

INFORMATION SHEET

PRESIDING: Commissioner Brown-Bland, Presiding; and Chairman Finley,
Commissioners Dockham, Patterson, Gray, Clodfelter, and Mitchell

PLACE: Dobbs Building, Room 2115, Raleigh, NC

DATE: Wednesday, September 19, 2018

TIME: 3:43 p.m. - 6:22 p.m.

DOCKET NO.: W-218, Sub 497

COMPANY: Aqua North Carolina, Inc.

DESCRIPTION: Application for Authority to Adjust and Increase Rates for
Water and Sewer Utility Service in All Service Areas
in North Carolina

VOLUME: 12

APPEARANCES

Please see attached.

WITNESSES

Please see attached.

EXHIBITS

Please see attached.

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REPORTED BY: Linda S. Garrett

DATE FILED: July 10, 2018

TRANSCRIPT PAGES: 121

PREFILED PAGES: -96

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N.C. Utilities Commission

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1 A P P E A R A N C E S C o n t ' d . :
2 F O R T H E U S I N G A N D C O N S U M I N G P U B L I C :
3 T e r e s a L . T o w n s e n d , E s q .
4 S p e c i a l D e p u t y A t t o r n e y G e n e r a l
5 M a r g a r e t F o r c e , E s q .
6 A s s i s t a n t A t t o r n e y G e n e r a l
7 N o r t h C a r o l i n a D e p a r t m e n t o f J u s t i c e
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12 W i l l i a m E . G r a n t m y r e , E s q .
13 M e g a n J o s t , E s q .
14 P u b l i c S t a f f - N o r t h C a r o l i n a U t i l i t i e s C o m m i s s i o n
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NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
APPEARANCE SLIP

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APPEARING FOR: Agro

APPLICANT _____ COMPLAINANT _____ INTERVENOR _____
PROTESTANT _____ RESPONDENT _____ DEFENDANT _____

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NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
APPEARANCE SLIP

DATE 9/11/18
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APPEARING FOR: AQUA NORTH CAROLINA, INC.

APPLICANT COMPLAINANT _____ INTERVENOR _____
PROTESTANT _____ RESPONDENT _____ DEFENDANT _____

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NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
APPEARANCE SLIP

DATE 9-11-2018
DOCKET #: W218 Sub 497
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APPEARING FOR: _____

APPLICANT COMPLAINANT _____ INTERVENOR _____
PROTESTANT _____ RESPONDENT _____ DEFENDANT _____

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NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
APPEARANCE SLIP

DATE 9/11/18
DOCKET #: W-218, Sub 497
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APPEARING FOR: the Using and Consuming public

APPLICANT _____ COMPLAINANT _____ INTERVENOR R
PROTESTANT _____ RESPONDENT _____ DEFENDANT _____

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Please check for the confidential portion of the transcript, only if a confidentiality agreement has been signed.
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Signature: Margaret Force
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NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION
PUBLIC STAFF - APPEARANCE SLIP

DATE September 11, 2018 DOCKET #: W-218 Sub 497

PUBLIC STAFF MEMBER Elizabeth D. Culpepper, Megan Jost,
and William E. Grantmyre

ORDER FOR TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY TO BE **EMAILED** TO THE
PUBLIC STAFF - PLEASE INDICATE YOUR DIVISION AS WELL AS
YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS BELOW:

ACCOUNTING _____
WATER _____
COMMUNICATIONS _____
ELECTRIC _____
GAS _____
TRANSPORTATION _____
ECONOMICS _____
LEGAL elizabeth.culpepper@psncuc.nc.gov
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***PLEASE INDICATE BELOW WHO HAS SIGNED A CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT. IF YOU DO NOT SIGN, YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE THE CONFIDENTIAL PORTIONS!!!!

ELIZABETH D. CULPEPPER, MEGAN JOST, WILLIAM E.
GRANTMYRE

Elizabeth D. Culpepper Megan Jost William E. Grantmyre
Signature of Public Staff Member

- My name is Becky Daniel, and I am a resident of Coachman's Trail neighborhood in Raleigh, which is on the Bayleaf Water System.
- I have lived in this neighborhood for 12 years, and while we have had occasional issues with brown water in that time, we had a string of repeated and unacceptable reliability issues during the second half of 2017.
- In the course of navigating these reliability issues, we have experienced not only poor customer service, but also wasted water.
- During the period June 20, 2017 – November 6, 2017, my family was impacted by brown water 8 times.
 - 7 times at our home
 - 1 time at Brassfield Elementary, our son's school
- As a result of the brown water:
 - My son had to drink bottled water at school
 - I ruined a load of white laundry
 - We gave our son a bath in brown water
 - We had to alter cooking plans and bathing plans
 - We drew dirty water into our drinking water lines, washing machine lines, sinks and bathtubs before we knew we had an issue
 - We flushed from outdoor spigots for approximately 200 minutes during this period with no bill credits.
- During this same period, we experienced a leak at our meter, which was not repaired for more than 3 weeks.
 - We followed up two times and Aqua was not able to provide a timetable for repair either time
 - Aqua provided an estimate of the rate of the leak in response to an August 14, 2017 Data Request from the Public Staff. Using this estimate, I calculate that more than 15,800 gallons of water were wasted.
- Over the course of these issues, we had numerous interactions with the website and customer service line, and noticed:
 - The customer service line seems designed to discourage call completion.
 - Automated message indicates "known issues in the area" before any address information is provided and before you speak to a rep
 - In the response to the August 14th data request, Aqua admitted that they had no record of at least one of our calls. This indicates there may be others like this, from our house and others, and that the Commission might not be aware of the extent of operational issues.
 - We erroneously received an emergency outage and boil water advisory meant for another neighborhood
 - The website rarely, if ever, includes outage information
 - During all of the brown water issues, the only one I saw on the website was the November 3, 2017 notice of flushing.
 - Information provided is sometimes confusing:
 - When we received the erroneous outage warning I mentioned before, it did not name the impacted neighborhoods. I had to call and wait on hold for ~15 minutes to find out that it had been an error.

- Flushing notification gave specific hours, but then brown water started before the hours given
 - Flushing period is usually an entire week, as are boil water advisories
 - One flushing notification we received came a full day into the flushing period
- I understand the need of utilities to both invest in their systems and also make a profit for their shareholders.
 - However, I believe that safe and reliable service to customers should be the top priority. And in the occasions where issues arise, customer service needs to be accessible and transparent.
 - I would like to request that, in conjunction with this rate request, the Commission:
 - Require Aqua to investigate and report back to the Commission on the true root cause of the issues on the Bayleaf system, and receive Commission approval on the steps will be taken to preclude these repeated issues again in the future. I believe both the investigation and system remediation should be executed within our current rate structure.
 - Require Aqua to file bi-monthly water quality reports on the Bayleaf system.
 - Require more transparent and thorough reporting to the Commission about service interruptions, understanding that Aqua's current call center metrics may be based on a system that discourages call completion and does not accurately track customer calls.
 - Require Aqua to be able to provide improved customer service. Specifically, I believe Aqua should be able to:
 - Provide timely outage information to customers both on the phone and on their website. This should include unexpected instances of "brown water."
 - Provide information about outstanding repairs, including a reasonable timetable for completion.
 - Provide more narrow windows of time for flushing, and then adhere to the time windows communicated.
 - Provide billing credits to customers that must flush the customers' lines to eliminate brown or black water.
 - Thank you so much for your time and consideration of my testimony.

Aqua Rate Case (W-218 Sub 497)

Becky Daniel

Written Testimony

- Below please find additional details about each of the eleven issues my family experienced with Aqua during the four-and-a-half-month span from June 20, 2017 – November 6, 2017. The detail corresponds to my Excel log of issues.
- As a result of these issues, my key concerns are:
 - Reliability – the lack of reliability from Aqua has been unacceptable. How will they be held accountable for providing better reliability in the future?
 - Customer Service – In dealing with Aqua during these issues, it has become clear that they do not provide transparent customer service, and customer complaints may not be getting reported accurately to the Commission. I would like to see improvements to their customer service model going forward.
 - Wasted Water – their reliability issues caused us to flush from an outdoor spigot for approximately 3 – 4 hours during the period in question. We had to pay for all of that water, because in one of our conversations with customer service, Aqua indicated that a billing credit could only be issued if Aqua came out and read the meter before and after the flush. This is obviously so onerous that it would never be effectuated. In addition, approximately 15,800 gallons of water was wasted due to a leak at our meter in July.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ISSUES (Item numbers correspond to Excel log of issues)

▪ Item #1 – Brown Water

June 20, 2017 at 7:30 pm

- Extremely dark brown water, approximately the color of iced tea, at our house.
- No proactive notice was given about an outage or maintenance being performed. Due to the lack of notice, we continued using water in house and ruined a load of laundry.
- We also drew the dirty water into various water lines in the house including our drinking water line in the fridge, the line into the kitchen sink in which dishes are washed, the line into the tub in which we bathe our son, and the line into our son's sink in which he washes his hands and brushes his teeth.
- Because this was the first issue, we did not contact Aqua ourselves, but merely flushed for 15 – 20 minutes from an outdoor spigot.
- When asked about this issue in a Public Staff data request dated August 14th, Aqua indicated:
 - It was discovered that the discolored water was coming from Coachman's Trail Well #4.
 - In an effort to limit the impact to the distribution system, Aqua technicians shut down Coachman's Trail Well #4. A blow-off and a fire hydrant located in the area were opened in an effort to help flush the water lines and clear up the water. The blow-off and hydrant continued to flush the water lines until June 26, 2017, at which point the distribution system had cleared.
- Note that, per Aqua's response, the flushing occurred for a total of six days.
- Reliability – Not only did we pull dirty water into drinking lines in our home, we also ruined several articles of white clothing in the laundry at the time.

- **Item #2 – Erroneous Automated Outage Call**

July 9, 2017 at approximately 8:00 am

- We received an automated, pre-recorded call from Aqua about an immediate outage. The call indicated that after the outage, we should boil our water due to safety concerns. No information was given in the call about the timing, and no timely information about the outage was posted on the Aqua website.
- Because of the lack of information, I called Aqua while my husband hurried to fill as many vessels as possible with water so that our family and dog had water to perform basic tasks.
- After sitting on hold for 15-20 minutes, the customer service representative told me that the outage was only for the Hunters Landing neighborhood specifically. She said that their system “sends the call out to all Raleigh customers, and it is up to (us) to call Aqua to find out if (our) neighborhood is impacted.”
- When asked about this issue in the August 14th data request, Aqua indicated:
 - There was a system emergency due to a water main break in the Hunter’s Landing subdivision. Aqua had to temporarily shut off the water supply to make an emergency repair. Aqua’s emergency telephone system, Swift Reach, was utilized to issue an SPA (Special Pressure Advisory) and contact all customers that reside in the Bayleaf Master System. It was realized that the SPA should not have gone out to the entire Bayleaf master system and within approximately three hours of the first notice, an SPL (System Pressure Lift) notice was issued to these customers.
- Customer Service - This created confusion and a needless emergency in our house and throughout our neighborhood. This confusion could have been avoided by calling only those customers impacted and/or posting timely, specific information on the Aqua website. In this day and age, the lack of transparency is unacceptable.
- Reliability – While we were not directly impacted by a reliability issue, it was the second one on the Bayleaf system.

- **Item #3 – Leak at our Meter – Not Repaired for 22 Days**

July 9, 2017 at 7:30 pm

- A neighbor informed us of flooding in our yard around the water meter. Because it was after hours and not impacting our water supply, we called Aqua the next morning, on July 10, and a service technician came out that day. He indicated that a ball-and-socket joint where the line connects to the meter had broken, and that he did not have the correct part on hand to fix it. He indicated that he would create a ticket and someone would be back “in a few days” to fix the issue, and that we would not be billed for the leaking water because it was leaking before the meter.
- We waited a full week with no follow-up from Aqua, and then began calling Aqua to understand when the issue would be resolved. According to AT&T call records for my husband’s cell phone, he placed follow-up calls on July 17th and July 31st.
- Each time, he was told that the work was being performed by a sub-contractor, and that Aqua “did not have any way to know if the ticket was in the sub-contractor’s system, or when we might be on the schedule.”
- On August 1, a team finally came out to the house and fixed the issue.
- By this time we had standing water in our yard. In the August 14th data request, Aqua estimated that the rate of the leak was ½ gallon / minute. Using this estimate, I calculate that the leak wasted

approximately 15,800 gallons of water. ($\frac{1}{2}$ gallon / minute * 1,440 minutes / day * 22 days = 15,840 gallons)

- While we were indeed not billed for the leak, I find the waste of water deplorable.
- When asked about this issue in the August 14th data request, Aqua indicated:
 - An Aqua technician visited the customer's residence to investigate the leak on July 10, 2017. The technician contacted the contractor on July 10, 2017 requesting they make the necessary repairs. Due to the high volume workload, the leak repair was unfortunately not completed until August 1, 2017.
 - At the time of the visit, the technician did not have the parts needed for this repair and it was deemed inefficient for the technician to drive back to Aqua's storeroom to obtain the parts based on the low severity of the leak. This repair was then given to a contractor for scheduling and the technician continued completing his assigned work orders. The repair was completed on August 1, 2017.
- Reliability – I understand that equipment ages and eventually requires repair. However, taking more than three weeks to repair an issue is not providing timely service.
- Customer Service - In this day and age, it is unacceptable that Aqua could not give information about the timing of the repair.

- Item #4 – Brown Water

August 7, 2017 at 10:00 pm

- Dark brown water, approximately the color of iced tea, at our house
- Again, no proactive notice was given about an outage or maintenance being performed, and no information was posted on the Aqua website.
- Luckily we noticed it before using water throughout the house, so we flushed from an outdoor spigot for approximately 20 minutes, wasting yet more water.
- There was no improvement after the flush, so my husband called Aqua. Without providing any information about our location, he was told that "there were disruptions in the area." When he asked if someone was being sent out, the rep then asked him for our location. All the rep could say was that complaints were being directed to a technician.
- We did not notice improvement before going to bed, so we flushed again on the morning of August 8, wasting even more water. This appeared to resolve the issue.
- When asked about this issue in the August 14th data request, Aqua indicated:
 - Aqua's records do not indicate any discolored water calls were received from Ms. Daniels on August 7, 2017.
- Reliability – Another dirty water issue, and this one created uncertainty as to whether we'd be able to shower for work the next morning.
- Customer Service – I have AT&T call records for my husband's cell phone showing the call was placed at 10:10 pm on August 7th. Something is not recording accurately on Aqua's side.
- Customer Service – How did the rep know that there were disruptions in the area without having our address?

- Item #5 – Brown Water

September 1, 2017 at approximately 7:30 am

- Brown water at our house when we woke up, so I cannot pinpoint the time the issue began.

- I called Aqua around 7:30 am, and spoke to a rep - she took my information and indicated that she would send it along to a technician.
- In the meantime, we flushed from an outdoor spigot for 20 minutes (more wasted water) and that seemed to clear up the issue.
- A very helpful technician named Brandon came to our house at 10:45 am and indicated the following:
 - The discoloration might have been caused by an area meter-replacement project. Brandon noted that we indeed had a new meter at our house. He was not sure why we were not notified via door hanger, but speculated it might have been because of the rain.
 - I asked him about the systemic issues we've been having recently, and he acknowledged them in our area. He indicated that we have been having a lot of issues with "flow reversal," which dislodges the calcium, manganese and iron build-up on the pipes and causes the discolored water. He further indicated that Aqua used to perform system flushes on an annual basis, which reduced the build-up in the pipes. However, he said that Aqua was trying a biennial schedule, and trying to treat the water with extra chemicals (I believe he said phosphate) instead.
 - Brandon said that they were going to be performing a system flush, beginning on September 5th, which should help with the discoloration issues in the area. He indicated the flush would last for 3-4 days and we should expect intermittent discoloration throughout.
 - He ran a water test, and said everything looked good after we flushed ourselves from the outdoor spigot this morning.
- Reliability - I am concerned about the change in flushing schedule and what it has meant for our water quality. It is hard not to wonder if the change to a biennial schedule was meant to be a cost-cutting (profit-maximizing) move in between rate cases. In other words, their cost of service in their last rate case included costs for annual flushing, and after rates were set, they reduced the schedule to drive up profit.

- **Item #6 – Brown Water – System Flush**

September 12, 2017 at 7:30 am

- Brown water at our house
- We were notified on my husband's cell phone on September 8th at 6:32 pm that Aqua would be performing their system flush September 11 – 15 (a five-day period). They indicated that we might experience brown water during the hours of 8:30 – 4:30 due to the flush.
- We did indeed have brown water, but it occurred at ~7:30 am, before the hours they had indicated in their notification. This created water usage issues getting ready for school / work.
- Because we knew it was related to the system flush, we did not call Aqua. Instead, we flushed from an outdoor spigot for 15-20 minutes, and it cleared up after that.
- Customer Service – I appreciated the notification, but then Aqua did not adhere to the time of day schedule that was provided in the notification, which created issues for us and likely others.

- **Item #7 – Brown Water**

October 1, 2017 at 7:30 am

- Light brown water at our house
- We flushed from a spigot three times for a total of 47 minutes, and the water cleared up at 11:45 am after the third flush.
- We also called Aqua at 8:40 am, and they said they would report it to a technician.

- Reliability – Even though we had just had a system flush, we were having our 5th instance of brown water in a three-and-a-half month span.
- Customer Service – As occurred on other instances, the customer service number provided an automated message before speaking to a rep or providing my location that “there is a known service disruption in the area.” This discourages call completion.

- **Item #8 – Brown Water**

October 8, 2017 at 8:15 am

- Light brown water at our house
- We flushed from a spigot for 30 minutes, and the water cleared up.
- We also called Aqua at 8:20 am, and they said they would report it to a technician.
- Reliability – This represented our 6th instance of brown water in a three-and-a-half month span.
- Customer Service – Again, the customer service number provided an automated message before speaking to a rep or providing my location that “there is a known service disruption in the area.” This discourages call completion.

- **Item #9 – Brown Water at Brassfield Elementary School**

October 10, 2017

- Brown water at Brassfield Elementary School
- As a parent of a Brassfield student, I received a call from the school that they had had a brown water issue at school. They further indicated that they were already working with Aqua.
- Reliability – This represented our 7th instance of brown water in a ~ three-and-a-half month span. This one impacted an entire school of small children.

- **Item #10 – Notification of Another System Flush**

November 3, 2017 evening

- My husband received an automated, pre-recorded voicemail on his cell phone indicating another system flush from November 3 – 10 (an eight-day period) between the hours of 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.
- Customer Service – It was confusing to receive this message since we had supposedly just had a system flush September 11 – 15.
- Customer Service – It would have been helpful to receive this notification before the flush had already started.

- **Item #11 – Brown Water**

November 6, 2017 at 6:30 pm

- My husband was working from home all day, and at approximately 6:30, we noticed brown water at our house.
- Because we knew it was related to the system flush, we did not call Aqua. Instead, we flushed from an outdoor spigot twice for a total of 42 minutes, and it cleared up after that.
- Customer Service – Again, Aqua did not adhere to the time of day schedule that was provided in the notification, which created issues for us and likely others.

SUMMARY OF ISSUES

- Our family was impacted by brown water 8 times between June 20, 2017 – November 6, 2017.
- We had repeated issues with not getting timely information from the Aqua website and customer service line, and also instances of receiving confusing information.
- The customer service line seems designed to discourage call completion.
- Aqua admitted that they had no record of at least one of our calls. This indicates there may be others like this, from our house and others, and that the Commission might not be aware of the extent of operational issues.
- Approximately 15,800 gallons of water were wasted while we waited 22 days for Aqua to repair a leak.
- We had to flush from outdoor spigots for approximately 200 minutes during this same time period, with no bill credits, also wasting water.

REQUESTS IN THIS RATE CASE

- I would like to request that, in conjunction with this rate request, the Commission:
 - Require Aqua to investigate and report back to the Commission on the true root cause of the issues on the Bayleaf system, and receive Commission approval on the steps will be taken to preclude these repeated issues again in the future. I believe both the investigation and system remediation should be executed within our current rate structure.
 - Require Aqua to file bi-monthly water quality reports on the Bayleaf system.
 - Require more transparent and thorough reporting to the Commission about service interruptions, understanding that Aqua's current call center metrics may be based on a system that discourages call completion and does not accurately track customer calls.
 - Require Aqua to be able to provide improved customer service. Specifically, I believe Aqua should be able to:
 - Provide timely outage information to customers both on the phone and on their website. This should include unexpected instances of "brown water."
 - Provide information about outstanding repairs, including a reasonable timetable for completion.
 - Provide more narrow windows of time for flushing, and then adhere to the time windows communicated.
 - Provide billing credits to customers that must flush their lines to eliminate brown or black water.

Service Address	Issue	Action Taken	Date Aqua Was Called	Time Aqua Was Called	Number Used to Call Aqua	Notes
505 Brittany Bay West	Dark brown water	Flushed for 15-20 minutes from outdoor spigot	N/A	N/A	N/A	Stained Items in a load of laundry
505 Brittany Bay West	Erroneous Automated Call	Called Aqua	July 9, 2017	~9:00 am	919-844-4504	Automated call indicated safety concerns, boil water requirement. Customer Rep said call should have gone only to Hunters Landing.
505 Brittany Bay West	Leak at meter	Called Aqua	July 10, 2017	12:02 PM	919-608-0029	Technician came out on July 10. Leak not repaired until August 1. Multiple calls made to Aqua between July 10 - Aug 1. Using Aqua's estimates of rate of leak, approximately 15,800 gals were wasted.
505 Brittany Bay West	Dark brown water	Called Aqua Flushed for 15-20 minutes from outdoor spigot on 8/7 Flushed for 15-20 minutes from outdoor spigot again on morning of 8/8	August 7, 2017	10:10 PM	919-608-0029	
505 Brittany Bay West	Brown water	Called Aqua Flushed for 15-20 minutes from outdoor spigot	September 1, 2017	~7:30 am	919-844-4504	Technician came to house, indicated lack of system flushing likely the issue
505 Brittany Bay West	Brown water	Flushed for 15-20 minutes from outdoor spigot	N/A	N/A	N/A	Did not call because this was likely part of system flush. Flush was warned in a call on 9/8 from Aqua
505 Brittany Bay West	Light brown water	Called Aqua Flushed from outdoor spigot as follows: 8:40 - 8:52 still brown 8:56 - 9:06 still brown 11:20 - 11:45 clear afterward	October 1, 2017	8:40 AM	919-844-4504	Customer rep said they would report it to a technician
505 Brittany Bay West	Light brown water	Called Aqua Flushed for 30 minutes (8:15 - 8:45 am) from outdoor spigot	October 8, 2017	8:20 AM	919-844-4504	Customer rep said they would report it to a technician
Brassfield Elementary School	Brown water	None - as a parent of a student at Brassfield, I received a call from the school indicating they had already been working with Aqua	N/A	N/A	N/A	
505 Brittany Bay West	Notice of Flushing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Received a notice on my husband's cell phone of another system flush. Confusing because they had supposedly just flushed the system in September.
505 Brittany Bay West	Brown water	Flushed from outdoor spigot as follows: 6:43 - 7:00 still brown 9:00 - 9:25 clear	N/A	N/A	N/A	

Aqua No Rate Hike, Resolve Water Quality Issues

Heinz Family
Stonebridge

Introduction

Since moving into Stonebridge in October of 2014, we have experienced ongoing issues with Aqua's service.

- Cloudy water
- Sputtering water
- Delayed or inaccurate flushing notifications
- Sediment, brown water, and high iron content.
- Delayed or non-existence / ineffective response to complaints

These issues have led to:

- Unnecessary expenses
 - More frequent filter changes in refrigerator
 - Multiple plumbing / water tests
 - Replacement of water heater with tankless
 - Increased maintenance of tankless due to sediment
- Inconvenience
 - Showering away from home during severe water issues
 - Buying bottled water
- Concern about the safety of our water and our family's long term health.

November 2014

Our first complaint (6 weeks after moving into the neighborhood).

From: (email address redacted)
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2014 12:19 PM
To: custservreply
Subject: Aqua Internet Feedback: Water Quality

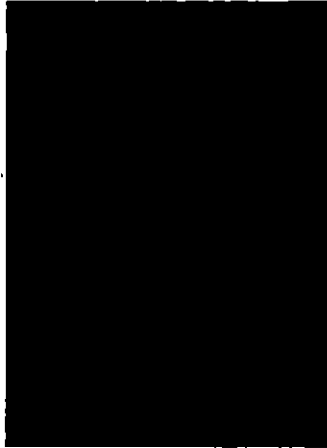
Message: Water in stonebridge community is cloudy, even after filtering. Several residents are reporting similar concerns. What's going on with our drinking water?

Summer 2016

The worst of these issues for our family occurred in the Summer of 2016. We had an ongoing (month's long) issue with discolored (brown to black water) that resulted in multiple plumber visits, water testing, store bought water, and showers at the gym. The following details our issues in summer 2016.

July 30th

- Started seeing discolored water.
- Called aqua.
- They suggested we flush our water heater and run our faucets for 10 minutes each, starting outside and working up the house.
- We flushed water heater and ran faucets.
- Issues continued.



August 9th

- Plumber checked all pipes, saw no issues.
- Suspected issue comes from source and recommended we install a whole house water filter.
- Quote: \$500



August 11th:

- Called another plumber.
- He flushed water heater again. Said water heater was clear of sediment.
- Checked both hot water and water in toilet tank to determine if it was present in both hot and cold water. Confirmed it is present in both.
- He took water and sediment samples from back of toilet for testing. Told us NOT TO DRINK THE WATER until after he had tested it due to how bad it looked.
- Testing came back high in iron content 7.5 ppm.
- Toilet tank is stained orange and has large amount of sediment.
- Recommended whole house water filter and treatment system: Quote: \$4200

WATER SAMPLE RESULTS

Iron: >7.5ppm (over 0.3 will cause staining)

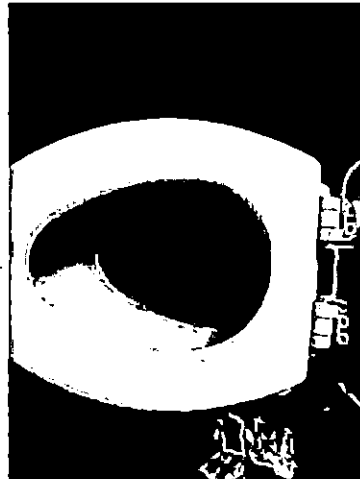
pH: 7.5

Hardness: 6.0

Recommendation: system needs softener & iron treatment.
\$4,200.00 for system to treat these issues.

August 19th:

- Called aqua again.
- They sent a technician who spoke with my husband without coming inside or doing any testing.
- He stated we needed a "level 2 technician".
- He did not know what could be done and reiterated what we'd been told in our first call.



August 23rd:

- Another aqua technician came out (Katie).
- She tested the water and said the levels were safe and that the sediment is oxidized manganese. No mention of iron.
- She advised us to talk her supervisor (Roger).
- I called him and left a message asking for next steps.
- I never received a return call.



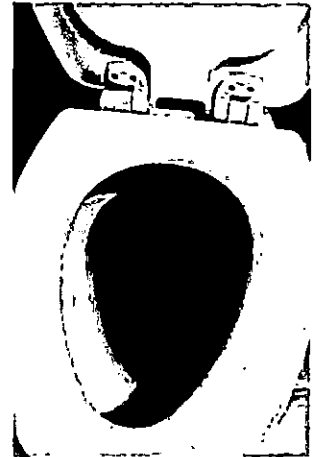
August 29

- Sediment still present.
- Still no response from Aqua
- Filed report with NC Utilities Commission



September 2

- Issues persisted.
- Still no response from Aqua



Between Sept 3 - Sept 15

- Aqua technician spent almost a day at and around our home, clearing pipes that led to our house.
- We were advised to let the water run from each faucet again throughout the weekend.
- This resolves our issues.

2016 and beyond

We continue to have intermittent brown water, lasting between hours to a few days.

Conclusion

While Aqua never at any time admitted wrong doing and always maintained our water was safe for drinking and bathing (despite contrary reports from independent water testing companies), not a single Aqua employee who saw our water would state that they would drink it or bathe their child in it. Until such time as water quality is restored permanently, the expense of ensuring safety falls on the consumers. With many neighbors installing filters, water treatment systems, and / or purchasing bottled water.

We ask the committee to deny Aqua's request for a rate increase until such time as water quality issues are mitigated. Further, we ask the committee to mandate that Aqua expedite their timeline for water quality resolutions from their proposed multi-year plan to immediately. Lastly, we request the committee impose upon Aqua fines or other legally feasible consequences for failure to provide a standard of water consistent with reasonable expectations - safe, clear, sediment free and without higher than .3 ppm quantities of iron..