on top of all of this, we are told of the outrageous increase in our water rates. This is so unfair. In our working community with many seniors living on fixed incomes, how are we all going to be able to afford this? This is the type of increase that causes people, out of necessity, to move. It's very disappointing
Jeff and Erica Barlow	E-mail		We, Jeff and Erica Barlow, live on Whidbey Island and are part of the Lehman water system. We oppose the rate increase by Cascadia Water unless the amount of the increase has been transparently shown to be justified. If a substantial rate increase should be approved, the economic impact of that decision on the customers should be spread out over period of at least 3-5 years, depending on the increased rate approved. Please consider the magnitude of the proposed rate increase. Sincerely, Jeff and Erica Barlow
Terri Butler	E-mail		Hello, My husband and I own 3827 Goldfinch Lane and I'm writing to express concern over the rate increase proposed for water from the well supplying the neighborhood.

			<p>Given water supply is an essential utility having rates that are predictable and justified seems like a reasonable expectation. Prior to raising rates a utility would be expected to educate their customers regarding conservation measures, have incentives to install low water use shower heads and toilets and encourage rainwater collection for yard use. We have not seen any of these measures taken by Cascadia.</p> <p>I hope when rate increases are needed due to cost pressures they will be limited to small increments so residents won't be caught off guard in their own budget management.</p> <p>I would appreciate your effort to restrict the rate increases currently proposed by Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Terri Butler</p>
James Cone	E-mail	<p>Cascadia's outrageous request for a 75% increase in their rates is not justified by any increase in benefits to their customers. They are still going to get their water as before. The plan of Cascadia to monopolize water service by buying up all of the local water providers and then request this huge increase is not fair to it's customers because they have no alternative but to use their water service. All of their proposed "improvements" are only for their own benefit and do not in any way provide service any better than they had before this monopolistic buying of the local water services.</p> <p>They still refuse to fix the water leak that is undermining Tyler View Place private road even though their water is the only source of water anywhere near the road. There is water in the ditches beside Tyler View Place and Land's End Road even when it has not rained for days at a time. It is their water that is causing the problem and they refuse to do anything about it.</p> <p>They definitely do not deserve this outrageous rate increase. Perhaps their ploy is to ask for this huge increase in hopes that they will get part of it and line their pockets with greater profits without any real benefit to their customers.</p> <p>James Cone</p>	
Neil Koseff	E-mail	<p>Please deny the rate increase of Cascadia Water as described in RATE CASE -240151</p> <p>I am upset that Cascadia Water who purchased the Dungeness Bay Plat Water from Peterson Water Company, Sequim Washington, recently, has informed us of a excessive rate increase. It is unacceptable that almost all of the reasons for the rate increases was to fix/improve OTHER non Dungeness Bay Plat water facilities mostly on</p>	

			<p>Whitbey Island far away from Sequim. Each community should be responsible for their own improvements.</p> <p>In addition, they want to add additional items that may be superfluous to our small community and thus not necessary.</p> <p>Our system has worked fine for the many years I lived there. In addition they never asked us what we felt we needed.</p> <p>I and many others agree with Vicki Colburn and our Attorney Judy Endejan to deny the rate increase</p>
	Cameron Hardison	E-mail	<p>Good afternoon, the Lake Alyson community is requesting a Vote of Voluntary Service. We have net as a community and are formally requesting thus vote. I have notified Cascadia Water as well.</p> <p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living. Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water. Thank you for your attention to this</p>
	Dani Devos	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p> <p>Dani DeVos</p>

Onika Muller	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living. Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues. In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
Thomas Gray	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p>
Justin Poirier	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p> <p>Justin Poirier</p>

	Joseph & Tamara Campion	E-mail	<p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues, summertime boil orders, and slow response times to issues when they arise.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
	Joseph & Tamara Campion	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues, summertime boil orders, and slow response times to issues when they arise.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Joseph & Tamara Campion</p>
	Annie B	E-mail	<p>I am writing to please ask you to Not increase our water rates, especially not by 94%!!! I moved here in 2018, and one of the draws to moving here concerned the low cost of water. I am a 71-year-old woman living in Monterra, and on a fixed income. My cost of living raise by Social Security has not allowed for everything else that has</p>

			<p>gone up recently such as medical, car and house insurance; utilities, and groceries. I already have had to "tighten my belt" and have canceled frills such as cable, hobbies, and eating out. I started a garden to help with food costs and am doing my own yardwork. Most of my clothes I wear are over 10 years old and have only bought shoes to replace holey ones. I am really struggling financially, so PLEASE don't add to my burden.</p> <p>Most sincerely, A very concerned Senior Citizen</p>
	JoEllen Burns	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Furthermore, our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase.</p> <p>Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues. In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p>
	Aylanah Chartier	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues. On another note, I have been concerned about the accuracy of my current water usage readings, seeing as even after fixing a bad leak my usage readings haven't seemed to change at all since.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
	Megan and Kyle	E-mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT

	Ostermick-Durkee		
	Blair Kipple	E-mail	<p>Washington State UTC, Cascadia Water has apparently requested approval for a 75% rate increase !</p> <p>75% !</p> <p>It appears, from the letter I received, that the projected rate increase for my service will be ... 50% ! Not 10%, not 20%.... 50% ! Our bill would be 1.5 times the current cost.</p> <p>Is the required revenue requested because of poor business practices? Over extended investment? If so, are the customers to be continually expected to cover for unsound business operations? For a requested 50-75% increase, UTC should get to the bottom of this matter and provide an objective explanation to the customers. When can the customers on this system expect to receive a justification from UTC?</p> <p>UTC has approved increases in water rates on this system numerous times since I have been a customer. The last I checked, our water rates were much higher compared to other providers in our area. Please do not allow a further rate increase at this time.</p> <p>Please advise as to your intentions in this matter.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Blair Kipple</p>
	Katherine E. Duff	E-mail	<p>May 28, 2024 Dear Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, RE: Rate Case Number UW-240151</p> <p>I live in the Dungeness area outside of Sequim. Our water system was recently purchased by Cascadia from Pederson Water System. Cascadia is applying for a substantial rate increase, the lowest threshold being 65% and every tier has increases. I am very concerned that this rate increase is not fully justified for the following reasons:</p> <p>1. The notice from Cascadia lists improvements but it appears none are for the Pedersen Water System, aka Dungeness Bay Plats Water. If this profit- making company purchases inadequate water companies I don't think it is the responsibility of other rate</p>

			<p>payers to subsidize a bad business decision.</p> <p>2. Are the capital improvements listed, for any and all, put out to bid? Since the owner of Cascadia, NW Natural Water Co., is funded 17% by the private equity firm Blackrock, is there a reciprocal agreement between all concerned to use Blackrock's holdings to supply materials? If so, that should not be the case unless there has been a bidding process that includes outside interests. Example: Who supplies all the generators?</p> <p>3. NW Natural Water is a shareholder owned company whose primary objective is profits for the shareholders. Increased revenue is how a company entices new investors. Proposing continual projects that require monetary investments from the company, that then require rate increases for the customers is a marketing tool, and not always necessary for the water system. That I am afraid, is what this requested rate increase is all about – at the expense of the water customers.</p> <p>I hope the Commission will closely examine this rate request and limit the amount. This vital commodity cannot turn into a cash cow for large corporations.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Katherine E. Duff</p>
	Lauralea Deluca	E-mail	SEE ATTACHMENT
	William Donohoe	E-mail	<p>1. This as a huge % of increase.</p> <p>2. The company is expanding by purchasing more water systems all over the state. I am not sure that is a good thing for our system? As I read your info on how it spreads out the cost, I wondered if all of these new companies would pay the same as we are paying? Also if new water companies purchased have to be brought up to a specific standard before they are allowed to be comingled into greater company. ie newly purchased company may not have sufficient water supply, water mains, pumps etc.</p>
	Kevin Woodland	E-mail	<p>Absolutely NO on the rate increase.</p> <p>Lynch Cove sold the water system with a commitment that the buyer and successors would act in the best interest of the community. Thus the operator must be frugal in their operation expense.</p>

		<p>It is time for UTC to stop giving rate increases without balance with the customer. This is how regulated are supposed to work.</p> <p>It is in interest of all to have enough affordable water available for families.</p> <p>Thanks, Kevin</p>
Peter Renner	E-mail	<p>am writing concerning the 94% rate increase purposed by Cascade Water for Monterra community. Monterra community is a 55 and over community located rurally between Port Angeles and Sequim, Washington, in Clallam County. I am a current resident of Monterra.</p> <p>Monterra is not a gated community with a high income residents. I moved to this community in August, 2023, purchasing a typical manufactured home in the community (all homes in Monterra are manufactured homes) - for \$345,000. I moved here after living in Seattle since 1980 after my wife and I divorced. Settlement of my divorce left me with enough money to purchase this home but not much money past that with half of my monthly retirement income and retirement savings going to my wife. The point of this is that my financial situation is much like most of the folks who live in this roughly 150 home community. Large rate increases are tough to afford as most residents are on fixed incomes, just like me.</p> <p>I do not know what Cascade is proposing to do with the rate increase. I do not know what condition the water pipes and pumping systems that serve our community are in. It does not appear, however, that the money generated by this rate increase is for any project on our water system. How can this be? Is our community's system simply being leveraged by the conglomerate that owns Cascade, PNW Utilities, Portland, to obtain more water systems in the our state and beyond.</p> <p>Water is not a renewable resource. We are in a drought situation in this portion of Clallam County as it is. The Monterra community should not be held ransom so that corporations can buy up smaller water companies like ours, to capture a resource so vital to the people who depend on it. Monterra community has no alternatives to Cascade's service and more importantly has no voice in how our proposed rate increase, should be, or on even whose system, it can be used.</p> <p>Please deny or greatly reduce Cascade's proposed rate increase.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p>Peter Renner</p>

Connie McDonald	E-mail	<p>I have owned property in Freeland WA for many years. Previously water service was provided by Lehman water for many years. The Freeland water area was purchased along with SeaView water on Whidbey Island on November 2, 2018 and a new company Cascadia formed. According to Cascadia's web site Cascadia is a private, Investor owned utility company of water systems located on Whidbey island, WA and the Olympic Peninsula (not adjacent to Freeland service area boundaries). Then Cascadia acquired a number of other water purveyors which apparently were distressed systems based on the number of improvements suggested now by Cascadia. In 2020 Cascadia was granted a 53% increase in rates in the Freeland water area. It took effect in June of 2021. Cascadia continued acquiring water systems in areas like Sequim, Port Angeles, on the mainland east of Whidbey Island, and as far as Moses Lake in Eastern WA. Now back comes Cascadia for another rate increase, this time a 75% increase. Other water purveyors were also acquired on Whidbey Island, one as far north as Oak Harbor, (about 30 miles North ,and one about ten miles south of Freeland near Bailey Road). Boundary Review Board issues in this state typically require natural boundaries should be used whenever changing boundaries. The Freeland water ratepayers have been combined with others far removed on Whidbey Island and by Puget Sound east to include services on the mainland. Several years ago a Freeland Sewer district got in a lot of trouble acquiring property off island on the mainland that had little to do with services here.</p> <p>It appears Cascadia has planned to buy these distressed systems and bundle the repair costs across many non - contiguous boundaries with different types of supply systems . North Whidbey receives water in a large main across the Deception Pass Bridge and everything on the south 2/3rds of this 55 mile long island receives water from wells. In a period of 6 years Cascadia has asked for a combined 128 % increase. I would say that is pretty inflationary, wouldn't you think? Actually, it is far beyond inflationary.</p> <p>Other Factors to consider;</p> <p>Freeland rate layers were never informed of the companies plan to acquire a significantly large number of needy assets. Makes one wonder if the investors were aware of the needs of these very rapidly acquired assets. Freelsnd rate payers , and presumably those in other acquisitions, were not given proposed costs for their specific improvements versus the costs attributed instead to other areas. There are so many acquisitions Casacdia should have sent ratepayers a map of the areas now owned by Cascadia and information on which improvements were necessary in each and which ones were nice to have such as elimination of meter readers with new equipment, given the size of this request. The rate payers should have had an opportunity to respond long before this request was made. We were actually informed after the rate increase request had been filed. In short, more work needs to be done before this request is granted. If this request is granted it seems the rate payers should explore legal remedies with Cascadia to see if these incredible number of acquisitions were done legally and/or without appropriate notification, and ratepayer input. It seems that rates should be structured in specific local service areas based on the improvements in those service areas.</p> <p>Please send the zoom link to this email address for the meeting on June 12 so we may at least observe the</p>
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			<p>questions and answers being raised. Thank you for consideration of my comments.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Connie McDonald</p>
Jamie Hoepner	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water. Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p> <p>Kindly,</p> <p>Jamie Hoepner</p>	
Maurine Shimlock	E-mail	<p>Dear UTC,</p> <p>Once again we are submitting our protest over Cascadia's proposed rate hikes for the Estates water users. While we understand that rate hikes are inevitable and necessary, this hike would DOUBLE the amount we, the users, are paying. Many people on the Estates system are on a low or fixed income and cannot afford an increase of this size, not should they be expected to.</p> <p>Through the public hearings (virtual and in person) we have learned that much of this hike is for Cascadia's benefit, as the company has been on a buying spree and needs cash. There has been little mention of how the consumers will benefit from from the proposed increases. Better maintenance? Doubtful.</p> <p>Thanks again for letting us express our cncerns. Please do the right thing and deny Cascadia's absurd proposal.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Maurine Shimlock and Burt Jones</p>	

Toni Mardell Shearer	E-mail	<p>Hello Melissa....</p> <p>My husband and I received the letter regarding the shocking rate increase to our water bill. We purchased this property last year, we have livestock that require gallons of water daily to sustain them...not to mention the people who live here. Then we discover the rate increase will be to pay for water system repairs or water usage for Cascadia systems that aren't even in the same state, let alone the same county we live in. Not ok with this in the least. We aren't ok with our water system being combined with other water systems under a single tariff. We support the capital surcharge being reinstated so we, the customers, have a say in future plans for our system...the one in the city, county and state we actually live in.</p> <p>And now we've received a notice warning us of a water shut-off, less than a month before it's scheduled to occur?!?! How am I supposed to water my horses?? A few days?!?! I would need a large water reservoir to hold enough water to sustain my four horses for an undetermined amount of time. My horses are my life, if any of them becomes ill due to bad water...I will not be excited. A 550 gallon water tank from Tractor Supply is \$750. So I need to purchase a water tank, fill it (pay to fill it) so I can make certain my horses are safe. To say I'm bloody pissed off is an understatement.</p> <p>Regards,</p> <p>Toni Mardell Shearer</p>
Monterra Homeowners, Lily Todd	E-mail	<p>***SEE ATTACHED SIGNED PETITION</p>
Lily Todd	E-mail	<p>I was unable to access the meeting today via the Zoom link you provided. I understand this is not the first time people have been unable to attend a public meeting with Cascadia. When will the meeting be reheld so we can voice our concerns.</p> <p>I wanted to say 3 things:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The request for the rate increase by Cascadia Water is psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse). This HUGE increase subjected us psychological trauma, including anxiety and depression. This bullying behavior cannot be tolerated. 2. In addition this action is plain and simple blackmail unless the cost Cascadia encounters in responding to our objections do not go on their records as an expense we are required to pay. If Cascadia plans to add the costs they've encountered in defending their sky-high rate increase, I content the whole process is just part of their plan to inflate our water costs and should be disallowed.

			<p>3. Increases in the stand-by rates for undeveloped property should not be allowed UNLESS the costs are justified by repairs to the system they are on.</p> <p>All of this could be avoided with reasonable, frequent rate increases reflecting the rate of inflation.</p> <p>- LILY TODD</p>
	Goss Lakeridge Acres Association	E-mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT
	Jim Breiling	E-mail	<p>Greetings, thank you for your email invited me to your zoom tonight at 4:00 pm unfortunately a last minute conflict arose in which I will not be able to attend the scheduled zoom meeting which I was hoping to share my concerns in regards to Cascadia Water Company's petition of a 75% rate increase effective June 1, 2024. My first concern is that the capital improvement project off of East Harbor Road, Freeland Washington (also located off of Pheasant Farm Lane) is on complete. I gave permission to the Cascadia Water Company to remove my post and rail fence in order for their construction trucks to have additional access to their property. My fence has yet to be replaced. I question if the final permits have been sign off as there is still an open ditch to Puget Sound Electrical Box. The community road, Pheasant Farm Lane has numerous pot holes and wear form the heavy construction (semi) trrucks. This includes the driveway at the end of Pheasant Farm Lane where truck would park through out the project. End closing, on my first concern I believe it is premature for Cascadia Water Company to petition for a 75% rate increase.</p> <p>Future investigation on my part has revealed some interesting statistics for example the average monthly water bill in Washington State is \$75.00 (https://www.statista.com/statistics/1128351/water-bill-increases-united-states/). However the age make up of does rise concern of affordability. According to 2022 Island County Demographics the median age is 57.5 which translates into peak or just below the peak power "s" curve for potential earnings (https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/average-salary-by-age/#average_salary_by_age_and_state_section) raising concern about the ability to generate disposable income to cover expenses such a water utilities. Future investigation reveal a white paper by Mckinsey.com raises a interesting concern; 60% of Water Utility Companies in 2022 surveyed said they experienced or anticipated financial impacts of nonpayment bills, with inflation unchecked one can assume that the nonpayment bills are even higher. (https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/electric-power-and-natural-gas/our-insights/us-water-infrastructure-making-funding-count?cid=eml-web#/).</p> <p>Thank you for reading my submission. Jim Breiling</p>

	Debe Skog	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission, I am writing to formally oppose the rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living. Some of us are on fixed incomes and the increase they are asking is outrageous and criminal. Our community's well (not city water) has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. I request a vote of voluntary service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p>
	Jennifer Gray	E-mail	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p> <p>Jennifer Gray</p>
	Dave Bennett	E-mail	<p>Please add this letter to Cascadia as part of the comments.</p> <p>Thanks Dave Bennett</p> <p>Culley Lehman General Manager Cascadia Water, LLC</p> <p>RE: WUTC DOCKET #UW-240151</p> <p>Dear Mr. Lehman,</p> <p>I reside at 3845 Goldfinch La. in Clinton and am a Cascadia Water, LLC customer. I have reviewed your IMPORTANT NOTICE about a proposed rate increase and appreciate your offer to "feel free" to reach out to the WUTC and yourself if I have any questions about how it might affect me. For generations the Lehman family has provided Whidbey Island residents of small communities such as mine good water at a fair price. Since the family</p>

sold Lehman Enterprises to Cascadia and its Oregon parent companies in 2018, however, my neighbors and I have experienced Cascadia's attempt to DOUBLE our water rates in 2022, a WUTC decision to allow an approximate 25% rate increase in 2022, and now this effort to more than double our raised rates AGAIN! This seems to me to be a shocking money grab, completely unwarranted, but regrettably common to the current practices of those who seek to profit from the privatization of previously public works.

Here are my questions (if the people who can answers these questions are employees of Cascadia Waters parent company, NW Water Resources of Portland, Oregon, or its parent company, NW Natural Holding Company (NYSE: NWN), of Portland Oregon, please forward this email to the appropriate employees).

1) What investments has Cascadia made since the rate increase in 2022 that benefit me and my neighbors' system?

You note that Cascadia has made "substantial investment system-wide and completed several key infrastructure projects that enhance service, for the benefit of its customers". In many instances I don't see any reference to where the improvements were made. For example, you list installing meters and generators, but Lehman Enterprises installed meters and a generator for our Goldfinch system well before Terry and Jim Lehman, your father and uncle, sold Lehman Enterprises to Cascadia. I've asked neighbors and no one can think of any improvements that have been made on our system since Cascadia bought Lehman Enterprises. Please advise if any improvements have been made that affect our system (I believe our system is, or is part of, T.E.L. Co #3, DOH PWS 939458).

2) Who or what is WB Waterworks?

I do see reference to "replacing two pressure reducing valves ... on the WB Waterworks system", as well as "installing a new reservoir on the WB Waterworks system...as well as a filter plant" . Cascadia makes no reference to who WB Waterworks is in its Notice. Are you referring to the company W&B Waterworks, which your grandparents Wally and Betty Lehman started some 40 or more years ago? It's my understanding W&B is still active and being run by your dad, Terry Lehman. Has his company been hired to do this work? Where was this work done? Does it benefit Goldfinch customers? What did it cost?

3) What were the costs incurred by Cascadia for the improvements you claim?

I see no itemization of the costs incurred for any of the improvements Cascadia claims to have made. That seems like pretty basic information for customers and the WUTC to consider when trying to understand such a huge rate increase request. I understand I can research what you filed with the WUTC and try to make heads or tails of whatever numbers you've submitted in whatever fashion but I would think a simple spreadsheet identifying the various water systems, the improvements made for each water system and the cost of each improvement could and

should be provided to your customers. Can and will you do that?

4) Cascadia and NW Natural Water state proudly that "Since its last general rate proceeding in 2021, Cascadia has continued to expand". Are customers like me being asked to pay for any or all of these expansion costs, which provide no benefit to me and my neighbors?

Cascadia and NW Natural Water, its holding company, are actively acquiring aged, small, rural water systems across the state. Yet Cascadia only provides service on Whidbey Island and contracts with other companies to do maintenance on the other newly acquired systems. Are these Contractors the same people who managed the systems before Cascadia purchased them, such as the Lehman family's situation? When your dad and brother sold Lehman Enterprises to Cascadia you, your wife, your brother and your nephew all became well-paid salaried employees of Cascadia. Have other system managers become salaried Cascadia employees? Cascadia's website identifies former system managers as "contractors". How are they compensated? On a time and material basis or otherwise? Has Cascadia or NW Natural Water brought in anyone new with water system management experience?

In the same vein, when Cascadia or NW Natural Water finance a new purchase of an existing system, are financing costs, loan payments, and/or interest included in items Cascadia claims qualify for recoupment and/or a Return on Investment? In simpler terms, are customers being expected to pay for Cascadia's aggressive acquisition business plan?

It's my lay understanding that the State Department of Health sometimes loans money to water systems (a SRF Loan(?)) which has to be paid off upon sale of the system. Did any of the systems Cascadia acquired have outstanding loans to DOH or of any other type? Were they paid off by Cascadia? If not, do my water bills help pay off pre existing loans of other systems? This seems grossly unfair.

How does Cascadia acquire new systems? Before Cascadia makes an acquisition does it conduct due diligence about existing and potential issues to calculate future anticipated expenses? For example, does Cascadia do due diligence regarding age and type and wear and tear of existing systems to calculate future anticipated expenses? Or regarding possible latent expenses such as PFAS contamination? Are such potential expenses part of the negotiating process of a sales price by which Cascadia attempts to protect itself and its future customers? Or does Cascadia simply, to put it bluntly, buy "a pig in a poke" and determine what expenses it will incur later?

It's my understanding that Lehman Enterprises was sold for \$200,000 less than its assessed value. Is that correct? Cascadia stated that Lehman Enterprises was "underfunded" at the time of sale. If this is so had your dad and uncle considered a rate increase request prior to selling to Cascadia? Or was this sale a means of avoiding the work of a rate increase request and helping ensure the next generation of Lehmans would enjoy the fruits of their family's business through steady future employment?

5) What overhead is Cascadia claiming in its rate increase request?

I'd appreciate some information about Cascadia's overhead expenses. Cascadia lists 18181 SR 225 as its business office. This is also the business address of W&B Waterworks, still active and I assume now your dad's company, and B&W Pump Co. (another Wally and Betty company?). 18181 SR 225 is a relatively small, shed-like building which I'd guess your grandfather built when he started W&B Waterworks. Does Cascadia pay rent to W&B or B&W? Share office staff?

Cascadia states its office is closed throughout the week and customer service is handled by phone by you and your wife. Does Cascadia claim overhead as part of its rate increase request? If so, how much and for what? Does any overhead claim include the salaries of all the Lehmans and other former system employees? How were such salaries negotiated? How are they justified if there are no office hours and customer service is limited to responses to individual customer requests? If older systems needed significant work prior to acquisition by Cascadia why were the same managers retained, and at such healthy salaries? (My understanding is that your annual salary is in the neighborhood of \$106,000, your wife Amy \$76,000, your brother Adam part time \$46,000 and cousin Bobby \$62,000. Is Adam paid part time because he holds another job?) Are salary increases for Cascadia employees included in the rate increase request? Were you all salaried employees of Lehman Enterprises before the sale? What were your respective salaries at the time of sale?

6) Cascadia and NW Natural Water justify increasing block rates because they encourage conservation. Why should Cascadia and NW Natural Water profit from arbitrary block rates?

Cascadia justifies incremental block rates based on increased usage as encouraging conservation. Cascadia is requesting significant increases in block rates: from \$1.30/ \$2.40/\$4.00 to \$5.52/\$8.72/\$11.04! These are roughly 4.25 times/3.6 times/ and 2.76 times greater rates respectively! What justification is there for such huge increases? Why should Cascadia make a profit from encouraging conservation? Your customers are very aware of the need for water conservation. But it seems very unfair for Cascadia to arbitrarily set quantity limits on water usage, assess a block rate penalty if its limits are exceeded, and profit thereby.

7) Does Cascadia believe that its current business plan creates any economies of scale that benefit me, my neighbors and the rest of Cascadia's customers?

I can't see how Cascadia's aggressive expansion program creates any economies of scale which benefit me and my fellow customers. Buying aging, small, rural water systems hither and yon across the state, retaining the same local managers and technicians who previously serviced these systems to continue servicing them, and making claimed improvements to these separate systems because of their individual pre existing or unique current problems doesn't benefit me in the slightest. What economies of scale does Cascadia or its parent Oregonian

			<p>companies claim?</p> <p>One of the systems-wide "improvements" you claim involves installation of "SCADA (telemetry) systems, which allow our operators to view</p>
Douglas and Patrice Markham	E-mail	<p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>I am writing to voice our concerns on the recent proposed 94% water rate increase requested by CASCADIA WATER for the MONTERRA WATER SYSTEM located in Clallam County, Port Angeles, WA.</p> <p>We are a retired couple living on a low fixed income (social security and a small government assistance) with no other source of income. The proposed (unjust and unjustified) rate increase would be an extreme hardship for us. We would have to decide to do without water or many other daily necessities. With no available low income financial assistance it leaves us with very difficult decisions.</p> <p>Respectfully, Douglas Markham Patrice Markham</p>	
Terri DiMartino	E-mail	<p>***SEE ATTACHMENT</p> <p>I have been in contact with several of the neighbors that homes are right next door to Cascadia's massive 33 foot concrete water tower, and I must tell you if I lived within feet of this eyesore and the ongoing construction activities, you would of gotten a call and email from me every day.</p> <p>I was recently looking for the Estates Water June 18 water shut off notice on Cascadia's website. It's not posted, but I laughed when I read this statement by Cascadia's Manager Culley Lehman, "Cascadia Water operates long-time family run utilities, and we're very connected to the communities we serve." This perception Lehman has is not any where close to being accurate or true.</p> <p>Here's how Cascadia's connects with their customers during a massive \$1 million construction project built smack dab in the middle of an established neighborhood:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hours of noise and diesel smells from idling and running concrete trucks, delivery trucks, employee vehicles, dump trucks, and a vacuum extraction truck being the most deafening sound. A vacuum extraction truck can exceed decibels of over 90 dPA. All nearby neighbors reported they left there homes when this machinery was operating. 2. No preconstruction warning that the project was starting. No construction sign posted or foreman to report 	

problems too like random low water pressure, or losing your home Internet because buried cable were severed. You'd assume Cascadia would of had the courtesy to contact each household near the construction site and give them a heads up on what anticipate. No such action occurred.

3. Home views diminished. One neighbor had a mountain view, now they look at a 33 foot water tower. Another neighbor has a 180 degree of the work site. These people are wondering if this will impact their home and property investment. I've never seen a massive 33 foot water tank built in the middle of a neighborhood. Please see attached pictures.

4. Loss of privacy and security. A steady stream of contractors and curious eyes has been non stop at the construction site. One person told me they keep their blinds shut so passers by can't see inside their home or they leave their home. Imagine how'd you feel about strangers walking by just feet from your property and driving up your private road on a daily basis.

5. Visual pollution. The former site was grassy and well maintained. Now there are large pipes, empty welding tanks, caution tape, rebar laying around, and large holes underneath the existing pump houses. Please see the attached pictures. These neighbors have asked Cascadia when will this project be completed? Cascadia response is "we don't know."

6. "Worksite dirt and dust are a constant on my home, vehicles and I have to keep my windows closed". A common complaint stated by everyone. Wind is common when you live near the Salish Sea and little dirt devils are frequently created when you leave mounds of dirt uncovered.

I think the rate payers above who continue to live through project are being taken advantage of by Cascadia since late December 2023. It is my opinion Culley Lehman has let these neighbors down. He's done nothing to assist these neighbors with the human and irreversible construction impacts of this water tower.

I hope the UTC acknowledges the Estates Water System hasn't been a family run water system that's connected to its communities for years now. It's owned by a private equity firm called NW Holdings LLC, NYSE NWN. Justin Palfreyman is the legal owner of record for the property the water tank was built on. He has demonstrated his company is not a good neighbor. This project might take months or years to finish all at the expense of the neighbors that have to deal with the ongoing construction noise and other unforeseen nuances.

It's hard for me to believe the existing underground water tanks couldn't of been repaired or savaged. Was this 33 foot concrete eyesore the only option? As a rate payer, I would of appreciated other options over this mess, and one that wasn't so costly. I hope the UTC commissioners tell Cascadia that building a 33 foot concrete water tower was a poor business decision and Cascadia, not the rate payers, can foot the bill on this disaster.

			Terri DiMartino
	Amanda Payne	E-mail	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I'm writing to you today about a proposed water rate increase that I received from Cascadia Water, our residential water service. We are a part of the Lake Alyson Water District, and are a single residential community of around 50 homes. This service was provided by Northwest Water Services until Cascadia purchased them. Before that, it was provided by a small company in Arlington run by a single woman who knew all our names and was genuinely honest about the services she provided.</p> <p>Since we purchased our home in 2015, we have gone from a small company that provided services, to a big corporation that is profit driven. This company has done little to improve our services, in fact, little has changed other than the monthly meter readers. Our service remains a shared well that requires only a filtration system, a few pumps and a generator. Dispite that, since Northwest Water Services acquired our water system, we have already seen an 80% increase in our rates since 2015.</p> <p>With this proposed increase, we will see an increase of 350% to our water bill since 2015 (not even 10 years). This is not an exaggeration. Our first year living here, our water bill averaged \$28 per month. With this proposed rate increase, our bill will reach \$108 per month. Our current bill is \$49 per month. This is nearly quadruple our rates 10 years ago. And this is over double what we are paying now. This would be a rate increase of nearly 350% in less than 10 years. THIS IS UNSUSTAINABLE.</p> <p>Our water system is not complex. It does not require extreme maintenance and does not need "high tech solutions". What it does need are sustainable rates. Their argument that this will make rates "even" for all the systems is unfair. Why should we have to pay double the rates for someone else's water system? Our system was not included in their "key infrastructure projects", why should we be forced to pay for them?</p> <p>Not only that, but just down the road is Snohomish County PUD's main water service pumps. PUD provides service for everyone else not in our tiny neighborhood. Their rates will be just a little over half of what this proposed increase will be. I would much prefer that SnoCo PUD take over our water service, if this is the case.</p> <p>While I cannot attend your meeting, I would greatly appreciate someone looking into our individual water system, and the exorbitant rate increases they are proposing. I think you will find that their costs do not justify the proposed increase.</p>
	Martin Spani	E-mail	Strongly urge you to disallow this phony additional charge that amounts to graft and corruption that now seems to be over taking the State. This "the sky is falling" currently prevailing is without a doubt bogus.

			Thank you,
Benjamin Hu and Janet Tipping	E-mail	<p>We received notification of a proposed rate increase that will more than double average water bills for customers of Cascadia Water Systems that is to be presented to the UTC at a meeting at 9:30am on May 23, 2024. We were not provided a docket number for the meeting.</p> <p>While the notification letter mentioned planned projects, there was no mention of financials of Cascadia Water Systems. Current rates provide a steady income stream for operations and profit.</p> <p>The proposed rate increases of over 100% are an outrageous and unjustified grab at profits during a time when inflation has been hurting all homeowners. Cascadia Water has also been moving towards creating a monopoly within the State of Washington by purchasing small community water systems and apparently seeks to leverage this monopoly into a financial bonanza.</p> <p>It is up to the UTC to protect consumers and home owners by ensuring that public utilities are operated to provide safe, reliable public utilities at reasonable rates. Nobody expects utilities to operate at a loss, but when inflation has been between 3 and 7%, it is not inherently reasonable to grant a more than 100% rate increase. The UTC should require disclosure of Cascadia Water Systems' full financials including executive and director compensation and profits. In the absence of documented losses, it is unreasonable to implement rate increases that are markedly higher than the general inflation rate.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the rate increase process.</p>	
Gerald Carpenter	E-mail	<p>Cascadia's request is for expenses related to expanding and upgrading their service area, and only minimally related to my area (Estates Water System, previously).</p> <p>While Cascadia may expand, my service fees should not provide investment type funds for this expansion. Since they have monopoly power, I hope the commission will be able to separate my fair costs for services from Cascadia's drive for expansion and profits. You are my arbitrator.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>	
Jack Landsbach	E-mail	<p>I am writing to comment on the filed proposal by Cascadia Water, LLC to increase rates.</p> <p>While it is reasonable to expect increases in rates, the proposed increase is fairly absurd. To suddenly double the price is a real shock to consumers. It seems to me that the proper way to increase rates is incrementally via a</p>	

		<p>schedule that spaces out the impact to consumers. In the notice, they speak to having "prudently managed operating expenses". While this may be true, it seems clear that they have expanded quickly and taken on systems that need a good deal of upgrading, repair, etc., and planned properly for that expansion. Prudently planning for these acquisitions would've meant putting a rate increase schedule in place to make proper business sense for the funding scenario used to acquire these new regions. It sure seems like they've gotten in a bit over their heads and are relying on customers to bail them out.</p> <p>I hope the commission decides to require them to increase rates over the next several years to get to where they need to be.</p>
Robin and Ema Hartman	E-mail	<p>Dear UTC,</p> <p>We received notification of a 100+% water rate increase proposal from Cascadia Water Systems. We whole heartedly agree with everything that Ben Hu and Janet Tipping, our neighbor, stated in their comments sent to you.</p> <p>With the cost of inflation continuing to be high and living on a fixed income, this proposal is outrageous. We haven't received any documentation indicating the financial situation with Cascadia Water Systems. They created a new "well", never indicating the cost of this project or any notification of possible increases in community water rates.</p> <p>Ema and I ask you to reject this proposal. An increase of 5-7% would be more reasonable, considering the economy and fixed income we have. The both of us are retired.</p> <p>Regards, Robin and Ema Hartman</p>
Joshua Duerst	E-mail	<p>The implications of these skyrocketing water rates extend beyond mere financial strain. They threaten the fabric of our local community's well-being. As the cost of water soars, vulnerable members of our society, including the elderly, low-income families, and individuals on fixed incomes, are disproportionately affected. Families should not have to ration their water usage or compromise on basic needs due to financial constraints imposed by unjustifiable rate hikes.</p> <p>Furthermore, the lack of transparency surrounding the rationale behind these increases only serves to deepen the sense of distrust and disillusionment among residents. We demand accountability and transparency from the authorities responsible for managing our water resources. The community deserves a clear and comprehensive explanation for the sudden escalation in rates, as well as a commitment to fair and equitable pricing structures that prioritize the well-being of all residents. Cascadia are asking for a 75% increase in their revenue across the board, which is great if you are a shareholder, but not so much if you are a resident here.</p>

		<p>In light of these urgent concerns, I implore you to take immediate action to address the untenable situation facing our community. We call upon the “Commission” to conduct a thorough investigation into the reasons behind the unprecedented water rate increases and to implement measures to alleviate the burden placed upon residents. I personally have witnessed our water rate go from \$17.50/month base rate prior to the Cascadia takeover in 2018 to a \$24/month base rate. AND now they want to increase our rate to a \$44/month rate as of June 1, 2024. The previous ready to serve rate prior to the Cascadia takeover was \$60/year and that is now proposed to be \$44/month (\$528 year!!) as of June 1, 2024. I have also been informed that we are unable to dig a private well on our own property without Cascadia’s approval. I am shocked and really disappointed this company has ruined what was once a very fairly priced and good working community water system.</p> <p>In Addition, as you may recall this exact scenario came up a few years ago resulting in our community coming together and hiring an attorney at our own expense to fight this issue, which we won. Is hiring an attorney our only course of action moving forward to prevent Cascadia Water, llc from raising their rates exponentially now and in the future?</p> <p>Our community cannot afford to wait idly by as essential services become increasingly unattainable for those most in need. As the governing body overseeing this unethical rate increase request, I urge you to heed this call to action and work towards a swift and fair resolution to this pressing issue and not allow this 94% increase in our water rates to pass!</p> <p>Kind regards, Joshua Duerst</p>
	Lacey and Ray Guna	<p>E-mail</p> <p>We received notification of a proposed rate increase from Cascadia Water, LLC. Cascadia filed on February 29, 2024 for approval to increase rates, effective June 1, 2024. The meeting will be held at 9:30 am on May 23, 2024.</p> <p>Cascadia notes in the docket that they service 4,000 customers. Their website says they service 9,000 people through 3,600 connections.</p> <p>Cascadia state that they are "seeking cost recovery in rates because current revenues are insufficient to cover the ongoing cost of continuing to provide service that is safe, adequate and efficient, and in all respects just and reasonable, while allowing an opportunity for a reasonable return on the Company's needed capital investment".</p> <p>What I believe Cascadia means is since the last rate increase we all paid in 2021 and 2022, Cascadia has expanded and bought assets from FIVE more water system companies, and Cascadia wants us, the customers, to pay for it. If these systems needed upgrading, that should have been worked out in the negotiations in purchasing the systems, not having the customers pay for it. Capital investment should be coming from investors/shareholders, not the customers.</p>

Cascadia states the increased rates will reflect additional revenue of \$1,788,793, an incremental increase of 75%. How did they arrive at that? The letter we received from them attached the proposed rates and resulting average monthly bill impact for Island/Mainland System (for Sea View/Lehman/Del Bay).

Our rates for Island/Mainland System will go up 145% for the 1st block; 149% for 2nd block, and 145% for 3rd block. Not the 108% Cascadia shows on their excel "Cascadia-GRC-Workbook-Cascadia-Western-Systems". And why do the Northwest Water Services rates only go up by 80%, according to their excel worksheet, while our water system goes up 108%?

The excel worksheets are very hard to follow from tab to tab, and they don't make sense, especially PFIS - Pro Form Income Statement. It is only picking up two of the five entities' income and expenses. I'm hoping the UTC does their own worksheets to see that this increase is unreasonable, seeming to pick and choose what figures they want to use. Looking at the PFIS, the Net Operating Income will be about \$692,000 or 33.6% of Operating Revenue. That is a very hefty increase to the bottom line. Again, why are the customers paying for the company's capital improvements? That is what stockholders and investors are supposed to do with their funds.

This type of increase, with all other increases in our lives, hurts those that live in the neighborhoods of Cascadia's water systems. Cascadia has been purchasing small community water systems at a rapid rate, and wanting the homeowners to foot the bill of these capital expenditures.

It is the UTC's responsibility to ensure that public utilities are providing safe utilities at reasonable rates. I don't see where even at Cascadia's existing revenues and expenses; they are operating at a loss. Cascadia may try to show that on their Pro Forma Income Statement, but that is only a fraction of the existing revenues and expenses. I could spend hours trying to analyze all their worksheets, but I'm in the middle of tax season. All I know is Cascadia's excel worksheet has a whole lot of numbers that when trying to trace, some just don't make sense.

Cascadia Water LLC is owned by NW Natural Water, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Northwest Natural Holding Company (NYSE:NWN). A publicly traded company who wants to make sure their shareholders and investors are kept happy, at the expense of the customers. Wanting a rate of return of 12% for those investors, is not reasonable.

I appreciate you reading my entire email. More than doubling our water bill every month will put a strain on most of us. Those on social security don't receive that type of Cost-of-Living increase. Those that are still working may not even get a raise each year. This proposed rate increase will definitely put a burden on all customers.

Thank you in advance for looking into this in more detail and not just taking their worksheets at face value.

	Jason Popp	E-mail	<p>Cascadia recently purchased the only water well serving roughly 550 homes in Moses Lake WA. The area is known as Pelican Point. The community has started receiving notifications that individual water bills will start increasing 92% for single family homes starting June 2024.</p> <p>Most people can not simply afford a DOUBLING of rates for something as basic to human rights as water. Cascadia purchased this community well for the sole purpose of exploiting its members to pay for improvements outside of this community. They are for all intents and purposes holding a communities right to water hostage.</p>
	Sarah Nortz	E-mail	<p>Hello. Cascadia's apparent need for a rate increase of 75% indicates gross mismanagement. Companies that mismanage at this level should not be allowed to operate utilities.</p> <p>Sarah Nortz</p>
	Janis Machala and David Stenberg	E-mail	<p>To Whom it may Concern:</p> <p>We have reviewed the outline of the Cascadia Water Rate increase request and have found it to be both unreasonable and unfair. We find it this way simply because Cascadia operates multiple distinct water systems, each of which has its own unique needs. By structuring the rate increase as a single request, this fundamental fact is ignored.</p> <p>The outline of reasons for the rate increase, includes multiple maintenance items that impact only one of the multiple systems that Cascadia operates. These include the major overhaul of the CAL waterworks, consolidation of the Del Bay system, extension of the Bacus Road system, adding chlorine analyzers on Pelican Point, the new reservoirs for the Estates system and WB Waterworks, installation of disinfection on the Rolf Bruun system and the new well on the Sea View system. Clearly, these items should only be one time assessments to that particular water system's users.</p> <p>Standard maintenance items, like the replacement of pumps, pressure tanks and control boxes are known and expected expenses, which Cascadia should have considered as part of its prudent management. The meter upgrade and replacement is standard prudent management, which will ultimately result in reduction of Cascadia's expenses. Likewise, the installation of telemetry systems will result in lowering of Cascadia's operating expenses. None of these changes is primarily for the benefit of the system users, but rather for the efficiency of Cascadia and will increase Cascadia's profitability at the expense of all the water systems users.</p> <p>Further,</p> <p>since the last rate increase, Cascadia has gone on an expansion spending spree. Purchasing 6 systems across most of Washington State. From Clallam County in the West to Grant County in the East. Now, Cascadia wants to consolidate those far flung disparate systems into a single billing and rate structure. While this will simplify Cascadia's accounting system, we fail to see how this will improve service to individual water system users. While Cascadia wants to consolidate the systems it has purchased, these systems are in fact physically separate systems with different needs and challenges. It makes no sense to group Island County water systems with any of the Mainland, Olympic Peninsula or Grant County Systems.</p>

			<p>Finally, the sheer size of this increase is totally unreasonable. Cascadia had gotten a large rate increase in 2021, to come back to the commission 3 years later and ask for an even bigger increase is just greedy. Cascadia, clearly, has not prudently managed its growth and as a result is seeking to hold its water system users hostage to its excesses.</p>
Melissa Rosloniec	E-mail	<p>I currently live on the outskirts of Oak Harbor, WA and our water provider is Cascadia. I am appalled by the recent letter mentioning proposed rate increases of over 100% increase. That is absurd! In all my years here, I have never received such a dramatic increase in fees to our water as what we received from Cascadia last week. Honestly, the proposed percentage increase of over 100% is simply outrageous, especially given our economy, inflation and more. I understand that Cascadia Water wants to put in essential improvements, but there is absolutely no way that families can absorb 100% increases and further, at a minimum, Cascadia Water should think about how to stagger increases as to minimize the impact to consumers.</p> <p>I also want to bring up a very important matter: I had to install a whole home filtration system (very expensive) SOLELY due to the fact that even today, Cascadia Water delivers terrible quality water. In fact, I argue that the water Cascadia delivers today to all the homes around us, is substandard and non-drinkable. So if I can't trust Cascadia Water to deliver PURE, CLEAN, DRINKABLE water today, why on earth should there be this rate increase. The WA State Commission should mandate that Cascadia Water delivers this water before they ever have a right to increase fees.</p> <p>Lastly, we have had our property taxes increased dramatically year over year and why aren't the increased taxes (which are inappropriately high), used to offset the Cascadia water essential improvements? Afterall, that's what our extra taxes should be used for.</p> <p>In summary, I STRONGLY OPPOSE this rate increase and urge you to consider this.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	
Josh Courteau	E-mail	<p>Dear Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC),</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to Cascadia Water's proposed 75% rate increase. This increase is simply unaffordable for many customers and comes on the heels of a 53% increase levied in December 2020.</p> <p>Cascadia Water has not provided sufficient justification for this exorbitant rate hike. The company claims that it needs to recover costs associated with water service, but it has not demonstrated that these costs are reasonable or necessary. Planning for system upgrades, the company should consider what type of rate increases are actually sustainable by their clients - in aggregate, with the 53% increase in 2020, this amounts to a 128% increase since</p>	

			<p>the start of Covid.</p> <p>For consideration, at same time as we received this notice from Cascadia Water, we received notice from Waste Connections that their rates were dropping for garbage pickup. The argument that inflation is driving up costs doesn't hold water.</p> <p>Similar to waste collection, we have no choice of water providers. This effective monopoly has a trapped audience and is acting accordingly. In 2010, through Resolution 64/292, the UN General Assembly recognized the human right to clean water - drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realization of human rights. We are living in a time where tax increases, costs for basic food and supplies and housing costs are skyrocketing - especially now, we should not permitting the further decline of peoples basic rights though pricing them out of their water.</p> <p>I urge the UTC to reject Cascadia Water's proposed rate increase. This increase would be a devastating blow to many customers, their rate of increases are not reasonable nor sustainable and the costs haven't been justified by the company.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Josh Courteau</p>
	Sid and Virginia Lewis	E-mail	<p>UTC Commissioners,</p> <p>We are customers of Cascadia Water on Whidbey Island. Our particular system is the Silverlake system. We have received a notice of the proposed 84% rate increase for our water. We do not see any justification for this huge increase. It appears that Cascadia is spreading the costs of updating their other systems in different counties and locations to justify this rate hike and causing all of us to shoulder the costs. The letter that we received has no proposed major changes of any kind to improve our water. We have very poor water (hardness and tannins) which requires each homeowner to install incoming filters and water treatment at the point of use. I believe that each water system should be looked at individually when system cost and upgrades are being considered. We can understand an inflation adjustment but certainly not an 84% hike. We have been on this water system since 2004. We have not experienced any quality changes in our water.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration</p>
	Denise Mckay	E-mail	<p>Good morning;</p> <p>I am in receipt of your undated letter entitled "important notice" that informs of Cascadia's plan to increase water rates a minimum of 89% effective 1 June 2024. The letter indicates Cascade has made "substantial investment</p>

		<p>system wide,” and tags inflation as a contributing cause for the proposed rate hikes. Sadly, no examples are given to back these claims up.</p> <p>The letter goes on to list several bullet points of “infrastructure projects to enhance service,” none of which are in support of Pelican Point. Further, the only “improvement” to the Pelican Point system appears to be a chlorinator which can hardly be called an upgrade.</p> <p>Additionally, Pelican Point has suffered with low water pressure for several years, yet there are no proposals to address this. A well pump which was allegedly replaced in 2022 has not increased water pressure, and a straw poll indicates that many of the residents—including me—lack the water pressure to efficiently power lawn sprinklers. This may be partially due to the significant increase in new home construction in the neighborhood, which obviously utilize the community water system. An expansion of the community would seemingly result in an expansion of the water system; alas, this is not the case.</p> <p>Your letter further states “for the purposes of this proceeding, the Company proposes to maintain a separate rate structure for the Pelican Point System, which is located across the Cascade Mountains near Moses Lake and its proposed rates do not align with either the Peninsula System or Island/Mainland System rate structures for consolidation at this time.” The letter provides no explanation whatsoever for this statement, but the attached table of current and proposed rates would seem to indicate an outrageous and usurious hike nonetheless.</p> <p>I would trust that Cascadia would show good faith and transparency to provide financial documents to illustrate the need in support of this exorbitant proposal, and the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission would utilize focus and discernment to act with both the consumer/end user and the water company’s best interest to arrive at a reasonable decision. A nearly 100% in price is most definitely not reasonable.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Denise McKay</p>
	Susan Allen	<p>E-mail</p> <p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>I am writing concerning the 94-102% increase Cascadia Water is asking for. I live in the Monterra 55+ community on the Olympic Peninsula. Cascadia acquired our water system 3 years ago, I believe. They have installed meters at every home and have done some work at the water tower: monitoring, safety equipment and some other things. No extensive work was done beyond this that I am aware of. Our water tower reservoir is in good condition. They state in their letter they have other infrastructure projects to do here: new above-ground reservoir, new booster pumps etc. My concern is the huge increase in our water bill and are all their repairs necessary? No one has complained about water pressure that I know of. We have good water and good water</p>

			<p>pressure here.</p> <p>Cascadia stated in its letter how it is acquiring new acquisitions and how rapidly it is expanding. It has only been in business since 2018. My concern is for Monterra residents to be paying only for our water system and repairs here and not elsewhere. I do know in their rapid expansion customer service is not good. I needed to contact them and left a message at their phone number. No one returned my call, so I emailed them. No response. Sometime later I received a call from some nice lady who said she had stumbled on my email- just quite by chance- and had read it and called me. I immediately Thanked her for her call. Of course, everyone is on autopay and I did request on their website to receive paper bills as well as email notification but they have not done that.</p> <p>I realize expanding their water empire takes all their time, but anyone in business can tell you, you don't get rich overnight. With their rapid expansion and poor customer service, I have concerns.</p> <p>They have raised our rates twice I think and it was needed I know. We all know the cost of everything is rising exponentially. Can't afford to live these days. In closing, I would ask the commission to consider what is just and fair for the dwellers of Monterra.</p> <p>Thank your for your time.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Susan Allen 242 Monterra Dr. Port Angeles,WA 98362</p>
	Greg and Diane Spanjer	E-mail	<p>We are emailing to express our concern about the the rate increase filing from Cascadia Water to be effective June 1, 2024.</p> <p>As a homeowner serviced by this utility company it is unacceptable to experience a rate increase in one year that would be over a 84% increase in our cost for water.</p> <p>We ask that the UTC rule on behalf of the customers and grant a substantially lower rate increase. Like all of us this utility needs to find a way to operate in a more cost efficient manner. I do not question the necessity of their many projects but they need to find a way to action these needs in a more cost effective manner rather than asking</p>

		<p>their customers to pay almost double for a life necessity.</p>																		
	<p>Kent Sherrer E-mail</p>	<p>Issue 1: Proposed Average Bill calculation incorrect</p> <p>The Average Proposed Bill does not seem correct.</p> <p>The Average Current Bill shown on page 1 is equivalent to 878 cu. ft. Average Water Usage. Based on this and the new rates, the Proposed Avg. Bill should be \$116.56, NOT \$104.41. In other words, if I currently pay the average \$56.72, my new rate will be \$116.56. If there is another method for calculation, it would be good to explain this. Details below:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="540 516 1753 659"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Avg. Bill</th> <th>Water cu. ft.</th> <th>Base Rate \$</th> <th>1st Block \$</th> <th>2nd Block \$</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Current</td> <td>\$56.72</td> <td>878</td> <td>43.00</td> <td>8.68 = 668 * \$1.30/100</td> <td>5.04 = 210 * \$2.40/100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Proposed</td> <td>\$116.56</td> <td>878</td> <td>56.00</td> <td>27.60 = 500 * \$5.52/100</td> <td>32.96 = 378 * \$8.72/100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Issue 2: Unmetered Bill should at higher than the Average Rate</p> <p>There may be several good reasons for a residence to be unmetered. But if a house is occupied, why would the expected water usage be less than average (about 878 cu. ft. or about 6,500 gal/mo as calculated above)? On the contrary, it seems that water usage for these customers would be higher than average, either due to leaks or lack of conservation. Increasing this rate would motivate these users to consider meters.</p> <p>Issue 3: Prioritize Installation of Wireless Meters for Unmetered Residences</p> <p>It seems that many residences are unmetered because their hookup was made prior to widespread use of meters, and it can be difficult to find or access the waterline. However, the location where the water enters the house is usually well known but several hundred feet from the road. It seems that these circumstances would be a perfect application for the new wireless meters. They can be easily installed next to the house (similar to gas and electric) and data collected from the road.</p> <p>Issue 4: Publish Number of Unmetered Customers</p> <p>Unmetered customers have the highest risk for leaks and excessive usage. Reducing this number would be a good indication of efforts to conserve water and control costs.</p>		Avg. Bill	Water cu. ft.	Base Rate \$	1st Block \$	2nd Block \$	Current	\$56.72	878	43.00	8.68 = 668 * \$1.30/100	5.04 = 210 * \$2.40/100	Proposed	\$116.56	878	56.00	27.60 = 500 * \$5.52/100	32.96 = 378 * \$8.72/100
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		<p>At a time of substantial rate increases, these customers have good reason to avoid meters, either because new pipes are expensive, or their lifestyle consumes a lot of water. Mariners Cove Community near Oak Harbor is a good case study. For many years they were completely unmetered, and only recently converted to all meters. They immediately identified and fixed several major leaks. And they identified several customers with exceedingly wasteful consumption that were quickly reduced. This was a significant benefit to the community and more fairly spread the costs.</p> <p>Issue 5: Create New Category for DORMANT Water Usage</p> <p>A new Dormant rate should be established for customers that are not using their water for long periods of time. Currently, the only options are to pay the monthly Base Rate, or to cancel water services and remove the meter. Both these options are unfair expensive alternatives, especially at these higher rates.</p> <p>There are several valid reasons for a customer's account to be dormant. In some cases, waterlines must be installed and connected to a lot just to prove it is buildable, and it may be several years before a house is built. Or, a building project is delayed, and occupancy has not been granted. Or, a house is empty for an extended period of time for various reasons (e.g. illness, nursing home, deployment, remodel, etc.)</p> <p>Perhaps a Dormant customer could pay the Base Rate annually. Their meter would be checked annually, and water usage would need to remain below 100 gallons, otherwise they would pay the Block Rates for water used and convert back to the regular rate.</p> <p>Thanks for your thoughtful consideration,</p> <p>Kent Sherrer</p>
	Susan Bonallo	E-mail <p>We here on the Olympic Peninsula are not responsible for the debt that the “new” Cascadia water company has taken on. We don’t pay for other companies to make a profit, why should a utility be any different? I didn’t vote for it. We are paying expenses for all their acquisitions ! Not our problem to see them make a profit. Give us a break. Isn’t your job to manage a fair and equitable utility providers? Or is that not the case?</p>
	Kirk Wells	E-mail <p>My Name is Kirk Wells, my address is 113 Canyon Estates Drive Sequim WA 98382 and I am a customer in the Peninsula System which is the old Aquarius System on the Miller Peninsula Diamond Point Estates.</p>

		<p>The increase in rates to my particular account as shown in the rate forecast provided by Cascadia for the Peninsula System would be approximately 24%. The overall revenue increases indicated in the letter is 75%.</p> <p>The rates in my system are also proposed to be configured so that the bulk of the rate payment will be as a Base Rate which means that they now want the bulk of the monthly payment as a fixed revenue stream to them and a fixed cost to the consumer independent of the amount of water consumed.</p> <p>Cascadia has apparently been busy in the acquisition of various water systems such as the Aquarius system, is consolidating them and now making a major move to "raise the rents" so to speak to enhance their revenues and profits and justify the cost of acquisition for the owners.</p> <p>Mention is made of improvements at the Peninsula System such as generators and pumps to secure water availability during power outages. In 20 years, I have never experienced a water shut off despite over a hundred power outages, some lasting up to 2 days. You can't improve on that. All of a sudden we need new ones?</p> <p>The letter refers to an apparent cost of doing business issue involving "rate tariffs" which implies that Cascadia is required to pay an amount to an outside entity, possibly a government agency, as a tariff, for the privilege to provide water services. If this is significant to the rate increase request, then I would object to such a tariff that would cause the need for such a steep percentage increase in revenue.</p> <p>If the rate increases are more of an inflation chasing, return on investment enhancing request, I would also object to it as Cascadia has made the decision to acquire water companies for its own growth objectives and now wants to make it attractively profitable at the customer's expense.</p> <p>So, to summarize, I consider the rate of increase objectionable as I do the way the rates are being configured to be fixed cost heavy and volume usage light. It makes all the talk about water conservation taken with a certain amount of cynicism.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Kirk Wells 360-808-2102</p>
Kathy Trainor	E-mail	<p>My comment is with regard to the impending increase that Cascade Water is asking for; the Docket number is 240151.</p> <p>Cascadia is asking for a 94% increase in our water rates. When is it okay to almost double the cost of a utility at once? Imagine if your bill was \$200 per month, and now it's \$388. Most of the people in my community</p>

			<p>(Monterra) are 55 or older and many are having a tough time surviving as it is. Electric just went up, trash collection has increased, and have you been to the grocery store lately? A 94% increase should be unthinkable at any time, let alone a time when getting by is already nearly impossible for so many.</p> <p>It seems to me Cascadia wants to buy up as many communities as they can and force everyone else to pay for those that are in disrepair, while they enjoy the gains. This is not fair to us, and I urge you to say no to this rate increase.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Kathy Trainor</p>
Burt Jones and Maurine Shimlock	E-mail	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,</p> <p>Cascadia's proposed rate increases are price gouging at its worst. While we understand the need for rate increases over time, to raise our rates nearly 100% in a single increase will cause financial hardship for just about everyone who uses this water system, especially retired people on a fixed income.</p> <p>Cascadia has purchased several smaller water systems during the past couple of years, and obviously desperately needs more cash inflow from consumers. We the consumers do not feel we should be liable for their poor business decisions and lack of planning. Reasonable rate increases are expected. Doubling rates from one month to the next are not remotely reasonable and should not be approved.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Burt Jones and Maurine Shimlock</p>	
Edwin L Hervey	Phone	<p>The water is terrible, it smells like rotten eggs, and its staining my car. No cleaning product will remove the stains from the faucets and sinks. Since Cascadia has taken over my appliances have been ruined.</p>	
Ron Norman	Phone	<p>The customer called in to oppose the rate case. They mailed a letter today. I let them know the letter will be added to the case.</p>	
Ed Harvey	Phone	<p>I'm a customer in Freeland, when I take a shower it smells like rotten eggs, I smell worse after a shower. I don't have a problem with an increase if the water is improved. I have calcium spots stains on my car. I have to wash my car in Bothell at my daughters house. My appliances are also stained because of the water, it gross. The glass on my car is damaged. I hope the same people who want to raise the rates are using the water. The water became 75% worse since Cascadia took it over.</p>	

Michael and Roberta Morton	Mail	<p>Dear Commission Members;</p> <p>We've received an undated letter from Cascadia Water informing us that the company was requesting an increase in rate tariffs to its customers totaling \$1,788,793. The justification for the rate increase was "due to high inflation that is beyond the company's control." This is an increase of 75% over existing rates. The combined US rate of inflation based on the Consumer Price Index for the three year period 2021 through 2023 is 16.9%, a far cry from the 75% increase requested by Cascadia Water..</p> <p>According to the information sheet provided by Cascadia Water the current average bill for a 3/4 inch meter is \$56.72. The Proposed average bill if the request is approved would be \$104.41 a month, a percentage increase of 84%. We purchased a share of the Oak Harbor Wa based Silver Lake Water Company in 1977 to provide water to our newly constructed home. Rates were stable for over 40 years until the company was sold to NW Water Services who raised monthly rates soon after purchase. Cascadia Water then purchased the Silver Lake Water company assets from NW Water and promptly raised rates again. Cascadia Water is now asking to double the current rate. This is outrageous! We are unaware of any system improvements that could possibly justify the requested increase.</p> <p>It appears that Cascadia is buying up small water systems region wide and creating a monopoly on ground water resources. They do not own the ground water and should not be able to demand additional income when ever they please. We respectfully request that you deny the requested rate tariff increase.</p> <p>Sincerely, Michael Morton Roberta Morton</p>
Emilie (Amy) D. Fenlon	Mail	***See Attachment
Rona Ishikawa and George Springer	Mail	***See Attachment
Board of Clallam County Commissioners	Mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT

	Hedi E. Voloshen	Mail	***See Attachment
	Fred and Kathleen Swenson	Mail	***See Attachment
	Mark and Cynthia Stoker	Mail	***See Attachment
	Catherine L. Wry	Mail	<p>***See Attachment</p> <p>Dear Sir or Madam:</p> <p>I would like to comment on Cascadia Water plan to increase water rates. Currently, we pay about the same rate for water that the city of Sequim customers pay.</p> <p>Cascadia water has bought 29 small independent water systems for a total of 8,000 customers. They say this incremental increase of 75% is needed to cover infrastructure projects. It appears Cascadia Water will triple water rates to all customers.</p> <p>I think once this infrastructure is paid for the water rates should be required to return to the base rate of \$24.00. Will there be someone from the commission to oversee Cascadia Water?</p> <p>It concerns me that Cascadia Water is creating a monopoly with no oversight and no plans to reduce water rates once this infrastructure is paid. Will we be forced to pay triple the water rates indefinitely while Cascadia Water continues to buy up more water systems offensively with customers money?</p> <p>Sincerely, Catherine L. Wry</p>
	Deborah LaPlante	Mail	<p>Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission P.O. Box 47250 Olympia, WA 98504-7250 Re: Cascadia Water, Docket #240151</p> <p>Dear People, I am writing to complain of the recent intended 94% water rate by Cascadia Water starting June 1, 2024.</p>

		<p>I have lived in the Monterra development for 3 years (May 2021). At that time, the bimonthly billing rate was \$12.30. Beginning 11 months later (April 2021), there was to be an increase every six months to the tune of \$71.64: An increase of 582%. Now, 2 years later, I am looking at the additional increase of 94% that Cascadia Water finds necessary after installing meters, intending to capture yet another means to charge more for water use.</p> <p>When Cascadia Water intended to install the meters, they were not to change or charge for meter readings until everyone was online. However, some neighbors have reported receiving billing for metered water in Monterra while others have not. Cascadia Water has not informed me that I have a meter attached to my water line, which I expected and requested a shut off valve be installed on March 9, 2019. If this work has been completed, I have no way to verify as I am not sure where the meter is located.</p> <p>I would expect a company who is asking more from its customers to be able to inform their customers when work has been completed. I also believe it is not fair to be charging these high and unprecedented increases, especially at a time when we all are being faced with runaway inflation in many sectors of our lives.</p> <p>Please consider no or a smaller increase in this utility's request for revenue currently.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Deborah LaPlante</p>
Jeri Cartright	Mail	<p>Dear commissioners,</p> <p>RECEIVED MAR 27 2024 WASH.UT. & TP. COMM</p> <p>I am writing regarding my interests in the proposed rate change to our water service in Pelican Point community in Grant county outside of Moses Lake WA by Cascadia/Gem State water company.</p> <p>My husband and I moved into the community July of 2019. As of that time our water system was owned by Pelican Point water a small company who has serviced the community since it started in the early 7 990s. We were told by previous owner that the water pressure is so poor he suggested irrigation be done at 11:00 pm. So when Cascadia/Gem state acquired this water system many issues were in dire need of repair/maintenance. We have an HOA in the community that takes care of a 9 acre park & boat ramp. We have had to replace sprinkler heads to a less pressure to get sprinklers to rotate on our property.</p>

			<p>This past summer the park irrigation was not working as the sprinklers had no pressure to rotate. We were told the pump & pipes went out and needed replacing. It was a fiasco. It took alot longer to repair than we were informed. The park dried up and weeds moved in. It took months to be repaired and residents were not kept informed. We called many times as my husband is on the HOA board and was given lip service. The residents fe!t it vvas the fault of the board when it was Cascadia/gem state water. It will cost us homeowners to get the park back in shape. Ifs difficult living in Moses Lake & our vvater company is out</p> <p>-</p> <p>of Idaho? It seems Cascadia/Gem state V'Jater has acquired too much too soon to keep up.</p> <p>I believe a water main broke & it took days for the cascadia/ gem state to realize it.</p> <p>We had to notify the fire dept. to bring a pumper truck if a fire broke out in the neiahborhood as the fire hvdnants had no pressure all summer of 2023. Very scary!</p> <p>We live in the county and are on septic tank service which we maintain and have already experienced low water pressure this year and summer isn't even here yet.</p> <p>The area is stili building multi residential buildings on Goodrich rd and large homes in The Dunes area on a water system that can not keep up with the homes already on this system.</p> <p>For these reasons we feel that the proposed rate increase suggested by Cascadia/Gem State is extreme and unreasonable for our Pelican Point community.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Jeri Cartwright</p>
	Jim Russell	Mail	<p>Dear Utility Commissioners,</p> <p>The assessment on my old worn down 1977 mobile home went up 62% from last year to this, even with a discount for its bad condition factored in. My home insurance went up 25% in one year. How am I going to pay that out of my little pension and social security? See attached the Proclamation of Greed from the water utility monopoly Cascadia for our mobile home community. Also see item-3 on the attachment. This is a statement about how long these old homes last. They were made of the cheapest materials and never intended to last as long as a stick-built. By and large they were and are purchased by lower income people who, to start, are not adequately prepared financially for the maintenance costs of mobiles. See attached the photo of my mobile, with its sewer pipe resting on 220 volt wiring. This passed code in 1977. The water leak and decay were just detected two weeks ago, but it is just a small sampling of the relentless deterioration of homes in a community dominated by old people on social security. Please, we need our utility to be publicly-owned, so we can at least vote for its commissioners, and the utility's owners won't be motivated by personal greed like Cascadia. Please do not increase our rates. Old people are literally being screwed toward homelessness and out of our affordable housing.</p>

			Jim Russell
	Donna/Demetri Vasiliades	Mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT
	James and Natasha Nichols	Mail	***SEE ATTACHMENT
	Kare Putnam	Web	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues. In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost increase complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter Emailed case summary to Public Involvement.</p>
	Bret Fritch	Web	<p>Hi, my name is Bret Fritch and I have lived at 1980 Island View Rd. oak Harbor, WA for 23 years. In all my years here, I have never received such a dramatic increase in fees to our water as what we received from Cascadia last week. Honestly, the proposed percentage increase of over 100% is simply outrageous, especially given our economy, inflation and more. I understand that Cascadia Water wants to put in essential improvements, but there is absolutely no way that families can absorb 100% increases and further, at a minimum, Cascadia Water should think about how to stagger increases as to minimize the impact to consumers.</p> <p>I also want to bring up a very important matter: I had to install a Pure Life Water System just to have drinkable water and water to cook with (very expensive) SOLELY due to the fact that even today, Cascadia Water delivers terrible quality water. In fact, I argue that the water Cascadia delivers today to all the homes around us, is substandard and non-drinkable. The water has gotten worse over the years as to, it stains your whites to yellow after a few washed, your white toilets are brown stained after only 3-4 months. So if I can't trust Cascadia Water to deliver PURE, CLEAN, DRINKABLE water today, why on earth should there be this rate increase. The WA State Commission should mandate that Cascadia Water delivers this water before they ever have a right to increase fees.</p> <p>Lastly, we have had our property taxes increased dramatically year over year and why aren't the increased taxes (which are inappropriately high), used to offset the Cascadia water essential improvements? Afterall, that's what</p>

			<p>our extra taxes should be used for.</p> <p>In summary, I STRONGLY OPPOSE this rate increase and urge you to consider this.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, Bret Fritch</p>
	James Cone	Web	<p>I am a customer of Cascadia Water LLC. I strongly object to the rate increase request of this company. Increasing our rates is not justified by their service. There is a leak in their system that is causing Tyler View Place in Sequim to be undermined and is collapsing. I have complained several times but they just say that they are not responsible even though they are the only source of water for this area. Even when it has been dry for some time there is standing water in the draining area next to Tyler View Place and also on Lands End Road. The leak has to be somewhere along these two roads, The home owners have repaired the road numerous times, including one repair that was done by Lakeside Industries after they installed a new road on Tyler View Place. I would probably not object to their request for a small rate increase if they would just take care of their system properly. When Cascadia Water started buying up all of the privately owned water systems around the area I knew that they would start asking for rate increases because they are the only water system in the area. The previous owner, Estates Water System, provided excellent service for many years unlike the poor service by Cascadia Water.</p>
	Bruce Blough	Web	<p>Cascadia Water has come to the Washington State Utilities' Commission, hat in hand for a nearly 100% increase in water rates for the Pelican Point Waters System. This is comprised of rural Washington State wells. Cascadia purchased this water system in 2021, and immediately filed for a 97% increase in residential rates. This increase is an usuary level increase and wholly inappropriate for residents in this small community. Many residents are retired and cannot handle a massive increase in their water bill. I strongly urge the commission to reject this rate filing in its entirety.</p> <p>Supervisor Result: Yes. Lip service about providing the same level of water service at twice the price. They are adding homes to this overused system and need to justify their obscene rate increase.</p> <p>Customer Resolution: They should lower their expectations of reasonable rate increases in the single digit percentage range. They bought this system only a few years ago. If they thought they couldn't make a profit from the rates they agreed to at the time of purchase, they shouldn't have purchased the water system. Every upgrade they have outlined is to reduce their manpower, time and costs. It seems those upgrades should pay for themselves. If not, then the upgrades are not worth the cost.</p>
	Jane Cardinal	Web	<p>I am complaining about the recent letter from our water company Cascadia Water, they are proposing to raise our rates 107% ! How can this be allowed to happen, please do something to put a stop to this! This will be a financial hardship to a lot of people.</p> <p>Customer Resolution: Pay for their own expenses!</p>

	Paulette D. Ache	Web	Cascadia Water is requesting a proposed rate increase ranging from 65% to over 107%. The new cistern that the water company has put in our neighborhood is just over my fence and is visible to the left of my house and lurking over it when viewed from the road. This eyesore has devalued my property immensely. I requested that the company plant large trees around the cistern but was told that isn't going to happen. Now on top of all of this, we are told of the outrageous increase in our water rates. This is so unfair. In our working community with many seniors living on fixed incomes, how are we all going to be able to afford this? This is the type of increase that causes people, out of necessity, to move. It's very disappointing.
	Donna McSherry	Web	· RATE CASE UW-240151 The proposed rate increase is double what we are paying now and creates added financial stress to a budget that is already stretched thin because of inflation. The lumping of multiple water systems with varying stages of efficiency or inefficiency and then burdening those who are on an efficient system with the expenses of inefficient ones is unfair and lazy management. Rates should be based per each individual system and their expenses alone. The bully tactics of large corporations that take over smaller entities need to be held in check.
	Don Bockelman	Web	This an addendum to the beginning of my comments from yesterday. Most of the people who live in the area around Linda what's the name of the bay that's down by Mariner's Cove are retired and leave on fixed incomes. The precedent of allowing a public utility to amalgamate several different utilities from multiple counties in order maximize profits and hide underlying management dysfunction and corruption is seriously bone chilling. Demand a complete forensic audit of Cascadia's finances. Require corporate disclosure of top decision makers backgrounds and affiliations. Extend the comment period to allow consumers time to evaluate applicable RCW, and WAC statutes. Do turn off NOT allow Cascadia this aggressive and irresponsible increase. Your decision to facilitate this rate increase will undoubtedly lead lawsuits... Don and Linda Bockelman
	YVONNE YOKOTA	Web	A rate increase of 65% has been proposed which is significant and no reasons have been supplied.
	Dionne Tillotson	Web	Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rate Increase by Cascadia Water in Lake Alyson Community Dear Utility Regulatory Commission, I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living. Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.

			<p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
Dwayne Wendorf	Web	<p>I am completely against the outrageous rate increase proposed by Cascadia Water, that will result in a 35% increase in my water bill, but a 75% increase in CW's profits.</p> <p>The only "improvements" this company has made to Discovery Bay Water system since purchasing it is installing more accurate water meters so they can make darn sure they collect every penny due them for water used.</p> <p>If Cascadia Water wants to raise it's customer's rates, the Commission should require the company to actually make improvements to the system that reflect improvements, like increasing well or water storage capacity, replacing system piping, or the like.</p> <p>I strongly urge the Commision to reject this preposterous rate increase until Cascadia Water can prove that they have actually provided their customers with some tangible benefit. NO RATE INCREASE UNTIL CASCADIA EARNS IT!</p> <p>Sincerely, Dwayne A. Wendorf</p>	
Mary Heller	Web	<p>We recently received from Cascadia Water a notice of rate increase (Docket #240151), for additional revenue to the company of 75%. This amount of increase all at once will result in significant hardship to many residents, who are already coping with higher rent, food, and energy costs every day. The Company's assertion that this level of increase is "just and reasonable" due to "high inflation" and the completion of "several key infrastructure projects" is astonishing. Although the rate of inflation has been high, certainly not as high as 75%. And if these infrastructure orojects have been completed, it seems</p>	
M. Morgan	Web	<p>The rate increases being requested by this company are excessive and punitive. They will greatly harm many people here on Whidbey. Please take a good hard look at this company.</p>	
Tim Legree	Web	<p>Since the acquisition by Cascadia of Lehman this is the second significant increase requested. The funds are to upgrade systems "built in the 70s". The systems were in place at the time of acquisition, budgeting for replacement should have been in place at that time. A 100% rate increase is completely uncalled for and should be rejected.</p>	
Brad Petrie	Web	<p>Well with everything going up due to the economy, inflation, etc. it is already very, very, difficult to survive on a fix income. Now I am being informed our water rates could go up a huge amount. Incremental increases are bad enough, but understood. But to almost double our rates is unfair.</p>	

Jack Schwab	Web	<p>UTC Commissioners & Staff,</p> <p>As you evaluate Cascadia Water’s February 29, 2024 GRC (Docket 240151) please keep in mind a few items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2018: Cascadia Water acquired Sea View Water, LLC. • December 8, 2020: Cascadia Water submitted a GRC, which was substantially approved. • February 29, 2024: Cascadia Water submitted this second GRC. • Sea View Average Monthly Bill over time for our 5/8” meter, as outlined in Cascadia’s Dec 2020 and Feb 2024 GRCs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Nov 2018: \$32 o Apr 2021: \$35 o Oct 2021: \$42 o Apr 2022: \$49 o Jun 2024: \$103 (as requested in this GRC) • Thus, Cascadia Water is asking that, over the course of their 5 ½ year ownership of Sea View Water, they be allowed to increase monthly average bills by approximately 220%. • While we appreciate the improvements to both infrastructure and personnel/communications that have occurred since Cascadia acquired Sea View, this level of rate increase in such a short time period seems unreasonable. We ask that the UTC use its discretion to slow the increases, just as the UTC did two years ago with PSE. <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Mary Heller	Web	<p>We recently received from Cascadia Water a notice of rate increase (Docket #240151), for additional revenue to the company of 75%. This amount of increase all at once will result in significant hardship to many of the Company's customers, who are already coping with higher rent, food, and energy costs every day. The Company’s assertion that this level of increase is “just and reasonable” due to “high inflation” and the completion of “several key infrastructure projects” is astonishing. Although the rate of inflation has been notably high, certainly not as high as 75%. Additionally, it seems illogical that this level of additional revenue is required if the listed infrastructure projects have already been completed.</p> <p>We urge the Commission to reject this proposed rate increase, and direct Cascadia Water to submit a less onerous rate increase that will be fair to both the Company and its customers.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

	Brianna B McLean	Web	Cascadia Water's proposed rate increase is going to hurt struggling families who are ALREADY treading water. I understand a rate increase every now and then, but a 75% increase is going to cripple our already dwindling working class on Whidbey Island.
	Richard and Marcia Mack	Web	We are retired and on a fixed income. A 75% rate increase in our water bill is out of line. This could increase a bill to \$133 a month for two people. We do not water our yard, own do laundry once a week, run the dishwasher twice a week, showers are taken everyday and that is all. It makes us feel as though the water company is trying to put a lein on our home and property then take it from us and sell it. Which would make us homeless. This is totally unacceptable.
	CHERYL HARASTI	Web	I am a senior that lives on her own and this increase would be devastating to my budget. Plus half the time my water is brown and when I have contacted the company to explain why I never get any response. I am never informed when the lines are flushed. The explanation for an increase is to provide generators for power outages. The increase is excessive 75% not at all reasonable.
	Kent Renshaw	Web	<p>***See Attachment Urgent Appeal to Maintain Stable Water Rates for Rural Communities - Cascadia Water Rate Request Docket# 240151 (please see attachment).</p> <p>I Am an 89 year old low income senior and have resided in the same house since 1991. When my Del Bay community decided to sell our water system to Cascadia Water, we were led to believe that we would have stable affordable rates. This proved to be untrue and our rates have sky rocketed.</p> <p>The proposed rate increase asked by Cascadia Water will strain my income to the point that I will probably have to sell my house and find a residence with lower water charges. My alternative will be to buy bottled water, drive to my son's house in Renton to wash my clothes, take sponge baths instead of showers, and let my garden die from lack of water.</p> <p>I ask you to turn down Cascadia Water's request for a rate increase. Withdraw their request for a rate increase,</p>
	Brian Kirst	Web	<p>Description: I do not approve of the water rate increase!</p> <p>Supervisor Result: Customer Resolution: Spred the increases over a 10 year period</p>
	Kailey Burnett	Web	As someone who had their small community well bought out by King Water, seeing these utilities companies buying up these community wells for major profit needs to be stopped before it's too late. End this insanity, 109% increase is absolutely not OK.

	Mike Morton	Web	<p>I own a five acre parcel of property on Whidbey Island located at 2271 Wood Ridge Lane and own a share of the Silver Lake Water Company, now owned by Cascadia Water LLC. I have been paying for water for three years now but have not used a drop. We are planning on building a residence there. I know of no valid reason for Cascadia Water to request a near doubling of water rates. There have been no improvements to the water system. Inflation is an excuse.</p> <p>Cascadia Water is buying up small water companies all over Washington creating a de Facto monopoly. There is no alternative water service available to us.. We are being held captive. You are the only ones who can prevent them from charging what ever they want when ever they want to. Please deny their request. Thank you.</p>
	DAVID MARTIN	Web	<p>They have a Rate Increase public meeting scheduled for 9:30am on May 23rd to review the 75% rate increase they are proposing. This is an extreme increase in my mind. After talking to our neighbors, this is going to create a financial hardship on all of us located on Wahl Road. Their website details the rapid expansion in purchasing water systems around the state. I don't feel we should bear the financial burden of over expansion on their part.</p>
	Nancy Goodwin	Web	<p>This is now the 2nd time you are quickly raising water rates of an outrageous amount at 75% with very little notice! This is completely unreasonable and wrong. You don't know how to run a company. I have been a small business owner for over 30 years and know how to budget. You simply spend beyond your means and then rape us for more. This is dead wrong and you know it. We will fight every time you do this.</p>
	Chet Sulgrove	Web	<p>Chet and Danette Sulgrove 5721 Winona Ln. Langley, WA 98260 April 10, 2024</p> <p>Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission P.O. Box 47250 Olympia, WA 98504-7250</p> <p>Subject: Urgent Protest Against Cascadia Water, LLC's Proposed Rate Increase</p> <p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>We, Chet and Danette Sulgrove, residents of South Whidbey Island, and customers of Cascadia Water, LLC, are writing to express our strong opposition to Cascadia Water, LLC's proposed water rate increase, which is slated for June 1, 2024. This staggering 75% proposed increase, seeking to generate an additional \$1,788,793 in revenue, follows a significant 53% rate hike in 2021, further straining our community financially.</p> <p>Whidbey Island is cherished for its scenic beauty, close-knit community, and, importantly, its rural character, which includes significant agricultural activities. The proposed increase is not just a matter of concern for</p>

residential water users but poses a severe threat to our agricultural sector, a vital part of our local economy and community life. The added financial burden could potentially cripple our local farmers, escalating operating costs and impacting the price and viability of local produce.

Moreover, the challenge of affordable housing on Whidbey Island is already acute. This rate hike threatens to push many families to the brink. For some, it will force a difficult decision: uprooting from a community we hold dear in search of more sustainable living conditions elsewhere.

While we understand the necessity for infrastructure investments and improvements to ensure the provision of safe and reliable water services, the notification from Cascadia Water, LLC, lacks comprehensive details on these infrastructure investments. This omission raises concerns about the transparency of the proposed rate increase and its justification. It is essential for the community to understand where and how these funds will be allocated, ensuring that any financial burden placed upon the residents and the agricultural sector is indeed warranted and beneficial in the long term.

The proposed rate increase has far-reaching implications beyond financial strain; it threatens the very essence of Whidbey Island, risking the loss of the community and agricultural diversity that defines our island. A more balanced solution is necessary—one that accommodates the need for infrastructure improvements without placing an unsustainable burden on Whidbey Island's residents and farmers.

We urge the Commission to critically assess Cascadia Water, LLC's proposed rate increase, taking into full account its impact on the diverse aspects of life on Whidbey Island. We advocate for a decision-making process that is both transparent and inclusive, ensuring that any adjustments to rates are fair, justifiable, and considerate of the community's well-being.

We plan to voice our concerns at the scheduled open meeting on May 23, 2024, and hope for a thoughtful consideration of the impact this proposed increase will have on our community. We trust the Commission will arrive at a decision that safeguards the interests of all stakeholders on Whidbey Island.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Chet and Danette Sulgrove
chet.sulgrove@whidbey.com
danette.sulgrove@whidbey.com
360-969-3273

Antoinette Fulkerson	Web	<p>April 26, 2024</p> <p>Dear Washington Utilites & Transportation Commission: Cascadia Water, LLC sent everyone in our Monterra 55 and older community a letter saying they're requesting that you approve a 94% increase in our water bill effective June 1, 2024.</p> <p>I live in an old trailer in this community. My only income is social security and I have no savings. When Cascadia purchased our water company, Cascadia's owners told us that they planned to install meters and that our water bills would not go up very much. 94% is outrageous!</p> <p>My only income is social security. My husband died in 2013. I do not water my lawn in the summer, I take short showers. My faucets and toilets do not leak. I have a wash machine that conserves water.</p> <p>Please do not approve Cascadia Water's proposed rate increase.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Antoinette Fulkerson</p>
Barbara L Bennett	Web	<p>The previous rate hikes and the rate hikes currently proposed put a tremendous burden on retired, fixed income, low or middle income families. How can we afford to be levied some of the highest water rates in the country?</p>
Seth Raabe	Web	<p>To the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission,</p> <p>We oppose the proposed rate increases by Cascadia Water, LLC. This is a tremendously aggressive increase, following a few short years of similar increases by this company.</p> <p>The claim of a 75% increase (in their most recent letter from March) is misleading because, looking back to as recently as 2021, the proposed change will amount to an increase of 220% for the cost of being hooked up to the system--- before we ever use a drop of water. That's 3.2 times the price from 3 years ago. This increase only grows when you factor-in normal usage. For example, our household bimonthly bill at a usage of 3,000 cu.ft. would go up from \$78 in 2021 to \$365 in the proposed model (a 368% increase). I doubt this is "just the cost of doing business."</p> <p>While all rates will be raised across the board (both base and tiered usage rates) there is no clear plan and budget for improvements that warrants the rate increases. If improvements are paid for with the increases, will rates be brought back down after these are paid off? Again, I doubt it.</p> <p>In our family's personal efforts to reduce our environmental impact, we grow a significant percentage of our own food at home. We garden extensively and use mulch and drip irrigation to conserve as much water as possible and</p>

		<p>we never water our lawn. The proposed changes would essentially make it economically impossible to garden (peak consumption bills could cost \$2,000 or more)</p> <p>We have no option to choose another water company, and drilling a well is cost-prohibitive. Even if we build a water-catchment system providing our irrigation needs, we still need water for domestic use, and our average usage will be almost 5 times our cost from a few years ago.</p> <p>I'm a school teacher at South Whidbey and my wife also works in the district. We have both lived in this community since we were kids, and are raising 3 children here.</p> <p>Our parents live down the road and are also Cascadia Water customers. They are on a fixed income and dealing with a terminal illness. They cannot afford this astronomical increase in cost-of-living.</p> <p>Me and my family feel like Cascadia Water has gone too far and is way out of line with the proposed changes. It is a cynical and greedy move to capitalize on people's basic needs. Please deny the changes.</p>
Rebecca Bender & Mark Ojala	Web	<p>We are in the Peninsula System (Estates/Monterra) area & are not in favor of the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water. The monthly bill impact of 94% increase is outrageous for any resident anywhere. We find Cascadia Water are gouging their customers for their unsound fiscal practices and multiple project undertakings. Yes they needed upgrades to our system because of failures of preventive maintenance. Small incremental increases are understandable but this 94% rate impact all at once is not justifiable. It will result in residents losing value in their property from poor landscape/lawn maintenance. What about a potential high fire hazard on top of the financial impact to their customers. We are a retirement community with most property sizes 1-5 acres. We will see less farming, farmers getting priced out, higher prices in produce (again), undesirable landscapes. You get the picture. The amount of rainfall in our area is 16 inches/year & less every year with climate change. We have considered drilling a well on our 2.5 acres but the county does not allow wells in our area so we are subjected to Cascadia Water undertakings & unreasonable rates. It is not the customers full responsibility that Cascadia took on more than they were fiscally ready for with their upgrade projects. That is a company's poor research/development and planning. Now they want to be bailed out it seems for their poor management. Not mention the fact that if they are granted this increase, our justifiable fears are this will only be the beginning. We can easily imagine there thirst for profits continuing with rate increase after rate increase. As customers hopefully represented by the regulatory commission, we feel now is the time to pull the reins back on this price gouging.</p>
Joshua adams	Web	<p>This rate hike right after the buy out is flat out greed. On multiple occasions we have woken up to no water without notice. They are hard to reach and it has only gotten worse. I accept the fact cost of living has gone up with inflation by 30 percent. A 107 percent increase is greed. We do not have a choice on where our water comes in and they are taking advantage. I am blessed to be able to afford, however alot of my neighbors are on fixed income and cost increases like this will force them out. If this proposed rate increase is not stopped, they will continue to take advantage of costumers. If like they say they need an addition 2 million in revenue, maybe they should reevaluate their business practices, not stick their greedy fingers in their costumers pockets. Rates were just increased massively in 2020, when does it stop?</p>

Charles Radey	Web	<p>Re: Proposed rate increase for Cascadia Water, Peninsula System (for Pedersen)</p> <p>Comment: The proposed 65% water bill increase is, to say the least, bold and immodest. The increase mocks the public interest by being so excessive in what it would immediately demand of the average water consumer.</p> <p>The company should explore the financial implications of a graduated annual rate increase in the 10-15% range that would cover the costs of improvements in the system over time. Small bites are much more easily digestible than one gorging mouthful.</p>
Paul Jeffrey Binford	Web	<p>I am protesting the outrages price increase submitted by Cascadia water LLC. docket # is 240151. This increase is outrages {7 times more then the current rate} Please do not allow this rate increase! Thank You in Advance, Paul and Annette Binford</p>
Michael J Sammons	Web	<p>They are asking for a 75% increase, however the numbers they sent out are 120% increase. I would be in favor of a 25% increase over 2 years. What they are asking for, many people in our community can not afford such an increase. Most incomes in Lynch Cove are close to poverty because of inflation over the past few years. Please deny their application.</p>
Jay A Lovato	Web	<p>Cascadia Water's proposal to increase rates is too large. An average 24% increase (per their undated letter recently mailed to customers) to residential customers is substantial and does not reflect the current CPI rates. Nor does the increase take into account seniors on fixed incomes, low-income households, and others struggling to meet daily basic needs. I strongly encourage the Commission to substantially scale back this proposed one-time rate increase to ease the burden on the household rate payers. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
Janice Brady	Web	<p>As a resident of clallam county I am surprised that the UTC is even considering these enormous rate increases from cascadia. I hope that the UTC will carefully consider the facts and support the residents for a reasonable increase and not these enormous shocking increases.</p>
Dave Fester	Web	<p>Hi – I wanted to send some feedback on the letter that we received this last week from Cascadia Water.</p> <p>I’m Dave Fester and both my wife Paula and I have lived at 5644 Mutiny Bay Road, Freeland, WA 98249 for coming up on 24 years. In all my years here, I have never received such a dramatic increase in fees to our water as what we received from Cascadia last week. Honestly, the proposed percentage increase of over 100% is simply outrageous, especially given our economy, inflation and more. I understand that Cascadia Water wants to put in essential improvements, but there is absolutely no way that families can absorb 100% increases and further, at a minimum, Cascadia Water should think about how to stagger increases as to minimize the impact to consumers.</p> <p>I also want to bring up a very important matter: I had to install a whole home Aquasana filtration system (very</p>

			<p>expensive) SOLELY due to the fact that even today, Cascadia Water delivers terrible quality water. In fact, I argue that the water Cascadia delivers today to all the homes around us, is substandard and non-drinkable. See attached photos and videos for examples. So if I can't trust Cascadia Water to deliver PURE, CLEAN, DRINKABLE water today, why on earth should there be this rate increase. The WA State Commission should mandate that Cascadia Water delivers this water before they ever have a right to increase fees.</p> <p>Lastly, we have had our property taxes increased dramatically year over year and why aren't the increased taxes (which are inappropriately high), used to offset the Cascadia water essential improvements? Afterall, that's what our extra taxes should be used for.</p> <p>In summary, I STRONGLY OPPOSE this rate increase and urge you to consider this.</p> <p>Thank you Dave Fester</p>
	Craig morton	Web	<p>To Whom it May Concern,</p> <p>Recently, the water system servicing my property was purchased by Cascadia Water. Cascadia Water proposes a revenue increase of 75% to provide the same service.</p> <p>Water is a vital resource, we are dependent on it. How is it that a company can buy out the system that provides this vital resource, and then charge us nearly double to make use of the system, when we have no viable alternative for a water system? There is no competition available to us, we have no other option. Why not a %200 increase? Why not a %500 increase?</p> <p>At what point is a company charging us for clean air at exorbitant rates, what is the oversight? What is the justification?</p> <p>Cascadia Water has no intention of making improvements to the system that serves my property, or the surrounding properties. They have made it clear they are not using this capital to serve our community, we will not see a penny in return. This is simply added profits for company ownership, at the price of nearly double the rate for this community, in a matter of months.</p> <p>This should be criminal to even request such a huge increase of pure profit against a community that gets no additional benefit.</p>

			<p>If Seattle proposes to build a new rail system, should my neighbors in Island County be charged more to pay for it? If Skagit County wanted to make improvements to it's infrastructure, should my neighbors be charged more to pay for those improvements? If my neighbor wants to build a water well system, should I be responsible for paying for it?</p> <p>It is absolutely not justifiable to charge nearly double the rate to a community that will not see anything substantial in return. Cascadia has not indicated they will make improvements to our area, nor a timeline when those improvements will be made, nor confirmation that the improvements will be made at said time.</p> <p>They have bought out our local utility service, monopolizing our critical resource, and are now demanding nearly double the fee, for nothing in return to our community, overnight.</p> <p>This should be criminal, and should not be permitted. The government is here specifically to protect consumers in vulnerable positions like this. If Cascadia planned on making huge improvements that can be confirmed and measured, that benefit my home specifically, then I could see the justification here. That is not the case.</p> <p>This is clearly corporate abuse against a community that has no alternative, price gouging their customers.</p>
	Don Bockelman	Web	<p>Cascadia Water's proposed increase for water useage on Widbey Island dated 02/29 is pathetic, ludicrous and dangerous for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It severely impacts the economic quality of life of all residents who paid around \$8,000 dollars just to hook up to the original company's water system which originally had no meters, and then meters were installed, then water was billed in specific 'blocks'. <p>Now in order to sustain a massive expansion of Cascadia's (captive audience) base and Cascadia's profits they want the customers to foot the bill for their risky venture. Robinhood capitalism</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The "reasons" identified in the proposal are nothing less than excuses for
	Richard Husom	Web	<p>My wife and I are retired seniors on a fixed income with a garden to suppliment increased food prices, this extream water price increase would cause a financial burden on our household.</p>
	Jana Hilsinger	Web	<p>That is a huge rate increase that they are proposing. They not only shortened the block size range but also added over a \$4.00 increase on each block, that is outrageous. I understand the need for price increase due to our awful inflation however I do not see how this will benefit the customers with such a large increase. My suggestion is to either meet in the middle and do a \$2 increase per block and \$5-10 base rate or do half increase now and half next year for a full proposal increase.</p>
	Ted Stanley	Web	<p>Comments typed by Sam Cooper after call to the Consumer Protection hotline. 107% increase with less than two months to come up with the money is unacceptable, especially for those of us on fixed income. It looks like south</p>

			Whidbey is subsidizing improvements in mainland systems as opposed to upgrades and increase in efficiency in our particular system.
	Erin Coughlin	Web	I am writing to notify I am opposed to the proposed increase for Cascadia Water services. The proposed increases are not in any way reasonable or affordable for the majority of its customers. The financial burden this will create will be catastrophic to some families. Currently our family of 5 pays an average of \$75 monthly. The proposed increase for us would be 114% putting us at \$162 a month. This is too much of a financial impact for an essential service. We try to be conservative with our usage and have energy efficient appliances. People will just flat out not be able to pay rates that are increased as it is hard enough as is. They state inflation is affecting them but it is affecting its customers as well from several aspects, as the cost of living is becoming unsustainable. The resources this business has to access financially is far greater than that of an average person needing assistance. Passing this entire burden on to customers is beyond unfair and a recipe for disaster. The impact will be devastating especially for those on a fixed income. I would gladly pay another \$10-\$15 a month but anything greater than that is not even possible. Some people cannot even do that. You cannot request more when people don't have more to give. Please consider the ramifications this has on the elderly, working families, those on a fixed income, small businesses and all in our community.
	W. D. Parshall	Web	Oppose the proposed rate increase for water by Cascadia Water LLC. Seventy five percent (75%) increase is extreme. Whidbey Island Silver Lake District should not have to pay for other water districts system improvements. Along with many mergers and acquiring of multiple water services in various Counties of Washington State it seems as if Cascadia Water LLC has created a monopoly.
	Barbara Brugman	Web	“Your current water rates will not change because of this water system sale and transfer.” This is what Lehman Enterprises, Inc. (Lehman) represented to the UTC and to Lehman customers in a letter dated August 30, 2018. At that time, Lehman was seeking UTC permission to be absorbed by Cascadia Water, LLC and Cascadia’s ultimate parent, Northwest Natural Gas Company, Portland, Oregon. The August 30, 2018 letter is available on the UTC web site. We customers, of course, realized our water prices wouldn’t stay the same forever. And indeed, in mid-2021, Cascadia embarked on a series of rate increases. In fact these were hefty increases, heftier than one might expect given Lehman’s letter of assurance from three years earlier. Between July 2021 and the end of 2022, Cascadia boosted the base rate by 68%, from \$17.50 to \$29.35 a month, and increased by 200% the rate for Block 1, from \$0.75 to \$2.25 per 100 cu ft of water usage. Any Cascadia customer who used even a meager amount of water would be paying at a 200% higher rate in the Block 1 usage category than before the company ownership change. Those were very substantial rate increases for Cascadia Water’s customers. But on top of those recent price increases Cascadia Water is now asking for additional, and truly crushing, rate increases. The current proposal means that we customers would be paying an additional 91% more for the base rate and 145% more for Block 1 usage - - the proposed rate change from June 2024 to July 2024. Even more dramatic, compare the water prices in effect a short three years ago (June 2021) with the July 2024 increases now being proposed. Looking at that 3-year period, Cascadia’s rates would rise by 220% for the base

		<p>rate and 636% for the Block 1 usage rate. This is a truly out of control rate escalation and will be onerous for Cascadia's customers.</p> <p>^[1]_{SEP} We understand that the recent acquisition of new service areas and some investments in the infrastructure adds to the Cascadia's cost of operation. And we customers would hope to benefit from improvements in water quality and reliability. So, we would understand the occasional modest price increase in our water charges, commensurate with an improved quality of service. But Cascadia has called for price increases that are not modest; they are excessive.</p> <p>To put matters in perspective, we note that even during the recent high inflation years of 2018 through 2023, the cumulated inflation rates amounted to less than 25 percent over the five year period, much less than the water rate increases Cascadia has proposed. Between 2018 and 2023, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by some 20 to 22 percent cumulatively, and the Producer Price Index (PPI) by 20 to 23 percent, according to the data published by Bureau of Labor Statistics, US. Department of Labor. Similarly, the price indexes for the gross domestic product rose by some 22 percent, according Economic Report of the President (2024).</p> <p>We recognize that Cascadia is a private business whose owners or investors stand to gain by growing their water company into a more valuable asset. They evidently have made business decisions that these investments make business sense. We customers might benefit, but only if our water quality/reliability improves. Personally, we are unaware of any quality improvements to date in our own water area (Lehman) but remain hopeful.</p> <p>Water is the most essential item for sustaining life. Other food items also are essential, but there is a key difference. When the price of, say, milk is increased at our neighbor store, we can look for lower prices in other stores and/or search for substitute items for milk. Since Cascadia is the sole supplier of water in our neighborhood, however, we cannot look for a less costly supplier. Yes, we can reduce the use of water, but the extent to which we can do so is limited.</p> <p>We request that the UTC reject the new price increases Cascadia Water has proposed and scrutinize the need for any price increases at all, given the generous 2021-2022 increases now in effect.</p>
	Sheryl Wussler Web	<p>I am opposed to Cascadia's proposal for a 65% rate increase and the consolidation of my water system into the Peninsula System.. I as a rate payer am more then happy to have a rate increase to upgrade or fix any problems with the water system that I benefit from. I do not agree with Cascadia that it is fair and just to combine us and spread the rate increases for all the systems to all the rate payers.. I was a customer of the Pederson LLC before Cascadia took it over I don't see any improvements that have benefited us since that time.. As far as the Scada system they installed which then had to have cyber security system installed that was a benefit to Cascadia as I am sure they had factored in that this would need to be done when they acquired our system since there place of operation is in Freeland.I do not consider this to be an expense us the rate payers should have to pay for</p> <p>I think all of us just want our water to be safe and of good quality..I see nowhere that Cascadia plans to address our high levels of iron and magnesium. I have had to replace two hot water heaters in the 9 years I have been here because of all the calcium in the water..These are the things that I think are important to me.. I do not think it is fair and just to help pay for all the other repairs and problems of the other systems they want to group us together with.</p> <p>I also think what would be fair and just is to add back in the tariff that requires the system owner to advise the</p>

			<p>ratepayers in advance of any expensive repairs..We should have a say in what we think is a prudent expense.. One expense I see is all the costs for generators when we have so few power outages..</p> <p>We had a huge rate increase in 2021 of 97.9 % phased in over 3 rate increases.. Cascadia says due to inflation they need to generate more revenue.. I would argue that we as the rate payers have and are suffering from high inflation as well.. A lot of the less then 200 ratepayers in our small water system are senior citizens on fixed incomes..Water is not something you can live without and this rate increase puts an undue burden on us.</p> <p>So bottom line I strongly oppose the consolidation of the water systems.. I only want to pay for the cost of the system that provides my water.. I don't think Cascadia has shown me a reason to increase my rate based on what they have paid out since they acquired this system..The Scada system and cyber security and all the operating costs for these are not DOH required and only benefit Cascadia.. So the money spent on those things don't justify a rate increase and I don't want to pay for the repairs to the other systems..</p> <p>I hope the commission will take into consideration my comments when they come to a decision on this rate case..</p> <p>Thank You, Sheryl Wussler</p>
	Kasey Witte	Web	<p>Cascadia Water recently purchased our independent well on Whidbey Island in 2020. Our rates went up when it was purchased and now they are wanting to increase our rates by another 75%. This is an astronomical and unacceptable rate increase. I understand work needs to be done in order to maintain the systems but a 75% increase is greedy in my opinion and if these rates go into affect they will never go back down even when all upgrades are completed. Please do not approve this unfair rate increase.</p>
	Joseph Sharkey	Web	<p>The proposed rate increases are more than excessive. This is the wrong time to place such a tremendous burden on the users. It appears that Cascadia is using this to offset costs of additionally acquired water systems that require upgrading, not ours.</p>
	Lance Curry	Web	<p>Cascadia sent out a notice informing cusotmers of a rate increase for which they have filed for approval from WA UTC. In the notice they disclose their expected rate increase of 75% average across their different fee-zones. In the Rolf Bruun system, where I am a customer of Cascadia's, they inform me they expect the average bill to increase by 84%. However, I applied their rate increase to my latest bill which was \$98.43 on 14FEB2024, and it would have been \$246 instead, an actual increase of over 150%. I am asking you to reject their application until they recreate their average billing increase expectations and resend the notice with corrected numbers for their "dollar increase" and "percentage increase". Also, please delay the Open Meeting until customers have had a reasonable time to review their corrected notice.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
	Ali Deatherage	Web	<p>Opposition to Proposed Rate Increase by Cascadia Water in Lake Alyson Community</p> <p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p>

		<p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues. I cannot wash my hands and run my dishwasher at the same time. This seems ridiculous already and especially ridiculous given the high rate increases</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
Nicole Arian	Web	<p>Our water maintenance company King Water, was bought by NWNW. Currently we pay \$786.00 a year for water maintenance. NWNW wants to raise our rates to \$1423.00+ a year. Our neighborhood, as well as many others, are populated with low income, enlisted Navy families, and fixed income residents. Buying up all of these water systems and creating unrealistic price hikes, gives us no other options for water management companies. I didn't go to college, but that sounds like a monopoly to me.</p>
Timothy F. Bone	Web	<p>I was sent a notice informing me that Cascadia proposes to increase my residential water rate by an astounding 94%. The base rate goes from \$24 to \$44; 1st block rate from \$1.00 to \$2.83; 2nd block rate from \$2.00 to \$4.47; 3rd block rate from \$2.95 to \$5.66. Question One: Has anyone on your commission ever received a notice from a utility proposing to raise your rate by 94%? I'm guessing not. I expect increases from time to time and am glad to pay them, but this is over the top. Inflation is not at 94%. Question Two: My system, Peninsula System is to be combined with systems in Kitsap and Mason Counties (Aquarius System). Kitsap and Mason Counties are not even contiguous with Clallam County. We don't share a drop of water with counties that don't even border us and are two and three counties away, but we are now to be financially tied to them. I strongly urge the UTC to either set the proposed Cascadia rates much lower, separate us from Kitsap and Mason Counties, or both. Thank you. Tim Bone, 100 Nicole Pl, Sequim, WA 98382. 360-551-6111.</p>
Sue Gilman	Web	<p>Prior to Cascadia owning our water, Aquarius (Greg Roats) family privately owned our water supply. There is a very, very long history of Mr.Roats with UTC, which is documented from law suits against him and money he owes our county. Mr. Roats was a master manipulatittor . He appears to have no problems getting approved for rate increases for necessary repairs, replacement, new pipes, etc. All on paper looked good I guess, but nothing was ever done for the customers, who just had to pay more for their water, with nothing being done. He managed to ignore customers, county commissioners, and people would just get tired of him and onward he'd go.</p> <p>Well, our community on Diamond Point are in need of new pipes and repairs. We have no working fire hydrants. Our area is exploding with new homes being built. And because we are in the unincorporated part of Sequim, we get ignored.</p> <p>Cascadia, mega conglomerate, manager to get our commissioners to approve a sale, flying under the radar of our community . Cascadia promised not to raise the rates, and would address the issues left behind by Aquarius. No, in fact after maybe less than a month after taking ownership, our area's water had e-coli !!!! Unacceptable. Then to get a 2 page letter starting with Cascadia Water LLC on Feb 29,2024, filed for approval</p>

		<p>from UTC commission to increase rates as shown on their table to 50%. Rates effective June 1 2024. The rates will reflect additional revenue of \$1,788,793 an incremental increase of 75%!!!!!!</p> <p>No where in their proposal, are they planning on fixing anything in our area. Instead, we are paying more for other counties they have acquired that need repairs, etc.</p> <p>It's time the UTC come out from the secret to most people, that you in fact, don't care about the people, who unfortunately are now being served by a privately owned conglomerate. You only care about those who are owned and traded on the stock market.</p> <p>I am just a local citizen who watched and read about these types of companies that have come to our counties, and bought out the small owners, making a huge profit.</p> <p>And then having the audacity to say : Oh we need more money know, because we bought up all these new businesses so now we need money.</p> <p>Maybe instead, I say, did you not plan on what the cost would be, before you swiped up all this valuable water, which by the way with climate change, it will be interesting to see how high the rates will go.</p> <p>Bottom line . People can see a 3-5 % increase. NOT 50%</p>
	Sue Gilman	<p>Web</p> <p>I appose the rate increase. Based on historical work from Aquarias that was never completed. E-coil in our water after Cascadia took over. Work never never completed by Aquarius</p>
	Natasha Merkuloff Nichols	<p>Web</p> <p>RE: UW-240151 To Whom It May Concern: Cascadia Water, LLC has applied for a rate increase with the WUTC on 2-29-24. I object to the proposed rate increase and request that the Commission reject the rate filing in its entirety. The increase Cascadia has requested will cause financial hardship for my family as well as on many other families in this area. I don't understand why those of us living in Blue Ribbon Farms should be required to pay for repairs, upgrades, and improvements to systems other than our own. Cascadia seems to buy many small community water systems and then try to spread the upgrades to those systems among the rate payers of systems they already serve. In areas where we've lived before, rate increases have occurred gradually, so that rate payers can adjust their budgets accordingly, not in one huge fell swoop! It is a principle used by many utilities, and Cascadia should look at adopting that principle, rather than hitting customers with a huge increase. We understand that Cascadia claims that the consolidation of costs will help Cascadia communicate with its rate payers more effectively. Frankly we don't understand why this should be so. We also understand that Cascadia has not provided information regarding expenses over \$170,000 shown in the Water System Plan. This Water System Plan is supposed to provide customers with information on the condition of the water system as well as the need and cost of future work. We haven't heard anything about this plan and how it may impact us now or in the future. Again, we request the Commission reject this rate proposal, certainly until more information from Cascadia is provided, that would prove its investments were appropriate and that rates are just, reasonable, and fair for each customer. Thank you for your consideration.</p>

	Jerry and Alene Grant	Web	<p>Rate Case UW-240151</p> <p>This company has proposed a rate increase of 75% as we in our little development have been told and sent us paperwork to verify such. We are, obviously in shock over such an increase. The case above listed can't be serious. We would understand a small increase but not this.</p> <p>The way I understand it is our small 'water system' will be lumped into paying for Cascadia's other water systems they own. When repairs or upgrades are needed they want everyone to pay. This doesn't seem fair or equitable for our system. We needn't pay for other systems upgrades when our system is fine for now. We don't understand why they can't request a small increase just for our water system. I know they feel justified but so do I.</p> <p>Please consider looking in to this further. I appreciate your time and have submitted my email address and phone number if you want to contact me. Best regards, Alene Grant</p>
	Jarett herbert	Web	<p>Cascadia is proposing a rate increase of an average of 107% after they just did 4 tiered rate raises. I have lived in my home for 5 years and have already seen an increase of approx 100% while living here. I am currently in the seaview water system and can state that the water quality is abysmal. I currently spend an additional 40-50 a month on 3 stage water filtration(my 12 month filters last 2-3 months) and water softening pellets. Even after that treatment my toilets or left constantly stained. My glass has hard water stains that are permanently affixed to my shower walls. Authorizing any rate increase that does not address the condition of our water would be a detriment to the utilities commission. I understand i have to pay my share and am ok with rate increases as long as the a fair and address water quality issues. However this proposal is nothing more than a greed based attempt to bolster their revenue. We at seaview do not have an alternative option for water. I ask that the utc addresses this shameless act of venture capitalist companies buying up water rights then turning basic human necessities into monopolistic profit monsters. It would appear that whoever is running these companies is trying to use its customers to acquire more independent water systems. Claiming inflation as a justification for such rash increases is just attempting to hide the monopoly that they truly run. I ask that this comment is taken into consideration when the UTC committee addresses this proposal.</p>
	Dick Lanman	Web	<p>I am greatly concerned with the excessive rate hike that Cascadia has requested. I can only assume that it is the standard negotiating tactic of asking for much more than you actually want, let alone need, in order to settle for a better result than you would have gotten otherwise.</p> <p>With this in mind, I would submit the following rate changes as a reasonable middle-ground between what was asked for, and what customers want (e.g. no increase): up to 5% increase for monthly standard fee; 5% for first 500 cubic feet rate; 20% for rate increases beyond that. Possibly 10%; 10%; 25% for commercial users.</p> <p>This is with the understanding that Cascadia has to invest in updates and repairs for multiple largely dilapidated or ignored systems. They are already turning a profit. Their parent company posted net income over one billion</p>

			dollars in the first quarter of 2024. They don't need to extort their customers in order to fulfill their legally-mandated minimal effort.
	Mary Thompson	Web	We just found out that Cascadia water company (subsidiary of Northwest Natural Water Company, LLC , which is a subsidiary of Northwest Natural Holding Company) plans to raise our rates by 75% June 1st. We understand that there was a meeting for public commentary last month in Port Angeles. You couldn't site a meeting farther away from the majority of us as consumers. We live in Freeland. It is two hours of driving plus 45 minutes each way lined up waiting for the ferry, plus the 35 minute ferry crossing. To attend would have meant driving over 4 hours each way. The plan is to have the increase go into effect June 1. They obviously do not want any input and are doing a sneaky end run around consumers. This outfit is a holding company whose mission is simply to return dividends to its owners, without regard to the people they are providing water for. This is wrong. Aren't there regulations governing the rate of annual increase? I have never heard of a utility being allowed to raise their rates by 75%. This is grab for money from your constituents. Please help us! Our water costs are high as it is.
	Bret Medbury	Web	<p>I submitted a comment yesterday objecting to the doubling of our water rates and how unfair that was, however after thinking a bit more about this ridiculous request from the water company I have some thoughts to add. The company cites all these wonderful improvements they have incorporated, HOWEVER they never asked their customers about these things, they just went and did it, now they want us to pay for it. That is not how it should work. Also Our home is on the Silver Lake Water System and I see no mention of any "improvement" being made to our system, why am I paying for other systems. These are all individual and separate neighborhood systems.</p> <p>I think Cascadia Water should sell the Silver Lake System back to Bill Massey as he operated it in an efficient manner plus when improvements were needed he got a vote from the customers, floated a bond, they we all paid for it over time.</p> <p>Since Cascadia water acquired the Silver Lake system are rates have already MORE THAN DOUBLED, the board should realize they are way out of line, seriously hurting low and fixed income folks, and compromising our quality of life, by doing what they want then expecting us to pay for it.</p> <p>Bret</p>
	Celine Guidry	Web	We've now learned that Cascadia Water, LLC is owned by a large corporation and continues to acquire other water companies throughout the PNW and they wish to grow their business, while proposing to pass on the cost increases to its consumers in order to pay for their growth. There were recent considerable increases within the past few years and they are now proposing an immediate 107% increase (based on the average invoice in our area). Some other areas are being hit even harder. This is unacceptable as we do not have options to switch to another company. There are landlord/tenant laws to protect tenants in rental properties and we are essentially "tenants" in this respect.

			<p>See previous years's proposed BASE Rates below (does not include usage rates which also increased - based on our 5/8" meter size). These rates are slightly different than the proposed rates that were approved but were taken from our actual invoices...very similar to proposal:</p> <p>Effective 4/1/21: \$17.50 Effective 11/1/21: \$22 (26% increase over 4/1/21) Effective 12/1/21: \$24 (9% over 11/1, 37% over 4/1/21) Effective 4/30/22: \$24.95 (4% over 12/1, 43% over 4/1/21) Effective 6/30/22: \$26 (4.2% over 4/30, 49% over 4/1/21) Effective 10/31/22: \$27.65 (6.3% over 6/30, 58% over 4/1/21) Effective 12/1/22: \$29.35 (6% over 10/31, 68% over 4/1/21) PROPOSED for 6/1/24: \$56 (91% over existing, 220% over 4/1/21)</p> <p>In a nutshell, they are requesting a 220% increase over 38 months which means our rate has tripled in barely over 3 years. This will be difficult for many residents, especially those on fixed incomes. It's not as if we can shop for where to get our water.</p> <p>WE STRONGLY URGE THE UTC TO DENY THIS AND ANY OTHER ASTRONOMICAL INCREASE to a basic need of water in order to live in a safe and healthy environment.</p> <p>Sincerely, Celine and David Guidry Langley, WA</p>
	Burt Jones & maurine Shimlock	Web	<p>Cascadia's proposed rate increases are price gouging at its worst. While we understand the need for rate increases over time, to raise our rates nearly 100% in a single increase will cause financial hardship for just about everyone who uses this water system, especially retired people on a fixed income. Cascadia has purchased several smaller water systems during the past couple of years, and obviously desperately needs more cash inflow from consumers. We the consumers do not feel we should be liable for their poor business decisions and lack of planning. Reasonable rate increases are expected. Doubling rates from one month to the next are not and should not be approved.</p>
	Eric	Web	<p>April 30, 2024</p> <p>Washington Utilities And Transportation Commission 621 Woodland Square Loop SE</p>

Lacey, WA 98503

Subject: Seaview System (Island) proposed water rate increase from Cascadia Water LLC
Reference: Docket Number 240151

Dear Commissioners

As a concerned resident of the Seaview community, I am here to address the recent rate hike proposal from Cascadia Water. While we understand the need for sustainable funding, we believe that the sudden 107% increase is steep and it disproportionately affects our community.

The following are some critical points to consider:

1. **Over-Extended Acquisitions:** Considering the company's acquisitions from at least five other water municipalities, these failing assets can be described as dilapidated, outdated, and in a state of disrepair, thus resulting in exorbitant costs for restoration or modernization.
2. **This Was Reckless Planning:** These unforeseen costs for upgrades and repairs are now intended to be passed on to your customers! This depicts irresponsible planning, a lack of due diligence, and most of all financial imprudence!
3. **This is a Financial Burden:** There seems to be no accountability here, so now you expect your customers to bear the costs of these upgrades and/or repairs with an outrageous rate increase of 107%?
4. **This is Inequitable Treatment:** Our community is smaller with considerably less upgrades and/or repairs needed in comparison to other acquired municipalities. This drastic rate hike is deemed inequitable and unfair, and quite frankly feels like a classic case of corporate price gouging! We urge you to reevaluate this decision with fairness in mind.
5. **Local Context Matters:** When assessing water demand, usage, and asset improvement costs in the Seaview community, we find that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't align with our unique circumstances. We encourage Cascadia Water to consider a more palatable rate structure—one that reflects the realities of our local water utilities, community, and population.
6. **Consider Our Fixed-Income Residents:** Most homeowners in Seaview are retired and living on fixed incomes. For them, this sudden increase is not just an inconvenience; it's a financial burden! Many simply cannot afford such a sudden and significant increase in their water bills.
7. **Consider Meaningful and Adaptable Solutions:** Rather than imposing a uniform increase, let's explore options that are both meaningful and adaptable. Perhaps tiered rates based on consumption levels rather than base-rate increases could better serve our community or extending the increase over a 5-year period allowing customers more time to adapt.

In the spirit of collaboration, I kindly request that the board engage in further dialogue with the residents of the Seaview community. Let's work together to find a viable solution that balances financial sustainability with

			<p>compassion for our neighbors. We propose a more gradual, phased-in approach to this rate increase, which we believe would be more manageable for your customers, while still enabling Cascadia Water to recover its costs over a longer period of time.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter. We believe that by working together, we can create a fair and sustainable water rate structure that benefits all stake holders at hand.</p> <p>Thank you for your time reviewing our request.</p> <p>Sincerely Seaview Water customers,</p> <p>Eric and Judy Bingham, Jack and Linda Breedlove, Dan and Marilyn Egler, Diana Lanham, Joe and Debora Toro</p> <p>Cc: Culley Lehman General Manager Cascadia Water, LLC info@cascadiawater.com</p>
	Lauralee DeLuca	Web	<p>I was never given a chance to have anything to say or even knowledge about the so far 6 month project of the 35 foot water tower 30 feet from my property line. Perhaps it was buried in a water bill but not one of my neighbors I talked to knew about the impending project until it started. It has not only cost a bundle with them threatening to raise our water rates because of it, but has wrecked havoc with my ability to work at home do to noise and vibrations, has caused me and my neighbors property value to drop (who wants this monster practically next to their home??), and causes anxiety after 12 years in this quiet neighborhood to suddenly have to wake up to all these voices, noises and big equipment-with no predictable schedule! Some of us here would have left for at least part of the winter, as all of us surrounding this well are self employed or retired. But we didn't know. And Cascadia promised me that it would be done by March 31 but they are working over there today. My business and my mental health have taken a sever toll due to this monster they built next to my home. And now Cascadia wants us all to not only pay for this this beast but for subsidizing their other, less better off wells that they have bought. We had no known chance to voice our opinion. They say we did but no one I talked to had any idea this was coming. They say they would be done over two months ago, but they are not. What else are they not telling us or doing???</p>
	Mrs. Laura Medbury	Web	<p>We are an Island County resident on a fixed social security income. Cascadia Water who has purchased our water system, has already raised our water rates twice in very recent years. Now, they want to DOUBLE our rates but no one is DOUBLEING MY INCOME! We seniors cannot absorb increases to our food, property tax, heating costs AND ANOTHER increase from the water company. Water is a necessity. Should we stop eating?</p>
	Dave Bennett	Web	<p>I have reviewed all correspondence received from Cascadia and discussed with neighbors . It appears Cascadia did not hold discussions with customers prior to implementing significant system changes.</p>

		<p>It is a broken system that allows the only incentive for a utility is to maximize profit, without regard to maintaining affordable water rates. The system is such that the more Cascadia spends, the greater their profit with no regard to customers. Customers need some type of a say on improvements and affordability.</p> <p>For example, my water bill in February 2018 (before Cascadia take over) was \$54.40 (2 month period). Applying the current Cascadia rates and the proposed rates in UW-240151, the same bill (same water usage) would be \$386.90. That is a >7X rate increase or 611% rate increase.</p>
Kristie Pease	Web	<p>Resubmitted because it was not clear that my submittal was accepted. Thank you.</p> <p>Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission</p> <p>This is a Public Comment regarding Docket UW-240151</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>I was dismayed to receive yet another notification from Cascadia Water of a proposed rate increase in June 2024 for water supplied via the Estates Water System located in Clallam County. As a new homeowner to the area in 2023, and currently without any landscaping, it is giving us pause.</p> <p>Like others, I have attempted to do my own due diligence in response to this proposed increase by reading and studying the Cascadia rate proposal posted on your website and Cascadia's own communication of the same. Cascadia's reasons for the rate increase are cited as inflationary drivers and continuing investments in the various systems that they are maintaining and upgrading. I truly understand that like all infrastructure, upgrades must be made to keep old systems viable, and in this case, in order to provide an adequate and safe water supply. My concerns are though that Cascadia spending is excessive and without a schedule of upgrades in hand as reference, we the customers/rate payers have no idea where in this water system acquisition/infrastructure improvement project we actually are. I can't benchmark where Cascadia is in their investment spending. So, when will this end? We certainly can't shop around; we have no other options.</p> <p>I have worked for the Department of Energy most of my career as a budget analyst, and know what zero based budgeting is and, I have never witnessed an operation that on paper operates in the red and then looks for reimbursement from customers. That is not a balanced budget. I can understand an emergency unplanned expense requiring reimbursement. I can't understand what appears to be long lists of new assets such as meters and other equipment, new vehicles, and office equipment that on the surface has done nothing to improve my water quality or supply, What rates is NW Water strategically driving to? Is there a rate ceiling we are heading to that we can plan for or does the company have the right to impose increases systematically until water is simply unaffordable?</p> <p>I do appreciate the meeting that the UTC rate analysts held in Port Angeles on 4/24/24. It was a great opportunity</p>

			<p>for you to hear our concerns directly and for me to hear other water system current issues of which there seems to be plenty. In particular, the peninsula has concerns regarding emergency response preparedness: 1) managing the water system infrastructure in the event of an earthquake; 2) adequate water pressure/supply in existing fire hydrants located around the county. These issues are not a problem for water companies to solve alone but should be recognized and resolved before we do have that crisis. Lack of planning is poor management. Cascadia has no plan on this issue that they are able to effectively communicate.</p> <p>As a commissioner making a decision that significantly affects your constituents, my opinion is that Cascadia is expanding at a rate that far exceeds its ability to manage and improve their systems. Rights to water is a hot commodity across the country and is exciting for investors. Please make Cascadia manage prudently. Combining water systems located in different regions of the state for "economies of scale" is not equitable to the ratepayer. The UTC ruled in favor of maintaining separate rate structures for the Island vs the Peninsula, vs eastern WA during the last rate increase. Please rule again in that manner if necessary and ensure from the tangled web of financials that Cascadia has provided as justification, that costs are directed specifically where they were incurred.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Kristie Pease Sequim WA</p>
	Chris Dinges	Web	<p>The recent proposal to increase everyone's bill nearly 100% is unfathomable and detrimental to the community. We struggle enough with our weak water system and many of us removed lawns to save water but still have \$250 bills, this increase will double that for a still broken system. CW does not show improvements to the performance of our system except major repairs to other communities water systems. Our community should not be financially responsible for CW poor investment decisions to acquire and repair other water systems. I fail to see how the chlorine analyzer installed in our system should result in such a price hike to us when it is "to lower operational costs". I understand inflation increases are needed but not to this extent to repair other communities systems.</p>
	Rachel Hilsinger	Web	
	Stephen Gordon	Web	<p>The rate increase for our area served by Cascadia Water Company is close to 105% vs. the publicized "overall revenue increase of 75 percent effective June 1, 2024." (Feb. 29, 2024 filing)</p> <p>That type of increase puts an undue burden on many in our community, as well as speaks poorly of the management of our essential utility.</p> <p>We oppose having such an unjust and inequitable rate hike and hope to additionally make our complaint heard at the May 15, 2024 virtual informal customer outreach meeting.</p>

	Ken Wright	Web	The proposed increase is extreme and unjustified as there has not been significant improvement to our particular water system and appears to be aimed more at funding other business expenses and expansion of Cascadia overall versus actual value to consumers. Basically the equivalent of forced crowd funding.
	LuaraLee Deluca	Web	UW-240151 in reference to. I object to the ridiculously high rate increases especially now knowing they are subsidizing other water sources; I object to the fact they did not let me know in advance as well. I object to them building unnecessary systems to increase the rates.
	Eric Wright	Web	<p>Our rates have already been more than doubled in the years since Bill Massey sold Silver Lake Water (our system). You also brag about improvements/upgrades you have made, however we never approved these upgrades like we have in the past, you seem to just do what you want without asking then expects us to pay for them.</p> <p>It appears to me that Cascadia Water has overextended yourself purchasing other water systems and is now asking for this huge increase to pay for upgrades and maintenance to systems other than ours. Ours is never mentioned in their request letter.</p> <p>It appears you think you have us cornered and can charge whatever they want for a life sustaining resource. Shame on you and your naked grab for more money with nothing in return.</p>
	Barbara Jean Heessels-Petit	Web	<p>Cascadia's rate increase request is absurd - 94% when inflation & COLAs are closer to 3%. (Is this the opening salvo in a game of asking a whole lot and happy to settle for a lesser (but still healthy % .) I understand that big corporations can upgrade existing systems more easily - that makes some sense - but they can also be greedy - acquiring more systems, monopolizing the field, exercising little control over spending and raising rates, repeatedly! Where do we cut back, when we are already very careful? Who protects the consumers? I fail to understand how all this works - big companies come in, buy up our diminishing natural resources and sell them back to us at what can become exorbitant rates...something is wrong with this picture! What is Cascadia's plan for those of us on the Olympic Peninsula and where is that plan? AND, do we get to have any say in it? Water issues are going to worsen - please do something sensible and longterm now. Thank you, Jean</p>
	ROSANNA ROURKE	Web	<p>Cascadia Water is requesting an 84% increase? That's inconceivable to me.</p> <p>Cascadia was granted a 53% increase for 2020, unsure of their entire rate increase history because I don't have the time to research it, 53% is substantial and now they want 84%?</p> <p>My PUD went up \$40 a month, with this 84% increase that's a weeks' worth of groceries, I'm barely making it as it is, I haven't had a raise in 5 years and my Company can't afford to give me one.</p>

		<p>Everyone just wants more and more and more and consumers just don't have it to give. Now PUD has another rate increase effective 04/01/24.</p> <p>Cascadia wants to group me into other accounts that have had improvements (bare their expense), we've had no improvements, if they are allowed to group us together then I will be impacted by the rate increase. I think, their letter was not very forthcoming. I strongly believe grouping smaller accounts together is just a ploy to get 84% out of more customers. Maybe Cascadia is coming in high at 84% hoping you'll approve a lesser increase and then everyone is supposed to feel like it was win win for everyone. I am unsure if I will escape this increase if I'm not grouped together, that wasn't mentioned.</p> <p>The way I see it is Cascadia is acquiring assets and improving them which is the cost of doing business and a tax deduction. However, Cascadia expects to have the customer bare the expense of their growth.</p> <p>When the purchases and improvements of assets has been satisfied by the customer, the rates don't lower. Instead, they continue which is now profit, which is enjoyed by the Shareholders of North West Natural Holdings or NWN of the Stock Exchange, plus any bonuses they pay out to themselves. Correct?</p> <p>There are a few items they have listed in their reason for the rate increase that was listed in the last rate increase, thrown in for filler. They had to update their system to allow on line payments, that's an expense? So how many employees did you terminate because customers are processing their own payments and not your employees.</p> <p>All I know for sure is because of inflation, and there is no end in site, my disposable income is almost non existent and you just continue to allow rate increases for ALL the utility companies, even during Covid. How am I suppose to cover necessities like rent, gas, food, etc. and pay Cascadia's business expenses.</p>	
	Barb Walberg	Web	<p>I am opposed to the rate increase. I don't want to subsidized other systems. The new large 33-foot-tall tower is in my front yard, and I don't believe we need this tower. Nor the new generator. This is wasted money. I am absolutely opposed this. I am senior citizen on a fixed income and cannot afford a 92% rate increase.</p>
	Bill Howard	Web	<p>Just 2 years ago Cascadia Water received approval for a 40% rate increase. Now to add another 75% is excessive. From the information sheet provided by the company, they are acquiring companies rapidly throughout the State, yet claiming rates, i.e. revenues are insufficient. If water supply is a low or inadequate return business why are they investing resources into the field?</p> <p>Again from the information sheet, it appears there is some confusion of what is expense and what is capital investment. Eight of the nine items listed are long term taxable life assets which should be amortized over an extended period not treated as an annual expense. It appears maintenance has been deferred for many years on what are small, and discontinuous systems. Bringing continuity to what is described as a fractured business will be good for customers in the long run, but should not occur as what amounts to a financial penalty for the</p>

			consumers in the near term. The requested rate increase should be rejected as an inadequate presentation and reworked into a more well developed proposal.
	Bret Medbury	Web	<p>No I am DEFINITELY NOT in favor of this company's proposal. A doubling of water rates is ridiculous, a travesty actually. No wonder folks can no longer afford to support themselves and end up homeless or supported by the Government. Under no circumstances should this HUGE rate increase be considered, let alone approved. Have the company learn to be more efficient, lower their overhead, do whatever to reduce their costs, but double the cost to the consumer.</p> <p>I think it takes a lot of Gall to even ask for a rate increase like this, if it were me I would be afraid to even ask.</p>
	Frederic Abt	Web	<p>Currently Cascadia Water is proposing a rate increase of up to 104% due to inflation and system upgrades. Cascadia Water received a rate increase in 2021-22 of around 60% depending on location, again citing inflation and system upgrades. Cumulatively, Cascadia Water is proposing a rate increase of 160% since 2021 without any specifics. While inflation and system upgrading do require appropriate rate increases, no increase without specific fiscal data supporting such an increase is required. At this point no such information has been provided. At this point no discernable system upgrades have been provided ie. no SCADA or power redundancy in effect. The cumulative US Inflation rate from 2021 to 2024 is significantly less than 160%. Until such fiscal data is provided justifying any rate increase I strongly oppose any new Cascadia Water rate increase</p>
	Karl Horne	Web	<p>This proposed 75% rate increase is unwarranted, unearned opportunistic money grab from a poorly managed local water company. Most of Whidbey Island is on private wells, where they are allowed to pump as much water out of the aquifer for minimal cost. Those of us on Coles valley system are landowners that have acreage that they maintain in a natural way keeping the aquifer healthy. The bottom line is that we are paying to Cascadia to pump the water out of the aquifer which we just put there, which should involve a minor pumping fee. Additionally they are taking advantage of the out of control inflationary spiral to reward themselves for previous poor business decisions. We expect the government controlled costs of living to be a bulwark against this inflation by stabilizing costs. A reasonable increase if one is absolutely necessary</p>
	Jere Colman	Web	<p>Although rate increases may be understandable when a new company takes over an existing business, I believe the proposed residential rate increase of 94% and the 'ready to serve' cost increase from \$24/mo. to \$44/mo. is excessive. I respectfully oppose the amount of the increase and would suggest, if need be, a lesser increase in both the residential and the 'ready to serve' aspects of the proposal by Cascadia Water, LLC. I see a new well in our future, and maybe in our neighbor's future as well.</p> <p>Sincerely, Jere Colman</p>
	Scott Ortego	Web	<p>I just received a letter with Cascadia Water's proposed rate increase. The amount they want to increase our rates is unbelievable. I understand that inflation has been extremely high the past few years but in their plan they increase their revenue by 75%! They want to not only increase the basic rates, but increase the block prices while decreasing the size of the blocks. That will cost most people around \$30 a month more. That's an increase of</p>

			<p>approximately 35%. I know my pay hasn't gone up by 35% there are a lot of retirees in this area and live on social security. That 35% increase would adversely affect them. I could understand and support a 10% rate increase but the amount they are proposing is beyond reasonable.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Scott Ortego</p>
	Timothy Bone	Web	<p>This is the second comment I have submitted. Research shows that the 2024 water rate increases throughout Washington range from 2.25% (Othello) to 14'2% (Puyallup). Kitsap PUD is 8%, with 5.5% thereafter for the next 4 years. Tacoma Water, 9%. Aren't these more like the utility rate increases one sees? So how did Cascadia come up with a whopping 94% increase for the Peninsula System where I live? This isn't fair, just, or reasonable. Likewise, lumping us with water systems two and three counties away, on the other side of the Hood Canal Bridge, counties that don't even border Clallum County, is unreasonable. Please reduce the Cascadia water rate increase to a level commensurate with historical, reasonable practice. Thank you.</p>
	Debbie Hogan	Web	<p>This requested rate increase of 75% is so preposterous, I thought they missed a decimal point! Nothing justifies this astronomical increase. Cascadia is unresponsive to inquiries and all calls go to vm. They bought antiquated water systems and now want their existing customers to pay to upgrade what they bought. This should be paid through a bond issue; never an absurd 75% rate increase to customers who do not benefit from their purchase. Either issue bonds and pay interest for using other's money or sell what you should not have purchased if you can't afford to refurbish. I'd like to buy an old Lamborghini and fix it up. Maybe I need to ask my boss for a 75% pay increase. Illogical!</p>
	JoEllen Burns	Web	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls.</p> <p>This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase.</p> <p>Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>

Ida Birney	Web	<p>I strongly object to Cascadia's request for ad 94% rate increase in my area. I'm a disabled senior on Social Security. The proposed cost of living adjustment for next year seems to be are about 2.5%. We all understand that costs are up for the utilities and that prices probably need to go up a little, but 94% is just unconscionable! Increases in utility rates such as these would prices me out of my home.</p> <p>Further, I understand that the extra money that Cascadia is requesting would no be used to improve the water system in my neighborhood, but would be used to improve the problem water systems that Cascadia has added to it's portfolio. In other words, our little, relatively problem free, water system will have to pay to bring another system up to snuff. This is unfair. We purchased homes with a with a good known water source, and paid higher prices for our properties. Now we're being asked to subsidize Cascadia's purchase of problem water systems. It is just not fair.</p> <p>I ask that you limit any water rate increases to no more than projected cost of living increases.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
Talia A Lehman	Web	<p>The drastic increase in fees that is being proposed for Cascadia Water is ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS. Not only is the monthly fee going up \$13, so already a flat automatic \$26 increase per each billing cycle, the block rates are increasing exponentially. Also, the blocks are decreasing in water amount meaning each subsequent block will be charged sooner for less water usage. To increase slightly could be understandable, or even simply an increase in just the monthly fee, but to increase rates 4-5X the amount is absolutely ludicrous. This proposal is angering and maddening. Our water bills will be at least double, if not even more than that from what they currently are. Many of our neighbors will not be able to afford this change when water should be a basic resource available to all. This rate change should absolutely NOT be implemented!!! Please, please do not allow this to pass.</p>
Dave Bennett	Web	<p>RATE CASE UW-240151 I am a resident of Clinton Washington and I am opposed to the proposed Cascadia Water LLC rate increase currently under review by the WUTC. Cascadia Water is an LLC that provides water for 9,000 customers through 3600 connections on Kitsap, Skagit, Snohomish and Island counties as well as service on the Olympic Peninsula and the Moses Lake areas (per Cascadia Web site). It was formed in 2018 and has been purchasing several smaller water services since that time. Many of the purchased water services have since been the subject of significant upgrade projects, required because of poor prior management choices to defer necessary maintenance (as was stated in a recent WUTC session). It is disturbing to note that current Cascadia management includes some of those responsible for the poor management practices and no information is available on current salaries, bonuses etc. As such, in 2021, a general rate increase of 53% was levied on Cascadia Water customers. Currently, Cascadia is proposing another rate increase of “75%” is required to generate \$1,788,793 for various system improvements and to earn a 12% return on their investment. It is unreasonable for a company to implement improvement projects as a means to boost earnings for the shareholders of the parent company Northwest Natural Holding Company (NYSE:NWN). As I learned at the last WUTC session, Cascadia Water LLC is buying up ailing water districts so it can create projects for profit and pass the cost of the projects plus a 12% return on investment to us as customers. While I understand improvements are necessary, I am opposed to the structure of each project as a profit generator with rates set solely by the LLC (cost plus profit plus 12% ROI plus ??). As a representative for the public interest I urge you to consider the following and take action to stop this abusive practice: 1) Cascadia has misrepresented the rate hike as a “75%” increase when it is actually much higher for</p>

			<p>most customers: i. Base rate increase of 91% ii. Block rate increases of 145 to 149% 2) To check this, I applied the proposed rates to my April 2024 bill (household of two). The bill would increase from \$79.94 to \$178.32...a 123% increase. An average family of 4 will pay an average of \$193 per month. 3) No financial data has been made available to customers to verify project costs, salaries, profits, rate base etc. We have been told such information is confidential. 4) Data from Forbes on national water utility cost (2022 data) indicate the highest average state water bill as \$91 (West Virginia). 5) With this increase, household utility water bills are likely to exceed energy rates – WA state average of ~ \$100 per month. 6) As drier months approach, this will be particularly devastating on those depending on outdoor irrigation such as for local food production or landscaping. 7) Based on my billing increase, I estimate the average customer increase will be about \$100 per month. With 3600 connections, the utility will pay for the \$1.7M expenses incurred in a few months (less than 5). What is the justification for such a rapid return and for customers to continue paying these rates long after the expenses (plus profit) have been recovered ?</p> <p>Thank you for your prompt attention to help assure accountability and transparency of what appear to be questionable utility actions.</p>
	Jeffrey Hansen	Web	<p>Base rate increases from \$43.00/month to \$56.00/month. !st block volume decreases from 0 -668 cu.ft to 0 -500 cu. ft. !st block rate increases from \$1.30 per cu.ft to \$5.52 per cu.ft with a percentage increase posted at 84%. Rates more than double without any improvements to the system in the last 10 years. Cascadia has over extended by buying up additional companies.</p>
	Douglass M Culver	Web	<p>They're proposing a totally unreasonable hike in rates. For some of us, our bills would likely triple or quadruple in pricing. I feel like they know they're our main option in our area, and because of that they're hiking rates just because they can. They've talked about making small upgrades like a backup generator and some motion lights on their well house. I get that we can be expecting a raise in rates to cover that, I know things aren't free, but charging us 3x or 4x what we were paying is totally unreasonable and unacceptable.</p>
	James Stewart	Web	<p>The majority of people on Whidbey Island are elderly and/or retired, and can barely meet their current financial obligations. If money is needed for the proposed upgrades, another source, either state or federal government should be used.</p>
	Micheal H Campbell	Web	<p>They need to correct the water pressure before they are allowed any increase. The system is very inefficient use of water with the low pressure varying.</p>
	Corby Somerville	Web	<p>Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission This is a Public Comment regarding Docket UW-240151. The most important duty of the Commission is the protection of the public in a monopoly marketplace for public utilities. When utility companies attempt to engage in price gouging, the Commission should not allow it. The present rate case involving Cascadia Water, where increases up to 94 percent are proposed by the company, raises several questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If Cascadia is so unprofitable, and if such drastic rate increases are being requested in order to achieve profitability for the company, how has Cascadia been able to finance the acquisition of at least eight small independent water companies over the past five years? 2. Cascadia has submitted a 'claim of confidentiality' in order to conceal certain financial information, including:

		<p>“the confidential organization chart of NW Natural Holding Company” and “the confidential (unredacted) version of Cascadia Water’s general ledger.” Further, Cascadia has represented: “The confidential information is sensitive information due to the competitive market for water utility acquisitions and the identification of employee names and compensation data, and as such, comprises valuable commercial information. Disclosure of the confidential information could negatively impact Cascadia Water’s ability to negotiate future acquisitions ...” (Emphasis supplied.) It is evident that Cascadia has continuing ambitions to expand their holdings and acquire even more independent water companies. These acquisitions should be financed by stock shareholders. Are the present rate-payer customers being made to finance those acquisitions?</p> <p>3. Cascadia wishes to conceal ‘compensation data.’ How can the Commission assure the public that the proposed rate increases are not related to unreasonable executive compensation schemes?</p> <p>4. Without disclosure of accounting information how can we be assured that Cascadia is not co-mingling capital improvements with maintenance costs? Rate-paying customers should not be burdened with paying for capital investments. Capital improvements accrue to owners’ equity and those balance sheet investments should be made by stockholders.</p> <p>5. Previous Cascadia rate case UW-200979 requested unreasonable increases. Cascadia petitioned to combine costs between Whidbey Island rate-payers and those on the Olympic Peninsula. The Commission however directed Cascadia to: “allocate that (sic) revenue requirements appropriately between the Peninsula customers and the island customers.” Once the Commission decides (on principle) that Peninsula customers should not be burdened with Whidbey Island costs, shouldn’t that be a final determination? How can we be assured that this extraordinary rate increase is not another attempt by the company to achieve the same outcome as they requested before?</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Corby Somerville 22 April, 2024</p>
Brian Morrish	Web	<p>The rate increase for our system - Pelican Point Water Company - is a staggering 92% over 2021 rates. The reasoning given for their proposal is inflation and system wide upgrades. I understand the need for inflation adjustments but that has not been a 92% increase since 2021. Also, should not the regular replacement and upgrade of the infrastructure be a part of any successful business operation? Stuff wears out and needs to be replaced. That should not be a shock but baked into their pricing structure. In addition, their “average bill” estimates are grossly under valued as our system is used for irrigation as well so water utilization in the summer months are much larger than their estimates account for. It seems to me they are trying to justify price gouging to cover up mismanagement of the funds they are already receiving. Near a 100% increase is unethical for a utility – of which we as the consumer have no access to a free market to price check. I wholeheartedly appose such a radical rate increase.</p>
Dawn Brown	Web	<p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p>

			<p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
	Kim Boesch	Web	<p>Strong Opposition to Proposed 85% Increase in Water Rates for Silverlake Water.</p> <p>I am writing to express my vehement opposition to the proposed 85% increase in water rates. This substantial hike is unjustifiable given the current state of our water system and the lack of proposed improvements.</p> <p>First and foremost, it is imperative to note that the water supplied to our community is not drinkable without advanced filtration or purchasing commercially. This glaring issue raises serious concerns about the quality and safety of the water we are already being charged for. Without assurances of potable water, any increase in rates is simply unacceptable.</p> <p>Furthermore, there have been no proposed improvements or upgrades to our particular water system to warrant such a drastic increase in rates. As you are aware, many residents are already struggling financially, and imposing such a significant burden on households without offering any tangible benefits or enhancements to the service is unjustifiable.</p> <p>Additionally, the suggestion of adding a generator to the system seems entirely unnecessary given that our water system operates on gravity feed. It raises questions about the transparency and rationale behind the proposed rate increase. If our current system is functioning adequately without the need for additional infrastructure, then why impose additional costs on residents?</p> <p>In these challenging economic times, where every dollar counts for our community members, it is crucial that any proposed increase in utility rates be thoroughly justified and accompanied by clear plans for improvements or enhancements to the service provided. Without such justification and transparency, I urge you to reconsider this proposal and explore alternative solutions that do not place an undue burden on residents.</p> <p>I implore you to represent the best interests of our community and to reject this unjustified and excessive increase in water rates. Our residents deserve access to safe, affordable water without facing financial hardship.</p>

	Perry Yaw	Web	I just retired this year and to get hit with a 75% hike in my water bill is huge. I think any increase this size needs to be spaced out over several years in order to give families time to make room in their budgets.
	Dr. Comer A. LaRue	Web	Cascadia sent a very recent notice stating that they were requesting increased rates effective June 1, 2024. I quote, "Increased rates will reflect additional revenue of \$1,788,793, an incremental increase of 75%." DO NOT APPROVE THIS REQUEST!! Those in my area a forced to be on a community well and do not have the option of drilling our own well. An increase of this magnitude is not warranted. There have not been any significant changes in our area that would substantiate such a request. This request by Cascadia makes no sense.
	BOYD W. SEAL	Web	The letter I received indicates an overreaching attempt to gain a monopoly on water systems in Washington State! And with that an attempt to increase rates for consumers by 92%. The residents in this community at Moses Lake, (Pelican Point) not only use the domestic water in our homes but it is the only source for irrigation of lawns and trees and shrubs. There is no separate delivery system for irrigation water. Cost would be prohibitive.....
	Joshua Courteau	Web	<p>To the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC):</p> <p>I strongly oppose Cascadia Water's proposed 75% water rate hike. This increase is simply unbearable for many customers, especially following the already significant 53% increase in December 2020.</p> <p>Cascadia Water lacks transparency in justifying this exorbitant increase. Citing water service costs, they haven't proven the reasonableness or necessity of these expenses. Upgrading water systems requires a sustainable plan for rate increases, considering the cumulative impact on customers. This proposed increase, combined with the 2020 hike, totals a staggering 128% increase since the pandemic began.</p> <p>Further raising suspicion is the fact that Cascadia Water operates under a publicly traded parent company. Their primary focus may be on maximizing profits and increasing share price for investors, rather than prioritizing affordability for their customers. This potential conflict of interest needs to be addressed.</p> <p>Inconsistency strengthens our case. While receiving this water rate hike notice, we were notified of a decrease in garbage pickup costs from Waste Connections. Inflation cannot be the sole justification when other essential services demonstrate cost reductions.</p> <p>As with garbage collection, we have no alternative water provider. This monopoly unfairly exploits its captive audience. The UN General Assembly recognized the human right to clean water in 2010 (Resolution 64/292). Water is fundamental to human rights, and in these times of rising taxes, food costs, and housing prices, we should not further burden residents by pricing them out of this essential resource.</p>

			<p>The UTC must reject Cascadia Water's proposed rate hike. It would be devastating for many customers. The proposed increase lacks justification, is unsustainable, and prioritizes the interests of a publicly traded parent company over the needs of the community.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Josh Courteau</p>
	Barbara L Bennett	Web	<p>The previous rate hikes and the rate hikes currently proposed put a tremendous burden on retired, fixed income, low or middle income families. How can we afford to be levied some of the highest water rates in the country ?</p>
	David Jasman	Web	<p>CASCAIDIA WATER LLC took over our water system a few years ago from Cedarhearth water system. At the time they took over the water system we were told no rate increase. Then they immediately raised the rates by approximately 50% even though we were told no rate increase when they just acquired the water system and they justified the rate increase to pay for the upgrades to the system that they obviously didn't complete. Now currently Cascadia is again requesting a rate increase to cover the cost again for the upgrades which they are already being paid for which when looking at this request improvements must not have been completed so i must ask how many times are going to pay for improvements that the consumers are not getting? We all are aware that housing costs are skyrocketing in the puget sound area and have made a large strain on home owners and renters alike. i am also aware that the state of Washington has some involvement in this problem by creating some stiff regulations on water systems of this size that were requiring these water system comply to these new rules & regulations that ultimately required many of these upgrades creating a huge burden on the home owners and renters of involved water systems. I believe the state went o far on these regulations and should have made the new rules and regulations only apply to newly created water system and to any portions of an existing water system that is undergoing a repair or upgrade. Otherwise the preexisting water systems should have been grandfathered in and not need to brought up to the new standards unless there is a problem with the quality of the water. If upgrades in the water system are do to new regulations that the state is requiring then the state should be offering grants to cover the associated costs or ease up on the standards. As this 75% proposed rate increase will for sure have an effect on making housing less affordable and we are feeling the pinch rising taxes & fees that are making homes less affordable. in case i am not clear on this my vote is definitely no on this proposed rate increase from cascaidia water.</p>
	Dawn C Wolff	Web	<p>Cascadia purchased our previous company several years ago, and our rates doubled in 2021. Now they want to essentially double our rates again (a 94% increase). Monterra is a senior community and most residents are on fixed incomes. This additional doubling simply can't be afforded by these homeowners. Nor is there any type of payment adjustment for low income homeowners like offered by other utilities. Cascadia has not finished installing meters in Monterra, but has begun charging a metered rate to those homeowners who do have meters installed, although we have not received the required written notice of that change required under Washington</p>

			Administrative Code (WAC) 480-111-415 and -425. Please do not allow this increase to be implemented, or at a minimum, require them to offer a low-income adjustment.
	Andrew L	Web	<p>Doubling service rates is unconscionable. In my latest bi-monthly bill, my water usage accounted for a grand total of \$4; I can't get much more water-conservative than that. Under the proposed rate change, the time it would take for installing my own water well to pay for itself would drop, from about ten years, to just over three years.</p> <p>I would contend that if the company needs extra capital to cover expenses, they can divest from some of their extensive service portfolio across Washington, Oregon, Arizona, and Texas.</p> <p>I will admit that I am of the persuasion that believes Utilities should not be run for-profit.</p>
	Anthony Chambers	Web	I received a notice from Cascadia Water about their request to the Washington UTC for a rate increase. If the rate increase is allowed it essentially doubles the water bills of the citizens of Pelican Point community in Moses Lake, WA. Currently the water supply issues in our community revolve around very poor water pressure, especially in the summer when yard watering is in full swing. this to the point of not enough pressure to rotate sprinkler heads or watering in the middle of the day to obtain enough pressure to accomplish the task. In the letter from Cascadia it was outlined that the only enhancement of the Pelican Point water system was installing chlorine analyzers. nothing addressing the pressure issues. The citizens of Pelican Point community are captured patrons of the Cascadia Water monopoly with no other options. I request that the UTC deny the the rate increase request that doubles water bills of the citizens of our community. Thank you.
	Dana Whitfield	Web	<p>Dear Washington Utilities and Transportation Commissioners,</p> <p>I am deeply opposed to the method that Cascadia Water has proposed for attaining increased revenues. (Please reference docket number: 240151)</p> <p>It's interesting that Cascadia Water is lowering the cost of water per gallon when they are requesting revenue increases. Their proposal instead relies on an excessively high monthly base rate increase to raise the revenues they are requesting.</p> <p>The proposed rate structure penalizes single home conservative water users and benefits large water users. This structure leaves no incentive for conserving water and it leaves the individual homeowner with no substantial ability to lower their water bill by using less water.</p> <p>Using my Peninsula System (Aquarius) 3/4" meter size household as an example, raising the monthly water base rate from \$19.25 to \$44.00 per month is an increase of over 225%.</p> <p>My entire Cascadia Water bill has never been more than \$44.00 per month. My new costs will be the \$44.00 new base rate plus \$10.10 for the DWSRF Surcharge that we are required to pay. This comes to \$54.10 per month, and</p>

			<p>this is before we have used a single drop of water! This is outrageous, especially for those of us that are on fixed incomes.</p> <p>Water is a resource that we all need, and we should pay for that resource on a per gallon basis. The increased revenue that Cascadia Water requests should be obtained by an increase of the per gallon cost not a decreased per gallon cost and an extremely high increase in the monthly base rate, period.</p> <p>Looking forward to your considered review,</p> <p>Dana Whitfield</p>
	Dennis and Carla Egerton	Web	<p>We are opposed to Cascadia Water's proposal for rate increases effective June 1, 2024. The increase represents more than 100% of our current fees. While we appreciate the inflationary pressures and understand the water company's need to make infrastructure improvements that we will benefit from, we believe the proposed rate increases are simply too high. They will be especially burdensome to our large population of senior citizens, many of whom are dependent on fixed incomes.</p>
	David Jachim	Web	<p>Cascadia water is proposing a 50% increase in our water bill. This is an outrageous one time escalation, one that is unthinkable for most businesses. We strongly are against this current proposal and support a rate increase that is more in accord with reality/</p>
	Tamera Sheary	Web	<p>Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rate Increase by Cascadia Water in Lake Alyson Community</p> <p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
	Abigail latner	Web	<p>The proposed rate increase is astronomical- a majority of people who use cascadia would have trouble paying their water bill with this increase. Cascadia is asking for way too much and a smaller rate increase or no increase should be considered</p>
	Susan Gilman	Web	<p>I am totally not in favor of the increase in water in my area of Diamond Point. Not only has this new company come in and purchase water, which , should not be owned privately. and now</p>

			increasing the monthly price by 50% or more. This for all of us is a monopoly and should never be allowed by out local representatives
	Dionne Tillotson	Web	<p>Subject: Opposition to Proposed Rate Increase by Cascadia Water in Lake Alyson Community</p> <p>Dear Utility Regulatory Commission,</p> <p>I am writing to formally oppose the proposed rate increase by Cascadia Water for the Lake Alyson community in Granite Falls. This significant increase is unjustifiable and unaffordable given the current cost of living.</p> <p>Our community's well has not received any improvements that would warrant such an increase. Additionally, we continue to experience intermittent water pressure issues.</p> <p>In light of these concerns, I request a Vote of Voluntary Service and formally file a cost complaint against Cascadia Water.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this matter</p>
	Amy McVee	Web	<p>I am writing to comment on the proposed rate increases by Cascadia for the Pelican Point subdivision in Moses Lake.</p> <p>The rate increase for water meters is simply too high and beyond the usual and customary charges for Moses Lake:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The current monthly rate for a water meter is \$26. Cascadia proposes to nearly double this to \$51 per month. Even Amazon and Netflix raise their prices, but they don't double the cost of a subscription in one year. 2) Benchmarking: the current rate of \$26 per water meter per month is in line with the water system charges for our nearest water utility neighbor, the city of Moses Lake. The cheapest meter in Quincy is \$18.50 per month and includes 400 cf of usage; our neighbor to the south, Othello, has a monthly meter fee of \$35.53. Similar issues can be found with the pricing for water as described by Cascadia, although not quite as severe. Even Cascadia admits that water meter rates for households in the Pelican Point subdivision would increase by 97%. 3) What can we expect for our meter rates increasing from \$300 to \$600+ per year and our average monthly bills increasing from 92 to 103%? The letter from Cascadia mentions multiple projects in western Washington while Pelican Point in eastern Washington gets one line mentioning chlorination, which doesn't justify a 100% rate increase. What this means is that increased revenue from Pelican Point would be drained by Cascadia to benefit water systems that are geographically distant from ours. <p>It's unclear from the Cascadia letter (undated) whether the majority of the infrastructure projects are operating in eastern Washington. In general, these projects should be about improving efficiency and conserving water,</p>

			<p>resulting in lower costs for the consumer, not price gouging because they have a monopoly.</p> <p>The rate proposal increases are unreasonable, unrealistic and out of line with local water utility rates in eastern Washington. Cascadia does not offer improved efficiency or assistance in conserving water. It may be that rates have to be raised but Cascadia needs to do a better job of explaining this to its eastern Washington consumers.</p> <p>DON'T RAISE THE RATES!</p>
	Kristen Swenson	Web	<p>This is a huge hike in our water prices all at once. Few people can afford to pay 75% more in one year. We think this should be spread out over several years to cushion the blow.</p>
	Lenore Norrgard	Web	<p>We had a rate increase just a few years ago. It was phased in over three increments. And it was a MUCH smaller increase.</p> <p>I appreciate the improvements that Cascadia has made to their system; however, we never were consulted on them and how they would impact our rates.</p> <p>An increase of more than 100% at one time is unconscionable. I, for one, am on a fixed income, and so are many of my neighbors. I just barely get by as it is. Water is absolutely necessary to life; it is not a luxury. With the added expense of this rate increase, I will have less money to spend on food.</p> <p>Here are my specific questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are you doing to ameliorate the impact of this rate increase on low income people like myself? 2. Why on earth are you dropping the whole increase on us, all at once? 3. Why did you not so much as consult with your customers prior to spending so much money? 4. Where else can you recover what you spent, other than from us ratepayers? <p>Thank you.</p>
	Howard Miller	Web	<p>Another rate increase so soon? There is no justification for this increase, service is poor, water was poor, (better now). I put in a request for service on water that looked like urine and received a voicemail response on October 6th (2023), telling me that someone would contact me. Here it is April 1st 2024 and I still have not been contacted. Why should they be rewarded for poor service? I can understand a rate increase, but the size of the request is way too much.</p>
	Courtney McCammond	Web	<p>These rate hikes have not been approved by us, the residents, and we are tired of paying for the expansion of this company. Our meters all work and do not need replacing, yet this company is making us pay for these new meters</p>

			in the form of rate hikes. This is just one example. Please do not approve this company to continue to raise rates in the silverlake water district of oak harbor, or anywhere else. Most of our neighbors are senior citizens on fixed incomes and utility rate hikes like these are forcing some out of their homes. Thank you for your consideration.
	Cliff and Kay Morgan	Web	We understand that cost go up and the need to cover costs involved with business. We feel like a rate of this size is totally not supported. We would like to see some of the issues taken care of that have plagued the system. Water pressure is still so poor in some areas that showering is almost impossible. These issues have been discussed and whatever has been done by the company has not been adequate. If a raise in rate is approved, please bring it more in line with the rates in this area and in line with smaller increments of increase.
	Robert O'Neill	Web	This rate increase is extreme nearly doubling our water bill. If I felt that the improvements will produce a better water quality I may be inclined to agree with the rate hike. But, we lost confidence in the water quality several years ago due to the manganese levels, and the color of the water (often brownish). I will say that the support team is great at responding to complaints but we stopped drinking the water several years ago. I also feel we are paying for the poor judgement of Cascadia Water who wants us to pay for upgrades to unrelated water systems, they must have done their due diligence to evaluate the systems prior to purchasing them and now want the consumers to pay for their investment / improvements. A 75% increase with no ramp up time for customers to plan for the increase is unjustified. I feel that there needs to be a better approach to this and urge the commission to consider better solutions.
	Robin Miller	Web	It is not fair to the consumer to double the water rates. A hardship for Seniors.