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BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. 020071-WS

UTILITIES, INC. OF FLORIDA

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

**DONALD W. RASMUSSEN**

REGARDING THE APPLICATION FOR

INCREASE IN WATER AND WASTEWATER

RATES AND CHARGES

IN

MARION, ORANGE, PASCO, PINELLAS AND SEMINOLE COUNTIES

***EXHIBIT 7 \* VOL. 3***

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2 BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
3 REGARDING THE APPLICATION FOR INCREASE  
4 IN WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES AND CHARGES  
5 IN MARION, ORANGE, PASCO, PINELLAS AND SEMINOLE COUNTIES  
6 BY UTILITIES, INC. OF FLORIDA  
7 DOCKET NO. 020071-WS

8 Q. Please state your name and business address.

9 A. My name is Donald W. Rasmussen and my business address is 200  
10 Weathersfield Avenue, Altamonte Springs, Florida.

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

12 A. I am employed by Utilities, Inc., the parent company which owns 100% of the  
13 stock of Utilities, Inc. of Florida (UIF). Presently, I serve as Vice President  
14 and Regional Director of Operations and am responsible for the administration  
15 and operation of all water and sewer systems in Florida owned by subsidiaries  
16 of Utilities, Inc.

17 Q. Please summarize your background and experience in the industry of providing  
18 water and sewer service to the public.

19 A. I have been employed by Utilities, Inc. since first being hired in 1970. I was  
20 soon promoted to the position of Area Manager, where I was responsible for  
21 the operations of several water and wastewater plants. During this time, I

1 acquired the highest Illinois licenses awarded in the water and wastewater  
2 fields and continue to hold a Class A certificate in water and Class 1 certificate  
3 in wastewater. I also conducted safety seminars for the company and was a  
4 licensed paramedic.

5 In 1982, I was transferred to Altamonte Springs and accepted the position of  
6 Regional Director for Utilities, Inc. of Florida. In 1990, I was given the title of  
7 Vice President of the Utilities, Inc. of Florida systems. I currently maintain a  
8 Grade A certificate in water and a Grade C certificate in wastewater in the  
9 State of Florida. I have attended numerous seminars dealing with operations  
10 and maintenance of water and wastewater systems.

11 Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?

12 A. I have come to the Commission to sponsor the additional engineering  
13 information and explain the pro forma adjustments. My testimony will begin  
14 with an explanation to the Commission of UIF's philosophy in providing  
15 customer service. Then, I will discuss improvements made to the systems.

16 Q. Please explain UIF's philosophy in treating and serving its customers.

17 A. Our office staff and field personnel take great pride in providing quality service  
18 to our customers. In many instances, we adapt our procedures to allow for  
19 individual needs and requirements of our customers.

20 Customer calls, regardless of their nature, come into the branch office in  
21 Altamonte Springs. Customers located out of the area are furnished with a toll

1 free number. During office hours, each call is answered by a customer service  
2 representative.

3 If there is a problem related to field operations, a computer generated service  
4 order is issued and directed to the operator responsible for that particular  
5 system. The service orders are immediately relayed to the operator by means  
6 of a fax machine or radio communications. Depending on the nature of the  
7 service concern, the operator will include the service order in his schedule and  
8 respond to it as necessary. Emergencies – such as water leaks or water quality  
9 complaints – always require immediate attention. After the problem is  
10 rectified, the operator relays the information to the customer service  
11 representative, and the resolution is entered into the computer system as a  
12 permanent record of the call.

13 Billing inquiries are handled much in the same way as service calls. All  
14 inquiries are recorded on the customer's account by entering the information  
15 into the computer system. Any billing inquiries or complaints are resolved as  
16 soon as possible.

17 Customers using our toll free number after office hours are forwarded to our  
18 answering service. There is an operator assigned to be "on call" during the  
19 hours the office is closed. If an emergency should arise, the on-call operator  
20 will handle the situation.

21 This is just a brief summary of our billing and customer service procedures.  
22

1 As a company, we are never completely satisfied with customer service and,  
2 therefore, continue to strive to improve in every facet of service. Our ongoing  
3 goal is to be the best water utility in the State of Florida. We believe that we  
4 are well on our way to achieving that goal.

5 Q. Are all the plants presently in compliance with the Department of  
6 Environmental Protection's regulations?

7 A. Yes. At the present time, there are no known compliance problems with any of  
8 the systems.

9 Q. Were any of the Exhibits to the Application for Increase in Rates prepared by  
10 you or under your supervision?

11 A. Yes. The Additional Engineering Information required by Commission Rule  
12 25-30.440 which is attached as Exhibit "3" to the Application for Increase in  
13 Rates was prepared under my supervision and is true and correct, Exhibit  
14 (DWR-1) \_\_\_\_\_. Although obviously I did not prepare the detailed system maps  
15 which are attached as Exhibit "4" to the Application for Increase in Rates, they  
16 are business records which are under my control, Exhibit (DWR-2) \_\_\_\_\_. In  
17 addition, I, or personnel under my supervision, provided the input utilized by  
18 Mr. Seidman in preparing the Engineering section of the MRFs, previously  
19 introduced as Exhibit "1" by Mr. Lubertozzi, Exhibit (SML-1) \_\_\_\_\_.

20 Q. Please discuss the Seminole County pro forma adjustments.

21 A. Work Order No. 115-98-12 in the amount of \$209,593 is for the replacement of  
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1 mains. This project in Weathersfield was in conjunction with the widening of  
2 State Road 436. We had water and sewer mains that had to be relocated to  
3 allow the road work to be completed. The contractor that did the relocation  
4 work was the road contractor. The work was done through a joint planing  
5 authority with the Florida Department of Transportation.

6 Work Order No. 116-01-01 in the amount of \$140,366 was to construct  
7 a new lift station. Located at the south end of our office building in Altamonte  
8 Springs. We had a lift station that was situated under the building. One floor  
9 under the main level of the building was the pump room and the next lower  
10 floor contained the bar screen. Because of the age and deterioration of the  
11 station along with our concerns for safety in entering a confined space, we  
12 reconstructed the lift station. This new lift station eliminated the confine  
13 space.

14 Work Order No.116-01-02 in the amount of \$54,410 was for a gravity  
15 sewer relocation. At one location in our Weathersfield system, we have a  
16 gravity sewer main that runs along the Little Wekiva River. Because of  
17 erosion caused by the river, Seminole County and St. Johns River Water  
18 Management District entered into a project to install barriers along the bank  
19 walls to prevent further erosion. During the engineering for this project, it was  
20 discovered that our mains and manhole were in jeopardy of collapsing into the  
21 river. In addition, they had to be moved to accommodate the construction of  
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1 the bank walls.

2 Q. Please discuss the pro forma adjustments in Pasco County.

3 A. Work Order No. 116-01-01 in the amount of \$24,758 was a lift station  
4 rehabilitation. When we purchased the Wis Bar system, the lift station located  
5 at the end of Flintwood Drive was in disrepair. It needed immediate attention,  
6 therefore, we made the necessary repairs to the station to ensure its integrity.

7 Work Order No. 115-01-02 in the amount of \$114,510 was to replace a  
8 4" water main. After purchasing the Buena Vistas system we discovered a  
9 section of AC main that was deteriorated and having several breaks. To rectify  
10 this problem, we had to replace 2600 feet of the AC main which was located in  
11 the backyards of the homes.

12 Work Order No. 116-01-01 in the amount of \$27,510 was to remove  
13 lateral pipes. In our Summertree system, we were having several sewer back  
14 ups in the Point West section of the system. Upon TV of the mains, it was  
15 discovered that the laterals entering the sewer mains protruded into the main  
16 line and was causing the problem. We hired a company to cut these laterals  
17 out and enable us to TV and clean the mains which prevented additional sewer  
18 back ups.

19 Work Order No. 115-00-02 in the amount of \$16, 594 was to relocate a  
20 water main. In our Orangewood system, it was discovered that a 2" water main  
21 serving some commercial customers was not located in an easement. Because  
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1 the property owner wanted to construct a building where the main was located,  
2 we had to relocate the main into an easement.

3 Work Order No. 115-00-03 in the amount of \$48,398 was for a water  
4 main interconnection. After purchasing the Wis Bar system, which is adjacent  
5 to our Orangewood system, we interconnected the two systems. Wis Bar had  
6 no water plants and was purchasing water from the neighboring Holiday  
7 Gardens system, which we do not own.

8 Q. Please explain the pro forma adjustments for Pinellas County.

9 A. Work Order No. 115-02-01 in the amount of \$13,520 was for the installation of  
10 isolation control valves. In our Lake Tarpon water system when we  
11 experienced a main break we were unable to shut off sections of the system.  
12 Therefore, we would have to shut down the entire system to repair any leaks.  
13 With this not being in the best interest of our customers, we decided to install  
14 valves at various locations in the system that would allow us to shut off part of  
15 the system to make any necessary repairs without interrupting service to all of  
16 the customers.

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