

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Application for increase in water and wastewater rates in Alachua, Brevard, DeSoto, Highlands, Lake, Lee, Marion, Orange, Palm Beach, Pasco, Polk, Putnam, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia, and Washington Counties by Aqua Utilities Florida, Inc.

DOCKET NO. 080121-WS
FILED: OCTOBER 27, 2008

RECEIVED-FPSC
08 OCT 27 AM 10:40
COMMISSION
CLERK

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the Direct Testimony of Jay W. Yingling, on behalf of the Florida Public Service Commission, has been furnished by electronic mail and hand delivery, on this 27th day of October, 2008, to the following:


Aqua Utilities Florida, Inc.
Ms. Kimberly A. Joyce
762 West Lancaster Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010-3402

Holland & Knight Law Firm
Bruce May/Gigi Rollini
P.O. Drawer 810
Tallahassee, FL 32302-0810

Office of Public Counsel
J.R. Kelly/Charlie Beck/S. C. Reilly
c/o The Florida Legislature
111 W. Madison Street, Room 812
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400

Office of the Attorney General
Bill McCollum/Cecilia Bradley
The Capitol - PL01
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050

COM 5+1
ECR
GCL
OPC
RCP
SSC
SGA
ADM
CLK


KATHERINE E. FLEMING
SENIOR ATTORNEY
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
Gerald L. Gunter Building
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850
Telephone: (850) 413-6218

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

10123 OCT 27 08

FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

DOCKET NO.: 080121-WS - Application for increase in water and wastewater rates in Alachua, Brevard, Highlands, Lake, Lee, Marion, Orange, Palm Beach, Pasco, Polk, Putnam, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia and Washington Counties by Aqua Utilities Florida, Inc.

WITNESS: Direct Testimony of Jay W. Yingling, appearing on behalf of the Staff of the Florida Public Service Commission.

DATE FILED: October 27, 2008

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

10123 OCT 27 8

FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF Jay W. Yingling

1
2 Q. Please state your name and professional address.

3 A. My name is Jay W. Yingling. My professional address is 2379 Broad St., Brooksville,
4 Florida 34604-6899.

5 Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?

6 A. I am employed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD or
7 District) as a Senior Economist.

8 Q. Please describe your duties in this position.

9 A. My duties include economic analytic work in support of key District research, planning,
10 programmatic and regulatory functions. More specifically, I participate in rulemaking activities,
11 evaluate proposed rules, prepare or supervise the preparation of Statements of Estimated
12 Regulatory Costs (SERCs), prepare or supervise the preparation of economic analyses of water
13 and land issues concerning the District and existing, proposed, and potential District programs.
14 Since the development of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Florida
15 Public Service Commission (FPSC or Commission) and the five water management districts in
16 1991, I have acted as a liaison to Commission staff on issues of mutual interest addressed in the
17 MOU. This duty has included working with Commission and utility staff on water use
18 permittee-related rate structure and conservation issues, attending and presenting at utility
19 customer meetings, and providing testimony in rate hearings.

20 Q. Please describe your training and experience.

21 A. I received both B.S. (1982) and M.S. (1984) degrees in Food and Resource Economics
22 from the University of Florida. My academic training included courses on both economic theory
23 (supply and demand) and applied quantitative analysis (econometrics and statistics). Since
24 March of 1987, I have been employed by the SWFWMD, first as an economist and then as a
25 Senior Economist since June 1991. Prior to working for the SWFWMD, I worked as a Staff

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE
10123 OCT 27 8

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Rules Analyst for the St. Johns River Water Management District. I have prepared or supervised the preparation of dozens of SERCs, numerous articles, presentations and reports on water resource economic issues.

Perhaps most relevant, I was the District's project manager for the development of the Water Price Elasticity Study completed in 1993 and for the development of the WATERATE Model. I also was the District's project manager for a recently completed statewide study of water price elasticities for single family residential customers (Whitcomb, 2005). This was the largest known study of single family residential water use in the United States. The results of this new research have been incorporated into a new version of our rate simulation model (WATERATE 2006) that has been made available free of charge to utilities within our District. They are also provided with four free hours of telephone or email assistance from the model's developer. For ease of reference, I have included a list of articles that I have referred to in my testimony. It is attached as Exhibit JWY-1.

As stated before, I have also coordinated with Commission staff on rate structure and conservation issues since before 1991. I have testified both on the behalf of the Commission and utilities in rate hearings.

Q. Why does the District promote the use of water conservation-oriented rate structures?

A. For the benefit of all water customers within its jurisdiction, the District promotes the efficient use of water. The longer that we can maintain demand within the limits of available high quality water sources, the longer we can avoid the higher costs of having to develop lower quality sources. For water to be used efficiently, it must be priced in a manner that provides incentives for efficient use.

Over the years, water price elasticity studies have shown that water utility customers are responsive to changes in water and sewer price (hereafter referred to as water price). Extensive

1 statistical studies of utility water demand show that when the price of water increases, demand
2 for water decreases, all other factors equal (such as weather). Economic theory indicates that
3 persons respond to marginal price, i.e., the price of the next unit of a good purchased. The
4 marginal price is, therefore, the appropriate incentive for efficient use. Our latest research
5 further validates the economic theory of response to marginal price.

6 In much of the SWFWMD, potable quality water is at least a seasonally scarce resource.
7 Water conservation-oriented rate structures reinforce the concept of scarcity and the need to
8 conserve through the marginal price of water. If there is no marginal cost for additional water
9 use or the marginal cost of water declines as more water is used, the scarcity of high quality
10 potable water sources is not adequately reflected, and behavioral changes and the adoption of
11 water conserving technologies will be less likely to occur. A flat charge rate structure in which
12 there is no volume charge or marginal cost, or a rate structure that approaches being a flat charge
13 because a large portion of the customer class's use is covered in a minimum use charge, does not
14 send an adequate conservation incentive to customers and does not reward households that
15 conserve. Master metering of residences also diminishes the water conserving effects of rates.

16 Q. What is the purpose of a water conservation-oriented rate structure?

17 A. From the District's perspective, the purpose of a water conservation-oriented rate
18 structure is to provide economic incentives to reduce per capita water use to, or maintain it at, a
19 given level. The primary goal is not to change or generate additional revenues for a utility. The
20 intent is to provide incentives for conservation within the rate structure itself through
21 manipulation of fixed and variable charges and the level and/or location of marginal price
22 changes. It is one of a number of tools that can be used to reduce or maintain per capita use, but
23 one that is required in Water Use Caution Areas.

24 That said, utilities may also use an inclining block rate structure to fund conservation
25 programs designed to reduce the number of customers with consumption well in excess of

1 average. Those who pay for the program through the higher block rates benefit from programs
2 that can help them reduce the excessive use.

3 Q. How is a water conservation-oriented rate structure determined?

4 A. From a permitting perspective, the District has used the same guidelines on water
5 conservation-oriented rate structures since 1993. These guidelines are called "Interim Minimum
6 Requirements for Water Conserving Rate Structures" (Interim Minimum Requirements). In
7 essence the Interim Minimum Requirements prohibit the use of two rate structure forms based on
8 the marginal price signal. Flat rates, in which there is a single fixed charge for water use and no
9 gallonage charge, has a marginal price of zero. There is no additional charge for additional
10 gallons used. This structure does not reflect scarcity and provides no disincentive to profligate
11 use. Uniform gallonage charge rate structures, or any other rate structures that are essentially flat
12 rates because a significant portion of the customer class's use falls within the minimum use
13 charge allotment, are not acceptable. The Interim Minimum Requirements indicate: "[a]ny rate
14 structure in which a significant percentage of a customer class's water use is paid for under a
15 minimum charge would not be considered a water conserving rate structure." (p. 2)

16 The American Water Works Association (AWWA) M1 rate manual (1991) suggested
17 that only 5% to 15% of residential water bills be rendered under the minimum charge and that,
18 "[t]he percentage should not be so high, and the water allowance so great, that it effectively
19 approaches a flat rate for a large number of customers. This would encourage waste of water by
20 those customers who normally would use a smaller quantity of water than that included in the
21 minimum charge." (p. 34)

22 The Interim Minimum Requirements indicate that the permittee may be required to
23 demonstrate the revenue needed to exceed the 15% suggested by the AWWA. Declining block
24 rate structures are also not acceptable because the marginal price declines as more water is used.
25 Such a structure does not reflect the scarce nature of the resource because the marginal cost of

1 water to the consumer declines as more water is used.

2 In the literature, many types of rate structures are considered water conserving. The most
3 common among these are inclining block, seasonal, uniform with a seasonal surcharge, ratchet,
4 and excess use charge. All involve some form of higher marginal price for water use based on
5 usage or season. Uniform gallonage charge rates, with a constant marginal price, are sometimes
6 also considered a water-conserving rate structure. To minimize costs to regulated utilities, the
7 District will accept a uniform gallonage charge rate structure when the utility is in compliance
8 with per capita requirements. If the utility is not in compliance, then a more aggressive rate
9 structure, such as those mentioned where the marginal prices increases based on usage or season,
10 must be implemented.

11 Q. What permittees are required by rule to comply with the water conserving rate structure
12 requirement?

13 A. Public water supply utilities with permitted quantities of 100,000 gallons per day or more
14 that are located either in the Northern Tampa Bay or Southern Water Use Caution Areas
15 (WUCAs) are required by rule to comply with water conserving rate structure requirements. In
16 addition, rule development is underway to expand the water conserving rate structure
17 requirement to utilities in the entire District. The rate structure requirements for utilities in the
18 Northern Tampa Bay WUCA is found in Section 7.3.1.2 of the Basis of Review for Water Use
19 Permitting. The water conserving rate structure requirement for water utilities in the Southern
20 Water Use Caution Area is found in Section 3.6 of the Basis of Review. The authority to require
21 the use of water conserving rate structures and the District's flexible approach to the
22 implementation of the requirement as outlined in the Interim Minimum Requirements were
23 established in the Division of Administrative Hearings Case No. 94-5742RP, commonly referred
24 to as the "SWUCA rule challenge." The hearing officer recognized that "the general concepts as
25 to what constitutes a water conserving rate structure are well recognized in the industry (Final

1 Order, p. 799).” The District’s Interim Guidelines are consistent with those general concepts.

2 In addition to the conditions contained in the Interim Minimum Requirements, there may
3 be other occasions when the District may encourage or require the implementation of a water
4 conserving rate structure or the implementation of a more aggressive water conserving rate
5 structure. One of these occasions would be when the utility is violating the water quantity limits
6 of its permit and may cause or contribute to harm to water resources. Water conserving rate
7 structures are recognized as one of a number of reasonable tools that may be necessary to bring a
8 permittee into compliance when water resources are being harmed.

9 Q. What other guidance is there on the development of water conserving rate structures?

10 A. There are other features of a water conserving rate structure for which the District does
11 not have specific guidelines. However, the District has made available additional
12 recommendations to permittees and the Commission (Whitcomb, 1999) and the literature is rich
13 with recommendations for developing water conserving rate structures (American Water Works
14 Association, 1992; California Department of Water Resources, 1988; California Urban Water
15 Council, 1997).

16 For example, the fixed charge portion of the bill should be kept to the minimum
17 commensurate with the need for revenue stability. However revenue stability can be enhanced
18 with the establishment of a revenue stabilization fund while keeping the fixed charges
19 reasonably low (where allowed by law). A low fixed charge increases the revenue required from
20 gallonage charges and therefore higher gallonage charges result. This provides more of a
21 disincentive to wasteful use and more of a reward to the customer for reducing use. Anecdotal
22 information from rate practitioners indicate that a water conserving rate structure should
23 generally not generate more than a range of 30% to 40% of its revenues from fixed charges. The
24 30% is more applicable in areas of low to moderate seasonality in population whereas the 40% is
25 more applicable in areas of high seasonality. In cases of extreme seasonality, circumstances may

1 justify a higher percentage.

2 The marginal price change(s) for an inclining block rate structure should be large enough
3 to give the customer an incentive to reduce usage to the previous block. The higher or last
4 block(s) thresholds(s) should be low enough to cover a significant portion of the customer base
5 or the structure will only have a significant impact on a small portion of the customer base and
6 not have the water conserving effect desired. For those customer bases with excessive
7 consumption per customer, the last usage block should be designed and priced to aggressively
8 target that consumption. Similar types of considerations should also be made in the
9 development of other types of water conserving rate structures. Economists would generally
10 agree that the price of the highest block be at least the marginal cost of the next source of water
11 for the utility.

12 Q. How effective are water conserving rate structures?

13 A. This has been a difficult question to answer – but difficult to answer for a number of
14 good reasons. However, theoretical considerations, their relatively common use, and common
15 sense would indicate that well designed water conserving rate structures are effective. The
16 authors of the Guidebook on Conservation-Oriented Water Rates (California Department of
17 Water Resources (DWR), 1988) described the dilemma quite well.

18
19 “First, DWR knows of no city that has adopted conservation-oriented
20 water rates without at the same time enacting a general water rate
21 increase. Therefore, it is not possible to tell how much of the
22 subsequent drop in per capita water consumption was due to a revised
23 rate structure and how much was due to higher water costs.

24
25 However, the experiences of Washington, D.C., and Tucson, Arizona,

1 which switched to conservation-oriented water rates in the late 1970's,
2 show significant water savings can result from conservation-oriented
3 water rates. Refer to the excerpts from DWR Bulletin 198-84 (in the
4 back pocket of this guidebook) for more information.

5
6 When a city adopts conservation-oriented water rates, some customers
7 will get lower water bills, others will face higher water costs, and some
8 residential customers might see no difference in their annual water
9 costs. The incentive to conserve will come from several factors. First,
10 most users will experience increased summer water bills and lower
11 winter water costs. This is desirable, for conservation is more valuable
12 during the peak summer months.

13
14 Second, large water users will tend to get higher bills under the revised
15 rate schedule, which would provide them with incentives to reduce use.

16
17 Third, large residential users, with above-average outdoor use, will tend
18 to get higher water bills under conservation-oriented water rates.
19 Because outdoor use has been found to be more responsive to price than
20 indoor use, the drop in exterior water use by large users should
21 outweigh any increase in water use by apartment dwellers, most of
22 whom will face lower water bills.

23
24 A fourth factor in conservation-oriented water rates that leads to
25 reduced water consumption over time is the fact that everyone now

1 knows if a household gets careless and increases its water use, its water
2 bill will increase more under the revised rate schedule than it would
3 have under the old rate schedule.

4
5 The final factor explaining the use of pricing incentives to encourage
6 conservation is the concept of marginal cost. Marginal cost is the cost
7 of purchasing one more unit of a good or service. Although switching
8 to conservation-oriented water rates will mean that some users will face
9 lower average costs, virtually everyone should face significantly higher
10 marginal water costs (if the new rates are truly conservation-oriented).

11
12 Economic studies often indicate that consumers make purchase
13 decisions based more on marginal costs than average costs. So although
14 it is not possible to quantify the above five factors for each city to
15 determine exactly how much water would be saved by switching to
16 conservation-oriented water rates, DWR believes that a city with typical
17 water rates (a conservation index number of approximately 0.7)
18 switching to these conservation rates (an index number of 1.0) would be
19 equivalent to the effect of raising the average price of water by 10 to 20
20 percent, while keeping the old rate structure.

21
22 This would mean that if the above typical city (with a winter PED of
23 -0.25 and a summer PED of -0.35) were to adopt these conservation
24 rates, it could expect a decline in per capita residential winter water use
25 of 2.5 to 5 percent and a decline in summer per capita residential water

1 use of 3.5 to 7 percent. Commercial, industrial, and public-authority
2 water use could also be expected to decline if conservation-oriented
3 water rates are applied to those user classes.”
4

5 As noted above, it is quite difficult to find a utility that has adopted a water-conserving
6 rate structure that has not also included an increase in revenues. Further, to isolate the effects of
7 the structure change from other water demand variables, it may be necessary to perform complex
8 and expensive statistical analyses. Utilities are not inclined to perform such analyses. There is,
9 however, some anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of the water conserving rate structures.

10 In 1995, the Homosassa Special Water District implemented a revenue neutral water
11 conserving rate structure. The rate structure was designed using the District’s WATERATE
12 model. Although no formal statistical analysis of the effect of the rate structure has been
13 performed, in a telephone conversation between myself and utility superintendent Dave Purnell,
14 Mr. Purnell was quite firm in his conviction that the water conserving rate structure (inclining
15 block) played a significant role in reducing per capita water use in the service area.

16 In 1993, Sarasota County changed their inclining block rate structure to a more
17 aggressive inclining block rate structure. Again, the change was designed to be revenue neutral.
18 Per capita use declined significantly in the years following the structure change. No other
19 significant conservation programs were implemented during the same period. Although no
20 formal statistical analysis of the effect of the rate structure has been performed, David Cook,
21 Manager of Finance and Administrative Services for Environmental Services, informed me that
22 he was confident that the rate structure change played a significant role in the decline in per
23 capita water use in Sarasota County’s service area.

24 In 1991, the Spalding County Water Authority (Georgia) changed from a declining block
25 rate structure to an inclining block rate structure. As a result, the average customer’s bill

1 increased by \$1.99 per month. The estimated price elasticity for the rate change was -.33. In
2 1993, the average bill was increased by \$2.13 per month without a change in rate structure. The
3 estimated price elasticity for the 1993 rate change was only -.07. A simple 't' test was conducted
4 to determine if weather was significantly different between the two periods. It was not. In
5 addition, no other conservation programs were implemented during either period of time. The
6 author concludes that the change in rate structure was a significant contributing factor to the
7 larger response to the rate change in 1991 (Jordan, 1994).

8 Another study in Georgia in 1992 indicated that the daily water use for systems using
9 declining block rate structures was 503 gallons per connection, 428 gallons for systems using
10 uniform rate structures, and 352 for systems using inclining block rate structures (Jordan and
11 Elnagheeb, 1993).

12 In our most recent research on single family residential price elasticity, statistical analysis
13 indicated that when comparing a uniform gallonage charge rate structure and an inclining block
14 rate structure with equal weighted marginal prices, the inclining block rate structure had more of
15 a water conserving effect. Therefore, an inclining block rate structure should be employed in lieu
16 of a uniform gallonage charge rate to maximize conservation and preserve scarce, high quality
17 water resources whether required or not.

18 The statistical analysis showing inclining block rates to be more water conserving was
19 validated by the responses of surveyed customers when asked their opinions of the water
20 conservation effect of the rate structure of their utility (Whitcomb, 2005). Many (21%) of the
21 customers of utilities with inclining block rate structures essentially identified themselves as
22 "block targeters" that focus on reducing water use to avoid going into higher usage blocks. This
23 recent research only strengthens our belief that water conserving rate structures, and inclining
24 block rates in particular, are effective. The WATERATE 2006 model greatly enhances the
25 ability of utilities to estimate the effectiveness of changes in both rates and rate structures.

1 Q. For the Aqua systems in this proceeding that are located within the District, does the
2 Aqua systems' existing and proposed rate structures comply with the District's water conserving
3 rate structure requirement?

4 A. Of the permitted Aqua systems located in the Southern Water Use Caution Area
5 (SWUCA), only Lake Josephine (permit 4167) is required to comply with the water conserving
6 rate structure permit condition. In 2006, Lake Josephine had a daily per capita water use of 117
7 gallons and therefore was in compliance with its per capita requirement. Lake Josephine is also
8 in compliance with its pumpage limits. A compliance issue for Lake Josephine is that they have
9 not submitted their required Annual Report for 2007. The other active permitted Aqua systems
10 in the SWUCA -- Leisure Lakes (6456) and Orange Hill/Sugar Creek (7653) -- are below the
11 permitted quantity threshold of 100,000 gallons per day that would require them to adopt a water
12 conserving rate structure. Both are in compliance with their pumpage limits and other permit
13 conditions.

14 Our records indicate that Sebring Lakes (11768) is no longer an active permit and was
15 deleted in July of 2008. Lake Suzy is a totally wholesale supplied utility in the SWUCA that
16 uses more than 100,000 gpd and is therefore required to apply for a Wholesale Public Supply
17 Permit to enforce conservation conditions, which includes the water conserving rate structure
18 requirement. To date, Lake Suzy has not applied for such a permit and is therefore in violation
19 of that rule provision. As Lake Suzy uses more than 100,000 gpd they will be subject to the
20 water conserving rate structure requirement. However, in 2007, their per capita use was less than
21 150 gpd so they would not be required to change from their uniform rate structure. Information
22 regarding water conservation rate structure requirements and active compliance issues is
23 summarized on Exhibit JWY-2.

24 Of the Aqua systems located in the Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area
25 (NTBWUCA), only Jasmine Lakes (permit 279) is required to comply with the water conserving

1 rate structure permit condition. In 2006, Jasmine Lakes had a daily per capita water use rate of
2 97 gallons and therefore was in compliance with its per capita requirement. Jasmine Lakes is
3 also in compliance with its pumpage limits and has no active compliance issues. The other Aqua
4 system in the NTBWUCA, Palm Terrace (3759), is in compliance with its pumpage limits and
5 has no active compliance issues.

6 The SWFWMD permitted Aqua systems that are not in water use caution areas but could
7 be subject to the water conserving rate structure requirement under the proposed rules are Zephyr
8 Shores (11082), Gibsonia Estates (9336) and Lake Gibson Estates (7878). Zephyr Shores and
9 Gibsonia Estates are permitted for less than 100,000 gallons per day and therefore would not be
10 subject to the water conserving rate structure permit condition. None of the three have any
11 active compliance issues. The three remaining Aqua systems in the SWFWMD -- Rosalie Oaks,
12 Village Water, and The Woods -- fall below the permitting thresholds of the District based on
13 information provided by Commission staff.

14 Of the systems currently required to comply with the District's water conserving rate
15 structure permit condition, neither Lake Josephine nor Jasmine Lakes employs a minimum
16 gallonage charge. Therefore, they are in compliance with the minimum charge requirements of
17 the Interim Minimum Requirements. Lake Suzy does not utilize a minimum gallonage charge
18 and therefore would be in compliances with the minimum gallonage charge requirements.

19 According to data provided by the Commission, the percent of revenues from fixed
20 charges for the Jasmine Lakes system in Pasco County is proposed to be increased from 35% to
21 51% if viewed on a stand-alone basis. Similarly, the percent of revenues for Lake Josephine
22 from fixed charges is proposed to be increased from 46% to 49%, while the corresponding
23 percent of revenues from fixed charges for Lake Suzy is proposed to more than double, going
24 from 27% to 56%. The District does not believe that such a high percentage of revenues from
25 fixed charges is consistent with the intent of a water conserving rate structure. Based on data

1 contained in the utility's Minimum Filing Requirements, 16% of Jasmine Lake's billable
2 residential gallons is captured at monthly bills of 1,000 gallons or less. The corresponding
3 percentage for both Lake Josephine and Lake Suzy is 22%. This analysis indicates that these are
4 mild (Jasmine Lakes) or moderately (Lake Josephine and Lake Suzy) seasonal service areas.
5 Therefore, I recommend that the proposed increases in percent of revenues from fixed charges
6 not be approved, and that the fixed charges be reduced closer to 40% of revenues unless there is
7 compelling evidence demonstrating the need for higher base charges for revenue stability
8 purposes.

9 Q. What level of price elastic effect (repression) from price increases can be expected?

10 A. First, in the simplest terms, price elasticity is the percent change in demand for a percent
11 change in price. In 1991 the District was developing the WUCA rules which included the
12 requirement for water conserving rate structures to be used as a demand management tool. At
13 the time there were no large sample estimates of water price elasticities that included a wide
14 range of prices in the sample. However, there is a wide range of water prices in the District due
15 to source water of varying quality.

16 Given the proposed rule changes, it was deemed desirable to conduct a large-scale price
17 elasticity study to assist utilities in the District in estimating reductions in demand due to rate
18 structure and price level changes. Brown and Caldwell in association with Dr. John Whitcomb
19 were engaged to conduct the study. The price elasticity study, the most comprehensive ever
20 known to be conducted in the State of Florida, was completed in 1993.

21 Dr. Whitcomb's most recent research was believed to be the largest and most
22 comprehensive study of single family residential price elasticity in the United States at its time of
23 completion and includes monthly observations from over 3,500 homes over an approximate 5
24 year period. The estimation of price elasticity was refined by estimating elasticities for four
25 different profiles of property value. The estimation was further refined by estimating different

1 elasticities for those utility service areas where alternative, low cost irrigation sources such as
2 shallow wells and canals, were readily available, and those where they were not. The different
3 elasticities have been incorporated into the WATERATE 2006 rate simulation models so that
4 utilities can customize the elasticities to be appropriate for the characteristics of the individual
5 utility. The estimated price elasticities are provided on Exhibit JWY-3.

6 For example, a 1% increase in the volume charge for a Profile 2 customer with a 50th
7 percentile assessed value home (the median value for the State) would be expected to result in a
8 0.51% reduction in water use in a service area where substitutes are readily available. In a
9 service area without substitutes, the price elasticity would decrease to a 0.44% reduction in water
10 use for a Profile 2 home. As can be seen, the response to an increase in the volume charge
11 increases with property value up to the 4th profile. This makes sense in that lower value homes
12 generally have less discretionary water use, and discretionary water use generally increases with
13 property value due to increased outdoor water use. Water and sewer bills for Profile 4
14 households generally are not a significant portion of household income and this likely explains
15 the lower price elasticity. The lower price elasticities for households without ready access to
16 cheaper irrigation substitutes makes sense as well. Without a cheaper substitute irrigation
17 source, customers can become more efficient in their use, but cannot switch to a substitute
18 source, so the price response is lower.

19 Previous studies of overall (indoor & outdoor) single-family residential price elasticity
20 studies in Florida estimated elasticities ranging from -.23 (Brown and Caldwell, 1990), to -.81
21 (Lewis et al., 1981). As can be seen, the 2005 revised elasticities are generally consistent with
22 the range of other residential price elasticity estimates conducted in Florida. The slightly greater
23 range of elasticities can be explained by the fact that the 2005 elasticities are estimated for
24 discreet property value profiles and not the average of all customers. Not taking into account the
25 repression effect of these estimated price elasticities in rate making creates the risk of falling

1 short of revenue requirements.

2 In terms of the timing of price elastic response, Dr. Whitcomb believes that
3 approximately 50% of the price elastic effect occurs within the first year with the remaining 50%
4 spread over the following two years. This allocation is reflected in the WATERATE rate model
5 developed by Dr. Whitcomb.

6 Q. Are there any other compliance issues that should be addressed?

7 A. No. Both Lake Josephine and Jasmine Lakes are in compliance with the unaccounted
8 water requirements of the SWUCA and NTBWUCA, respectively, based on information
9 supplied by the utilities for 2006. The unaccounted water use of Lake Suzy is not know at this
10 time as they have not applied for the previously mentioned wholesale permit nor complied with
11 the annual reporting requirements of such a permit, which would include providing information
12 on unaccounted water use.

13 Q. Does this conclude your testimony?

14 A. Yes.

15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

References

American Water Works Association. Water Rates. AWWA M1. 1991

American Water Works Association. Alternative Rates. AWWA M34. 1992.

Brown and Caldwell in association with J. J. Boland. Empirical Water Demand Study. Prepared for the South Florida Water Management District. 1990.

California Department of Water Resources. Water Conservation Guidebook No. 9: Guidebook on Conservation - Oriented Water Rates. October 1988.

California Urban Water Conservation Council. Designing, Evaluating, and Implementing Conservation Rate Structures. July 1997

Jordan, J. L. and A. H. Elnagheeb. "Water Pricing in Georgia". In Proceedings of the 1993 Georgia Water Resources Conference. University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia. 1993.

Jordan, Jeffrey L. "The Effectiveness of Pricing as a Stand-Alone Water Conservation Program." Water Resources Bulletin. Vol. 30, No. 5. October 1994

Lewis, K., R. Carriker, and R. Marella. Analysis of Residential Demand for Water in the St. Johns River Water Management District. Prepared for the St. Johns River Water Management District. 1981.

Whitcomb, Dr. John B. "Recommendations for Defining Water Conserving Rate Structures." Prepared for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. August 1999.

Whitcomb, Dr. John B. "Florida Water Rates Evaluation of Single Family Homes." Prepared for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. July 2005.

AQUA UTILITIES FLORIDA, INC. (AUF) DOCKET NO. 060368-WS Water Conservation Rate Structure Requirements and Active Compliance Issues for AUF Water Systems Located in the Southwest Florida Water Management District			
<u>Location of System</u>	<u>Name of System</u>	<u>Subject to Water Conservation Rate Structure Requirements?</u>	<u>Active Compliance Issues?</u>
Southern Water Use Caution Area	Lake Josephine	Yes	Yes
	Leisure Lakes	No	No
	Sebring Lakes	Expired - Deleted	Expired - Deleted
	Orange Hill / Sugar Creek	No	No
	Lake Suzy	Yes	Yes
Northern Tampa Bay Water Use Caution Area	Jasmine Lakes	Yes	No
	Palm Terrace	No	No
Not Located in a Water Use Caution Area	Zephyr Shores	No	No
	Gibsonia Estates	No	No
	Lake Gibson Estates	No	No
No Permit Required: Below SWFWMD Permitting Thresholds	Rosalie Oaks	No	n/a
	Village Water	No	n/a
	The Woods	No	n/a
Source: Southwest Florida Water Management District, Water Use Permit Information Manual, 2006 Estimated Water Use Report (July 2008), Regulatory Performance Management data.			

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PRICE ELASTICITIES

Profile	Statewide Property Value Percentile	Assessed Value (2002 Dollars)	Elasticity with Substitutes	Elasticity without Substitutes
1	25%	\$57,890	-0.39	-0.28
2	50%	\$84,330	-0.51	-0.44
3	75%	\$126,932	-0.84	-0.65
4	90%	\$197,400	-0.56	-0.33

Source: Whitcomb, Dr. John B. "Florida Water Rates Evaluation of Single Family Homes."
Prepared for the Southwest Florida Water Management District. July 2005.