

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Application for certificate to provide
wastewater service in Charlotte
County by Environmental Utilities, LLC

Docket No. 20240032-SU

DIRECT TESTIMONY

OF

RANDY BELL

on behalf of

Environmental Utilities, LLC

1 **Q. Please state your, name profession and address.**

2 A. Randy Bell, Pressure Sewer Sales Representative for FJ Nugent & Associates. 2200 NW 150th
3 Ave, Ocala, FL

4 **Q. State briefly your background and experience.**

5 A. 36 years experience in the design, application, construction, operation and maintenance of
6 pressure systems across the country.

7 **Q. What is the purpose of your direct testimony?**

8 A. The purpose of my direct testimony is to explain the proposed wastewater collection system
9 that Environmental Utilities proposes to install in the service area.

10 **Q. Have you and the company you work for installed any low pressure systems?**

11 A. FJ Nugent is the distributor for EONE Pressure Sewers. *

12 **Q. Please explain what happens when there is a short-term or prolonged power outage.**

13 A. The standard basin is designed to flows during an outage for 2-3 days. The alarm panel also
14 has a generator receptacle with an auto transfer switch which allows the station to be pumped
15 down with a portable generator. I would point out that during power outages the main sources
16 of flow do not work, washers and dishwashers.

17 **Q. Are you aware of the comparison of the pros and cons of a low pressure system versus
18 a septic tank.**

19 A. Yes, pressure sewers are an actual wastewater collection systems. They take the sewage from
20 the home, grinder it into a fine slurry and transport it ultimately to a treatment plant. Whereas,
21 septic systems are onsite, which consist of a large holding tank and a lateral field. The tank
22 should be pumped out and the solids removed every 3-5 years. The effluent leaves the tank
23 and enters the laterals lines. Depending on what part of the country the effluent then either
24 evaporates or filters through down through the soil back into the ground water. The onsite
25 system will fail whether is it due to the homeowners not maintaining the system, the existing

1 soil conditions not being conducive evaporation or absorption, high ground water, etc.

2 **Q. Please describe the low pressure system pumps, and how the system works.**

3 A. The electrical power is typically provided by the home (average less than \$1.00 per month),
4 The grinder pump station is installed near the home, a 4” gravity line is run from the home to
5 the basin. A 1 ¼” service line runs from the station to the pressure main near the street. When
6 the wastewater comes from the home into the basin it reaches a designated on level, the pump
7 turns on, grinds and pumps the sewage out into the collection system. The mains in the
8 pressure collection system are sized so that the system cleans itself everyday. It is self
9 maintaining.

10 **Q. Do you have a schematic that shows this low pressure system grinder pump system.**

11 A. Yes, one was done in connection with the septic-to-sewer conversion in Martin County, and
12 I have attached a copy as an exhibit.

13 **Q. Are you aware of other location in Florida where this type of system has been installed?**

14 A. Florida Keys – 4,000+ residential and commercial stations in service. Martin County Utilities
15 – 1,000 stations in service 5,000 at buildout, Fort Pierce Utility Authority – 100 stations in
16 service 1,500 at buildout, Seminole Tribe of Florida -600 stations in service add 50 -100
17 annually, Port St Lucie – 40,000 stations in service (EONE is retrofitting another
18 manufacturer’s stations and all new construction is EONE, 4,000 installed to date), Indian
19 Creek Village, Miami 42 stations.

20 **A. What is your experience with the maintenance of this type of system?**

21 A. Once installed FJ Nugent inspects and starts up every station to insure proper installation,
22 electrical power and operation of the pump. The average Mean Time Between Service Calls
23 is 8-10 years. The average time between pump overhaul/replacement is 5-20 years. As for
24 regular servicing, the utility will pull the pump and install a spare. FJ Nugent picks up the
25 pump, repairs it and returns it to the utility. The EONE pumps and panels have a 5 year

1 Factory Warranty.

2 **Q. What happens if the pump station becomes covered with water?**

3 A. The cover is flood proof and should the station go underwater, the check vent on top closes
4 and won't allow water intrusion.

5 **Q. Are you sponsoring any exhibits?**

6 A. Yes, Exhibit RB-1 is the schematic I reference. Exhibit RB-2 are photographs from a Martin
7 County newspaper of the installation of the low pressure system which accurately show the
8 grinder pump station. Exhibit RB-3 are two photos of the top of the pump station after
9 installation.

10 **Q. Does that conclude your direct testimony?**

11 A. Yes, it does.

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

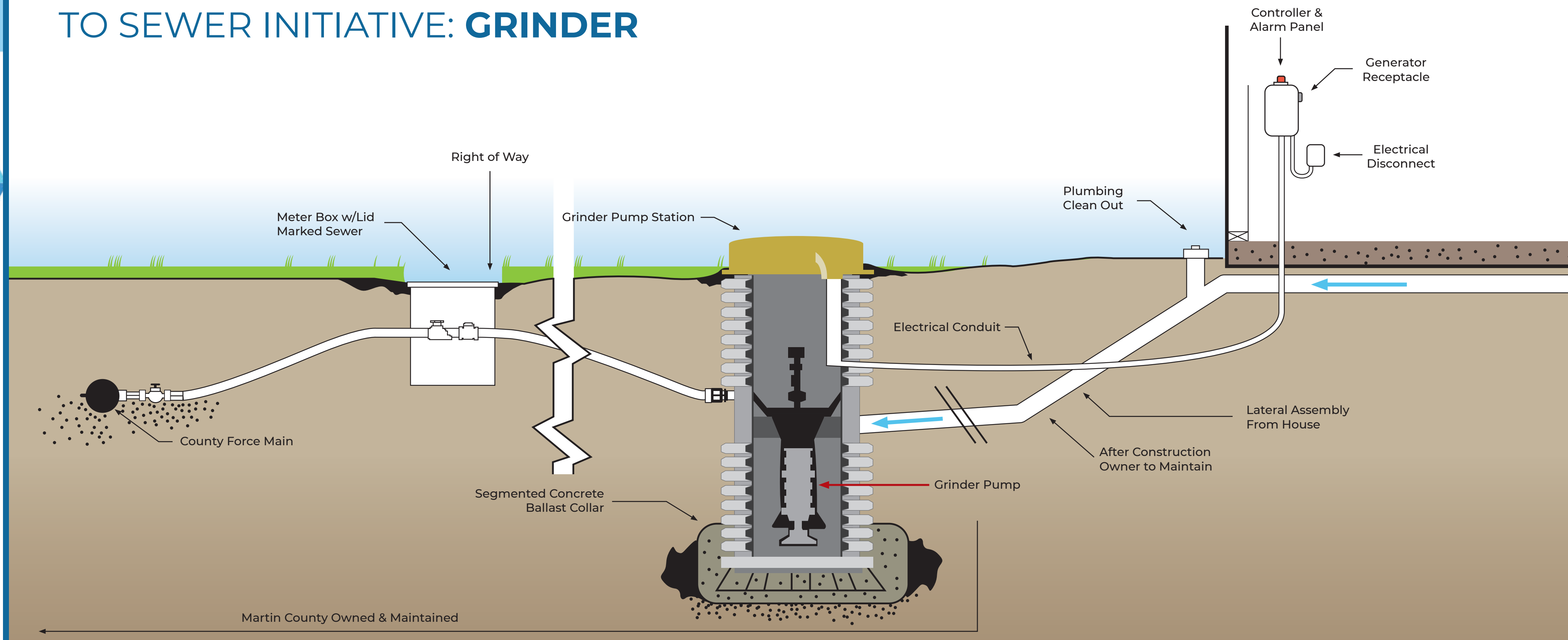
21

22

23

24

CONNECT TO PROTECT SEPTIC TO SEWER INITIATIVE: **GRINDER**



MARTIN COUNTY
CONNECT TO
PROTECT

MARTIN COUNTY UTILITIES:

- ▶ Owns the grinder pump and sewer lines between the grinder pump and the street.
- ▶ Is responsible for repairing and maintaining the grinder system tank, electrical box, and wastewater line leaving the grinder system.
- ▶ Responds to all alarms and customers concerns.

THE HOMEOWNER:

- ▶ Owns and maintains the plumbing and sewer lines from the home to the grinder system.
- ▶ Provides electricity for the grinder pump system.
- ▶ Reports alarms or malfunctions to Martin County Utilities.
- ▶ Minimizes water use during an emergency.
- ▶ Follows grinder station care instructions.



▶ MARTIN.FL.US/Connect2Protect

This document may be reproduced upon request in an alternative format by contacting the County ADA Coordinator (772) 320-3131, the County Administration Office (772) 288-5400, Florida Relay 711, or by completing our accessibility feedback form at www.martin.fl.us/accessibility-feedback

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM



Holwinster Alex, of Baker Underground Contractors, works on creating the outgoing piping (top) and incoming piping for the 6-foot ground tank placed in a hole in front of a house during the installation of a E1 grinder system residential station replacing an older septic system as part of Martin County's septic-to-sewer program at a home on Southwest St. Lucie Street on Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Stuart.

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM



The crew of Baker Underground Contractors works to install a new E1 grinder system residential station replacing an older septic system as part of Martin County's septic-to-sewer program at a home on Southwest St. Lucie Street on Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Stuart.

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM



The crew of Baker Underground Contractors works to install a new E1 grinder system residential station replacing an older septic system as part of Martin County's septic-to-sewer program at a home on Southwest St. Lucie Street on Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Stuart.

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM



The crew of Baker Underground Contractors works to install a new E1 grinder system residential station replacing an older septic system as part of Martin County's septic-to-sewer program at a home on Southwest St. Lucie Street on Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Stuart.

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM



The crew of Baker Underground Contractors works to install a new E1 grinder system residential station replacing an older septic system as part of Martin County's septic-to-sewer program at a home on Southwest St. Lucie Street on Friday, Oct. 20, 2023, in Stuart.

ERIC HASERT/TCPALM





CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing prefiled testimony has been furnished by E-mail to the following parties this 23rd day of August, 2024:

Palm Island Estates Association, Inc.
Brad Kelsky, Esquire
1250 S. Pine Island Road, Suite 250
Plantation, FL 33324
bradkelsky@kelskylaw.com

Linda Cotherman
P. O. Box 881
Placida, FL 33946
lcotherman@yahoo.com

Caroline Dike, Esquire
Major Thompson, Esquire
Office of General Counsel
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850
major.thompson@psc.state.fl.us
CDike@psc.state.fl.us

Little Gasparilla Island Preservation Alliance, Inc.
Holtzman Vogel PLLC
Robert Volpe, Esquire
119 S. Monroe St., Ste. 500
Tallahassee, FL 32301
rvolpe@holtzmanvogel.com
Kkentnor@holtzmanvogel.com

/s/ Martin S. Friedman
Martin S. Friedman