

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION  
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. W-1314, SUB 4

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of

Application by Pluris Webb Creek, LLC,	)	
5950 Berkshire Lane, Suite 800, Dallas,	)	ORDER APPROVING TRANSITIONAL
Texas, 75225 for Authority to Increase	)	BILLING ARRANGEMENTS IN 2021
Rates for Wastewater Utility Service in	)	AND REQUIRING CUSTOMER NOTICE
All Service Areas in Onslow County,	)	
North Carolina	)	

BY THE COMMISSION: On August 8, 2016, in Docket No. W-864, Sub 11, the Commission issued an Order Appointing Emergency Operator, Approving Increased Rates, and Requiring Customer Notice. In that Order, Pluris Webb Creek, LLC (Pluris Webb Creek or the Company), was appointed emergency operator of Webb Creek Water and Sewage, Inc.'s (Webb Creek's) wastewater utility system in Onslow County, North Carolina. The Schedule of Provisional Rates for Webb Creek Water and Sewage, Inc. (Pluris Webb Creek, LLC, Emergency Operator), attached as Appendix A to the August 8, 2016 Order, continued the billing frequency previously used by Webb Creek and stated that the billing frequency "[s]hall be monthly for service in arrears."

On March 26, 2019, in Docket Nos. W-864, Sub 11, W-864, Sub 14, and W-1314, Sub 1, the Commission issued an Order Revoking Webb Creek Water and Sewage, Inc.'s Franchise, Granting Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Pluris Webb Creek, LLC, Continuing Interim Rates, Discharging Emergency Operator, and Requiring Customer Notice. The Schedule of Provisional Interim Rates for Pluris Webb Creek, LLC, attached as Appendix B to the March 26, 2019 Order, stated that the billing frequency "[s]hall be monthly for service in arrears."

On November 14, 2019, in Docket Nos. W-822, Sub 3, W-1314, Sub 0, and W-1314, Sub 2, the Commission issued an Order Canceling Temporary Operating Authority, Approving Transfer, Granting Franchise, Approving Interim Rates, Requiring Undertaking, and Requiring Customer Notice. The Schedule of Interim Provisional Rates for Pluris Webb Creek, LLC, attached as Appendix B to the November 14, 2019 Order, stated that the billing frequency "[s]hall be monthly for service in arrears".

On April 27, 2020, in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4, Pluris Webb Creek filed an Application for a general increase in wastewater utility service rates in all its service area in Onslow County, North Carolina.

On December 17, 2020, in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4, the Commission issued an Order Approving Agreement and Stipulation, Granting Rate Increase, and Requiring Customer Notice (December 17, 2020 Order). The Schedule of Rates for Pluris Webb Creek, LLC, attached as Appendix A to the December 17, 2020 Order, stated that the billing frequency for Flat Rate Residential Customers “[s]hall be monthly for service in advance”.<sup>1</sup>

On January 8, 2021, in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4, Pluris Webb Creek filed with the Commission a Request for Approval of Transitional Billing Arrangements in 2021. In its request, the Company provided a suggested billing method to reduce the impact to the Company’s flat rate residential customers in transitioning from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance to comply with the December 17, 2020 Order.

Pluris Webb Creek billed all customers for service provided in December 2020, in arrears, based on its prior approved rates, adjusted to reflect the rate increase approved in the December 17, 2020 Order. Pluris Webb Creek plans to bill customers for service provided in January 2021, in arrears, at the newly approved rate. Pluris Webb Creek proposes to transition billing flat rate residential customers monthly in advance beginning in February 2021. To lessen the residential customer impact of this transition, the Company will not bill its residential flat rate customers at the same time both for service in arrears during the month of January 2021, and for service in advance for the month of February. Rather, as for the in-advance billing for February, Pluris Webb Creek proposes to defer the monthly bill amount of \$73.38 over a period of eleven months to be accomplished by billing 1/11th of the \$73.38 monthly billing charge in the remaining eleven months of 2021 (February through December 2021), which equates to \$6.67 per month.

Under Pluris Webb Creek’s requested approach, on February 1, 2021, the Company will send two separate wastewater utility bills to its residential customers. One bill will be for monthly wastewater utility service billed in arrears from January 1, 2021 through January 31, 2021, in the amount of \$73.38. The second bill will be for \$6.67, which is 1/11th of the February 1, 2021 through February 28, 2021 monthly billing charge of \$73.38 billed in advance. Beginning on March 1, 2021, amount of \$80.05, consisting of \$73.38 for the month of March and \$6.67 for the fractional amount due for the month of February. This billing method will continue for the remainder of 2021. Beginning with the January 1, 2022 monthly billing, the Company will have completed the transition of residential flat rate customers from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance and residential wastewater utility service will be billed in advance at the Commission approved residential flat rate of \$73.38 on a going forward basis as set forth in the December 17, 2020 Order.

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<sup>1</sup> Pluris Webb Creek’s affiliates, Pluris, LLC, (W-1282) and Pluris Hampstead, LLC, (W-1305) both bill their flat rate residential customers in advance, as provided for in their respective Commission-approved Tariffs.

The Public Staff presented this matter at the Commission's Staff Conference on January 25, 2021. The Public Staff stated that it had completed its review of the request and it agrees with the transitional billing arrangements proposed by Pluris Webb Creek.

On the basis of the evidence provided, the Commission finds that Pluris Webb Creek's proposed transitional billing arrangements described herein and agreed to by the Public Staff, are appropriate and should be approved.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED as follows:

1. That beginning with the February 2021 monthly bill, Pluris Webb Creek shall transition its monthly billing for wastewater utility service for flat rate residential customers from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance;

2. That in order to mitigate the impact on its customers of transitioning from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance, the Company shall bill the February 2021 monthly residential wastewater flat rate of \$73.38 to customers in advance over the remaining eleven months of 2021, which equates to a monthly bill of \$6.67 for February 2021, and a monthly bill of \$73.38 plus \$6.67, or \$80.05, for the months of March 2021 through December 2021;

3. That beginning with the January 2022 monthly billing, Pluris Webb Creek shall have completed the transition of residential flat rate customers from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance and residential wastewater utility service shall be billed in advance at the Commission approved residential flat rate of \$73.38 on a going forward basis as set forth in the December 17, 2020 Order in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4;

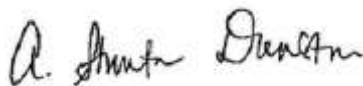
4. That the Notice to Customers, attached hereto as Appendix A, shall be mailed with sufficient postage or hand delivered to all affected customers in conjunction with the next regularly scheduled billing process; and

5. That Pluris Webb Creek shall file the attached Certificate of Service, properly signed and notarized, not later than 15 days after the issuance of this Order.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 25th day of January, 2021.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION



A. Shonta Dunston, Deputy Clerk

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION  
RALEIGH**

**NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS  
DOCKET NO. W-1314, SUB 4  
BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION**

Notice is hereby given that the North Carolina Utilities Commission (Commission) issued an Order in this docket on January 25, 2021, approving the request of Pluris Webb Creek, LLC (Pluris Webb Creek), to implement temporary transitional billing arrangements for its billings for residential wastewater service, during the remainder of 2021.

On December 17, 2020, the Commission issued an Order in this docket authorizing Pluris Webb Creek to increase residential wastewater rates. That Order increased the residential wastewater service rate to \$73.38 per month. The Tariff issued with that Order states that the billing frequency for flat rate residential customers shall be monthly in advance. Pluris Webb Creek has been billing all customers for service in arrears, which was a continuation of the billing arrangements utilized by the previous wastewater utility service provider, Webb Creek Water and Sewerage, Inc.

Pluris Webb Creek proposed the transitional billing arrangements in an effort to mitigate the impact of transitioning to billing residential wastewater customers in advance, by avoiding having those customers receive, simultaneously, a bill for the prior month's service in arrears and a bill for the coming month's service in advance.

All residential wastewater customers were billed at the end of January 2021 for service provided in arrears for the month of January at the recently approved rate of \$73.38. To transition to billing in advance for the month of February, the temporary transitional billing arrangements approved by the Commission will allow Pluris Webb Creek to spread the advance billing for residential wastewater service for the month of February 2021, over the remaining eleven months of 2021.

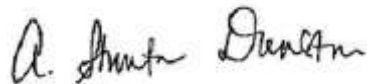
As a result, the February 2021 Pluris Webb Creek residential wastewater bill is a billing in advance in the amount of \$6.67, which is 1/11th of the \$73.38 monthly billing charge.

In the months of March through December 2021, Pluris Webb Creek will bill each residential flat rate wastewater customer in advance a total monthly bill of \$80.05, consisting of \$73.38 (the approved monthly residential flat rate for wastewater service) plus \$6.67 (1/11th of the deferred February 2021 monthly residential flat rate for wastewater service).

Beginning with the January 2022 monthly bill, Pluris Webb Creek will have completed the transition of residential flat rate customers from monthly billing in arrears to monthly billing in advance and will bill residential flat rate customers for wastewater service in advance in the amount of \$73.38 per month on a going forward basis as set forth in the Commission's December 17, 2020 Order.

This the 25th day of January, 2021.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Shonta Dunston".

A. Shonta Dunston, Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, mailed with sufficient postage or hand delivered to all affected customers the attached Notice to Customers issued by the North Carolina Utilities Commission in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4, and the Notice was mailed or hand delivered by the date specified in the Order.

This the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Utility Company

The above named Applicant, \_\_\_\_\_, personally appeared before me this day, and being first duly sworn, says that the required Notice to Customers was mailed or hand delivered to all affected customers, as required by the Commission Order dated \_\_\_\_\_, 2021, in Docket No. W-1314, Sub 4.

Witness my hand and notarial seal, this the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Official Signature of Notary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary's printed or typed name, Notary Public

(SEAL) My Commission Expires:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date