

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. W-354, SUB 400

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Application by Carolina Water Service, Inc.)
of North Carolina for Authority to Adjust and)
Increase Rates and Charges for Water and) ORDER APPROVING
Sewer Utility Service in All Service Areas of) REFUND PLAN
North Carolina and for Approval of a Water)
and Sewer Investment Plan)

BY THE COMMISSION: On April 26, 2023, in the above-captioned docket, the Commission issued an Order Approving Partial Settlement Agreement and Stipulation, Deciding Contested Issues, Granting Partial Rate Increase, Approving Water and Sewer Investment Plan, and Requiring Customer Notice (Rate Case Order). Among other things, the Rate Case Order requires that the Public Staff and CWSNC jointly file, within five business days of the date of the order, Schedules of Rates, applicable Notices to Customers, and Schedules of Connection fees for CWSNC's Base Case, WSIP Rate Year 1, WSIP Rate Year 2, and WSIP Rate Year 3.

Further, Ordering Paragraph No. 11 of the Rate Case Order provides:

That CWSNC shall refund all partial, temporary rates and charges in excess of the approved rates and charges found to be appropriate by the Commission, if any, in any of its four rate divisions with interest at 10% compounded annually. For the period January 31, 2023, through March 31, 2023, the Base Case Schedule of Rates shall be applicable and for the period April 1, 2023, through the issuance date of this Order the Rate Year 1 Schedule of Rates shall be applicable for calculating the excess amounts, if any, charged through CWSNC's implementation of partial, temporary rates.

Additionally, Ordering Paragraph No. 12 of the Rate Case Order requires CWSNC to file a refund plan for any excess partial, temporary rates and charges collected from customers within 30 days of issuance of the Rate Case Order and required the Public Staff to file a response to the Company's refund plan no later than 60 days from the date of the Rate Case Order.

On May 3, 2023, CWSNC and the Public Staff jointly filed with the Commission the applicable Schedules of Rates and Connection Fees and Notices to Customers.

On May 12, 2023, the Commission issued an order approving CWSNC's Schedules of Rates, Schedules of Connection Fees, and Customer Notices (May 12 Approval Order). In Ordering Paragraphs Nos. 1 and 3, the Commission approved Base Case and WSIP Rate Year 1 Schedules of Rates and Schedules of Connection Fees upon which CWSNC is required to compare rates collected under partial, temporary rates to the final rates approved by the Commission for a determination of whether any refunds are due to customers.

On June 7, 2023, CWSNC filed its refund plan as required by Ordering Paragraph 12 of the Rate Case Order. In its filing, CWSNC states that all its temporary rates under bond were lower than those rates confirmed in the May 12 Approval Order with the exception of the rates imposed for the Bradfield Farms/Fairfield Harbour commercial sewer consumption charge. CWSNC recalculated these charges to determine that a total of \$139.20 was overcollected from 15 customers. Accordingly, CWSNC states that it plans to provide bill credits among these 15 customers, including interest at the rate of 10% per annum,

On July 6, 2023, the Public Staff notified the Commission that it does not object to CWSNC's refund plan.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED as follows:

1. That within 60 days of the date of this Order, CWSNC shall refund a total of \$139.20, plus interest at a rate of 10% per annum, via bill credit, among the 15 commercial sewer customers in the Bradfield Farms/Fairfield Harbour service area that were charged temporary rates under bond higher than the rates approved in the May 12 Approval Order; and
2. That CWSNC shall promptly notify the Commission once all refunds have been completed.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 12th day of July, 2023.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. Shonta Dunston". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A. Shonta Dunston, Chief Clerk