

**Tristan Davis**

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**From:** Tristan Davis on behalf of Records Clerk  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 20, 2026 8:25 AM  
**To:** 'Jami Smith'  
**Cc:** Consumer Contact  
**Subject:** RE: "docket #20250088 - WU, Sun Communities Financial LLC d/b/a Water Oak Utility"

Good Morning,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20250088, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance.

Thank you!

Tristan Davis  
Commission Deputy Clerk I  
Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Phone: (850) 413-6121

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** Jami Smith <tarnishedhalo34@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 19, 2026 8:08 PM  
**To:** Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>  
**Subject:** "docket #20250088 - WU, Sun Communities Financial LLC d/b/a Water Oak Utility"

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Carl Smith  
434 Beaman Dr.  
Lady Lake, FL 32159  
mailto:tarnishedhalo34@aol.com  
409-795-7758

January 14, 2026

Office of the Commission Clerk  
Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Re: Docket No. 20250088-WU – Application for Staff-Assisted Rate Case by Sun Communities Finance LLC d/b/a Water Oak Utility in Lake County Dear Commission Clerk, I am writing as a concerned customer of Water Oak Utility to formally oppose the proposed rate increase outlined in the staff-assisted rate case under Docket No. 20250088-WU. As a resident impacted by this utility's services, I urge the Florida Public Service Commission to deny this application in its entirety. The proposed hikes, which would significantly raise base facility charges, meter fees, and per-gallon rates for both

residential and general service customers, are unjustified, burdensome, and fail to address the utility's underlying operational failures. Approving this increase would unfairly penalize paying customers while rewarding the utility's mismanagement.

First and foremost, the utility is plagued by systemic issues that directly undermine the fairness of any rate adjustment. Over 250 water meters in the system are currently broken or malfunctioning, resulting in inaccurate readings and billing for at least 250 customers. These non-paying or underpaying users—due to the utility's failure to maintain and repair essential infrastructure—are effectively subsidized by the rest of us who pay our bills in full and on time. It is fundamentally unfair to force responsible customers to shoulder the financial burden of the utility's neglect through higher rates. Instead of passing these costs onto consumers, the Commission should mandate that Sun Communities Finance LLC invest in immediate repairs and upgrades to ensure all meters are functional and all customers are billed accurately. Raising rates without fixing these core problems is not a solution; it's an evasion of responsibility that violates principles of equitable utility regulation under Florida Statutes, including Sections 367.081 and 367.0702. Section 367.081 states: "Rates shall be just, reasonable, compensatory, and not discriminatory." Section 367.0702 states: "each customer bill shall reflect the actual water or wastewater service provided." Yet the utility is doing the opposite—charging us for unmeasured usage and ghosts in the system.

Moreover, the preliminary rates proposed by Commission staff—such as increasing the 5/8" x 3/4" residential base facility charge from \$8.61 to \$19.11, and escalating per-1,000-gallon charges for usage over 6,000 gallons from \$1.43 to \$16.28—represent exorbitant jumps that far exceed inflation or justifiable cost recovery. For a typical residential customer using 3,000 gallons per month, the bill would skyrocket from \$28.05 to \$37.01, a nearly 32% increase. For higher usage at 8,000 gallons, it jumps from \$35.14 to \$111.42, over a 217% hike. These figures do not account for the utility's history of poor performance, including the cancellation of prior certificates in March 2020, which suggests ongoing instability. The utility's application fails to demonstrate that these increases are necessary for prudent investments or operational improvements; rather, they appear designed to cover inefficiencies and losses that should be borne by the company, not its captive customers. Our water comes from the utility's own four deep wells, not the town, so there's no excuse for passing on deficits from mismanagement.

Additionally, I request that any approval be conditioned on an independent audit to verify that water usage for common areas—such as the Water Oak Golf Course, entrances, sports complex, and other shared facilities—is not being included in residential billing. Homeowners should only pay for their own metered usage; these common areas should be covered by Water Oak Utility itself, not subsidized by residents. The audit must include full breakdowns of usage per home, per common area, and documentation showing no cross-billing, to ensure transparency and compliance with the law. The Commission has a duty to protect consumers from such predatory practices. Approving this rate case would set a dangerous precedent, allowing utilities to neglect maintenance, accumulate deficits from non-functional equipment, and then demand bailouts from ratepayers. I implore the Commission to reject the proposal and instead require an independent audit of Water Oak Utility's infrastructure, including a full inventory and repair plan for the broken meters, before considering any future rate adjustments. Customers deserve reliable service at fair prices, not escalating bills to compensate for corporate shortcomings.

I request that this letter be included in the official docket file and considered during the Commission's review, including at the customer meeting scheduled for January 21, 2026, and the subsequent conference on April 7, 2026. For any questions, please contact me at the information provided above.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl Smith