

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed water changes and the potential long-term impact on residents and infrastructure in our community. I respectfully ask that these concerns be fully considered before any approval is granted.

Respectfully

Barry J. Thompson

Sunlake Estates  
1550 Warmwood Dr.  
Grand Is. FL.

30 year resident

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COMMISSION  
CLERK

Mr. Barry Thompson  
1550 Warmwood Dr.  
Grand Island, FL 32735-9753

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Office of the Commission Clerk  
2540 Shumard Blvd.  
Tallahassee FL.  
32399-0850

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Dear Commissioner,

We are four-year residents of Sunlake Estates and are writing to formally express our strong opposition to the proposed water rate increase requested by Sunlake Estates Utilities, LLC (SEUL) - (Docket No. 20250108-WS) in Lake County. This drastic increase (78% to 190%) is unwarranted and will place a significant financial burden on most households in the community.

Our concerns include, but are not limited to:

- **Affordability:**
  - The proposed rate increase is excessive compared to inflation and income growth. A [78% to 190%] increase is unjustifiable.
  - SLEU states there are 2.48 people per household in Sunlake Estates. We would like to see the supporting documentation on this as all houses (we are aware of) have a maximum of 2 people and many with only 1 person
  - In addition to indoor daily water use for necessary functions, SUN, Inc. (Sunlake Estates Utilities, LLC's parent company) now mandates twice weekly watering of lawns and annual pressure washing. This was added to their revised Prospectus which went into effect in January Of 2026.
  
- **Quality of Service: The current service provided does not justify higher rate:**
  - Numerous water main breaks, often lasting several hours at a time
    - Water main breaks are a frequent occurrence in Sunlake Estates. SLEU states they only received one complaint. Residents of this community would not know to complain to this utility company. All complaints and concerns are submitted to the SUN Community Management and, in some cases, directly to SUN, Inc. It is apparent these complaints/concerns are not passed along to SLEU.
    - Sunlake Estates Utilities, LLC provides no relief on the sewer side for watering the lawn or other outdoor water usage.
    - **Fact: There were 10 water main breaks in 2023; 29 breaks in 2024 and 15 breaks in 2025**
    - The monthly invoice payments are made to SUN, Inc. Contact information for SLEU is not noted anywhere on the bill.
  - Poor communication when water-related issues occur
  
- **Impact on Seniors/Fixed Income:**
  - Many residents in this 55+ community are on a fixed income, and this increase will force them to choose between water service and other essentials.
    - The 5+% rent increase this year and projected 7% rent increase next year, increased water rate and overall significant increases in all aspect of daily living would make it impossible for most seniors to sustain a healthy, comfortable lifestyle they worked their entire lives to enjoy. Many are already struggling to pay their increasing pass-through taxes. This increase has the potential to cause some to have to sell their home or walk away from the house to simply survive.

**Alternative Approach: Before considering this extreme increase on vulnerable senior citizens, we ask that you recommend an “educational” approach to help relieve SLEU’s financial concerns.**

- **Most responsible utility companies make attempts to “educate” their customers on responsible utility usage and offer advice on how to decrease the amount being used**
  - **SLEU has NEVER made an effort to work with the residents to reduce water consumption.**
  - **The monthly invoice has never contained helpful information on water usage**
  - **Proactive conservation education demonstrates a utility’s commitment to its customers, fosters trust, and reflects a good-faith effort.**
  - **By educating customers on managing water usage, utilities can reduce the load on the grid, especially during peak times**
  - **Providing tips on how to save water and thus money, empowers customers to better manage their utility bills and improves customer relations**

We have reviewed the documents submitted by SLEU as well as the audit conducted by the Commission and have many concerns with SLEU’s questionable accounting and reporting practices. We understand an increase is inevitable; however, a 78% increase is grossly excessive. We request that the Commission denies this rate increase and forces Sunlake Estates Utilities, LLC to review their entire operational efficiency before placing a crippling burden on ratepayers.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this serious matter. We look forward to the meeting on May 15<sup>th</sup> to hear the response to our concerns.