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Charles J. Beck
Deputy Public Counsel

November 18, 2004

Blanca S. Bayo, Director
Division of the Commission Clerk
and Administrative Services
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

RECEIVED-FPSC
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COMMISSION
CLERK

Re: Docket Nos. 020896-WS & 010503-WU

Dear Ms. Bayo:

Enclosed for filing, on behalf of the Petitioners, are the original and 15 copies of the Direct Testimony of Hasit Patel.

Please indicate the time and date of receipt on the enclosed duplicate of this letter and return it to our office.

Sincerely,

Charles J. Beck
Deputy Public Counsel

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12388 NOV 18 04

FPSC-COMMISSION CLERK

ORIGINAL

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Petition by customers of Aloha)
Utilities, Inc. for deletion of portion)
of territory in Seven Springs area in)
Pasco County)

Docket No. 020896-WS

In re: Application for Increase in)
Water Rates for Seven Springs)
System in Pasco County by Aloha)
Utilities, Inc.)

Docket No. 010503-WU

Filed: November 18, 2004

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

HASIT PATEL

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

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DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

HASIT PATEL

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BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Docket Nos. 020896-WS & 010503-WU

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

HASIT PATEL

Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.

A. My name is Hasit Patel. I reside at 1533 Haverhill Drive, New Port Richey,
FL 34655.

Q. WHICH UTILITY SUPPLIES YOUR DRINKING WATER AND SEWER SERVICE AND HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A CUSTOMER OF THE UTILITY?

A. Aloha Utilities, Inc supplies my drinking water. I have been a customer since July, 1998.

Q. ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH THE QUALITY OF WATER IN YOUR DOMESTIC PLUMBING?

A. No. There is a black discoloration in the water at times and sometimes I have to let the water run before it is clear. The water also smells like bad eggs.

The problem is most noticeable in taps that have not been used for sometime.

1 **Q. DO YOU DRINK WATER FROM YOUR TAPS? IF NOT, WHY NOT?**

2 A. No, I do not drink water from the tap directly. I have had a Reverse Osmosis
3 Filter installed in my house since the day we moved into our house. We do
4 not drink water directly from the taps. After having seen “black discoloration
5 in the water”, I don’t think anybody would want to drink water from the tap!
6 In addition the water does smell at times like bad eggs.

7

8 **Q. WHAT IS IT THAT DISTRESSES YOU ABOUT THE QUALITY OF**
9 **WATER?**

10 A. For 6 years (since I have moved into my current residence) Aloha has been
11 saying that the quality of the water is good according to their report, but we
12 keep getting black water. I have talked to other friends and relatives living in
13 other counties and areas that have different utilities and they do not experience
14 the problem. Why is it that other utility customers do not experience the same
15 problem whereas Aloha customers do? The black water and the bad eggs
16 smell is what distresses me most about the quality of the water.

17

18 **Q. HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU EXPERIENCE POOR QUALITY?**

19 A. The discoloration is present most of the time. It is most prevalent on faucets
20 that have not been operated for some time for example in the Jacuzzi. The
21 sediment builds up in the toilet tanks and in the hot water tank

22

23 **Q. UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES OF USE HAVE YOU**
24 **EXPERIENCED POOR QUALITY?**

1 A. In all the faucets and including the ice dispenser. We do not always use one
2 of our showers and usually have to run the taps for a while to get rid of the
3 black sediment build up as well as the smell before the water can be used.
4

5 **Q. WHAT KIND OF PIPES DO YOU HAVE?**

6 A. Cooper. The whole house plumbing is copper.
7

8 **Q. DO YOU HAVE A WATER CONDITIONING APPLICANCES. IF SO**
9 **WHAT KIND?**

10 A. I have a water softener installed as I prefer soft water for cleaning and heating
11 purposes.
12

13 **Q. DO YOU USE ANY TYPES OF FILTERS ?**

14 A. No. Currently do not use any types of filter but am contemplating a device to
15 install at the main inlet to reduce the blackness of the water. One of the
16 homeowners in our sub-division has installed a device and has found a
17 reduction in the blackness of the water.
18

19 **Q. HOW DOES THE POOR QUALITY OF WATER AFFECT YOU AND**
20 **YOUR FAMILY?**

21 A. It has been embarrassing when we have had guests who have stayed overnight
22 and have had to let the water run for a few minutes before they could take a
23 shower because of the black water and the smell. I had to explain to the
24 guests that we are experiencing this problem with the water. On several

1 occasions we have had to do the laundry as well as run the dishwasher twice
2 as the laundry was black and the dishes came out black. I have to regularly
3 clean out the toilet tanks to remove the black deposits in the tanks. It is
4 frustrating that this issue has not been resolved for such a long time.

5

6 **Q. HAVE YOU MADE ENQUIRIES ABOUT THE QUALITY OF WATER**
7 **THAT CUSTOMERS OF OTHER UTILITIES IN THE**
8 **NEIGHBORING AREAS RECEIVE?**

9 A. I have asked other friends and family members living in neighboring areas
10 that are not customers of Aloha and they do not experience this problem of
11 black water or the smell in the water.

12

13 **Q. WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR EXPERIENCE OF THE QUALITY OF**
14 **WATER IN DOMESTIC PIPES, IF YOU HAVE LIVED IN OTHER**
15 **PARTS OF OUR STATE OR OTHER STATES?**

16 A. I have never seen this problem of black water. In fact I only heard about the
17 black water issue when I moved to my current residence.

18

19 **Q. WHO DO YOU THINK SHOULD TAKE THE PRIMARY INITIATIVE**
20 **IN IMPROVING WATER QUALITY?**

21 A. I think the provider has to ensure that the quality of the water is improved for
22 its customers. My belief is that the problem should be fixed at the source as
23 this water is being provided to all the users

1 **Q. IF A REASONABLE INCREASE IN COST IS NECESSARY TO**
2 **IMPROVE WATER QUALITY, WILL YOU BE WILLING TO**
3 **ACCEPT AN INCREASE IN WATER RATES SIMILAR TO WHAT**
4 **NEIGHBORING UTILITIES CHARGE?**

5 A. Yes, I would be willing to accept an increase in rates as long there is a
6 guaranteed improvement in the water quality. I understand that the black and
7 smelly nature of the water can be eliminated if a certain element is removed
8 from the water which is the primary cause of the problem.

9
10 **Q. DOES THAT CONCLUDE YOUR TESTIMONY?**

11 A. Yes.

**DOCKET NOS. 001503-TP and 020896-WU
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing has been furnished by U.S. Mail
or hand-delivery to the following parties on this 18th day of November, 2004.



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