

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. W-218, SUB 526

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of		
Application by Aqua North Carolina, Inc.,)	ORDER APPROVING
202 MacKenan Court, Cary, North Carolina)	REVISED CUSTOMER
27511, for Authority to Adjust and Increase)	NOTICES AND ACCEPTING
Rates for Water and Sewer Utility Service in)	FINANCIAL UNDERTAKING
All Its Service Areas in North Carolina)	

BY THE COMMISSION: On December 31, 2019, Aqua North Carolina, Inc. (Aqua or Company), filed an application with the Commission seeking authority to adjust and increase its rates for providing water and sewer utility service in all of its service areas in North Carolina (Application). Within its Application, Aqua notified the Commission of its intent to implement its proposed rates on a partial, temporary basis subject to refund, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-135, effective for service rendered on and after six months from January 30, 2020, or July 30, 2020.

On June 11, 2020, Aqua filed a motion requesting, among other things, approval of a financial undertaking and approval of Notices to Customers. On June 23, 2020, the Commission issued an order denying use of a revenue deferral mechanism, approving Aqua's financial undertaking, and approving Aqua's Notices to Customers noting that choice to exercise the remedy provided by N.C.G.S. § 62-135 belongs to the Company and is not determined by the Commission. Upon review of Aqua's motion, the Commission found that Aqua had satisfied the statutory requirements necessary to place new rates into effect on a partial, temporary basis. subject to refund with interest at a rate of 10% per annum, effective July 30, 2020.

On July 1, 2020, Aqua filed a motion seeking Commission approval of revised Notices to Customers. In its motion Aqua seeks to implement partial, temporary rates under bond at a lower level than it previously requested and than was authorized in the Commission's June 23, 2020 Order. Also on July 1, 2020, Aqua filed its executed Undertaking to Refund.

While N.C.G.S. § 62-135 affords the Company a remedy to address any financial hardship it perceives during the pendency of a general rate case proceeding, the choice to exercise the remedy belongs to the Company and is not determined by the Commission. The Commission finds that Aqua's request for approval of revised Notices to Customers would result in lower partial, temporary rates than previously requested, and Aqua has satisfied the statutory requirements necessary to place new rates into effect on a partial, temporary basis, subject to refund with interest at a rate of 10% per annum,

effective July 30, 2020. Therefore, the Commission finds good cause to approve the revised Notices to Customers attached to this Order as Appendices A and B and to accept Aqua's executed Undertaking to Refund filed on July 1, 2020, in this docket.

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED as follows:

1. That the Commission takes no position on whether the Company should or should not invoke the rates under bond mechanism authorized by statute;

2. That the revised Notices to Customers regarding Aqua's request pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 62-135 to place an increase in its rates and charges into effect in accordance with the schedules attached hereto as Appendices A and B be, and the same are hereby approved;

3. That should Aqua decide to implement rates under bond, the applicable Notices to Customers attached as Appendices A and B shall be mailed with sufficient postage or hand delivered by Aqua to the respective customers no later than July 10, 2020; and that Aqua shall submit to the Commission the attached Certificate of Service properly signed and notarized no later than 20 days after the date of this Order;

4. That no rate or rates placed into effect pursuant to this notice shall result in an increase in more than 20% on any single rate classification of the Company;

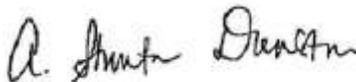
5. That Aqua shall be, and is hereby, obligated to refund to its customers any amount of temporary rates made effective on or after July 30, 2020, that are finally determined by the Commission to be excessive, plus 10% interest per annum, and to make any refunds in a manner consistent with any additional terms and conditions imposed by the Commission in subsequent orders; and

6. That Aqua's executed Undertaking to Refund with interest, from the date that such rates are put into effect, any revenues in excess of those the Commission ultimately determines to be appropriate, filed by Aqua on July 1, 2020, in this docket be, and the same is hereby accepted.

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 2nd day of July, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION



A. Shonta Dunston, Deputy Clerk

on a temporary, interim basis subject to refund, effective for service rendered on and after six months from January 30, 2020, assuming that the Commission: (a) suspended the operation of the Company's proposed rates as requested in the rate case application; and (b) had not entered a final order by that date. Consistent with the customer notice provisions of N.C.G.S. § 62-135(a), Aqua further requested that the Notices to Customers attached to the Commission's order scheduling hearings should include a specific provision which notified customers that the Company intended to implement temporary rates under bond effective for service rendered on and after six months from January 30, 2020.

In the Commission's Order Scheduling Hearings, Establishing Discovery Guidelines, and Requiring Customer Notice issued on February 14, 2020, in Docket No. W-218, Sub 526, the Commission required the Company to send Notices to Customers which contained notification of the dates, times, and locations of the public hearings scheduled in this case and, at Aqua's request, customers were also notified of the Company's intent to implement temporary rates under bond effective for water and sewer utility service rendered on and after July 30, 2020. The Notice to Customers stated that if ultimately found to be excessive by the Commission, these temporary rates are subject to refund to customers with interest at an interest rate to be ordered by the Commission. Thus, the present Notices to Customers is a second notice regarding the temporary rates which Aqua will place in effect on or after July 30, 2020, as specifically allowed by N.C.G.S. § 62-135.

Aqua's temporary rates for all its service areas, with the exception of the Brookwood and LaGrange service areas in Cumberland and Hoke Counties and the Fairways and Beau Rivage (The Cape) service areas in New Hanover County, are as follows:

WATER UTILITY SERVICE

<u>Monthly Metered Service (Residential and Commercial customers) Base facility charge (zero usage, based on meter size)</u>	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Temporary Rates</u>
<1" meter	\$ 19.25	\$ 20.63
1" meter	\$ 48.13	\$ 51.58
1-1/2" meter	\$ 96.25	\$ 103.15
2" meter	\$ 154.00	\$ 165.04
3" meter	\$ 288.75	\$ 309.45
4" meter	\$ 481.25	\$ 515.75
6" meter	\$ 962.50	\$1,031.50

The base charges listed above apply to all Aqua North Carolina metered water systems except those in the Brookwood/LaGrange service areas in Cumberland and Hoke Counties and the Fairways/Beau Rivage (The Cape) service areas in New Hanover County.

	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<u>Usage charge, per 1,000 gallons</u>		
All service areas unless noted differently below	\$ 5.83	\$ 6.36

Bulk Purchased Water Systems

Temporary base monthly charge same as above
Temporary usage charge per 1,000 gallons based on bulk water provider are unchanged.

	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<u>Monthly Unmetered Service (flat rate)</u>		
All service areas unless noted differently below		
Residential customers	\$ 39.66	\$ 46.07
Commercial customers (per REU)	\$ 67.42	\$ 73.39
(REU = Residential Equivalent Unit)		

	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<u>Water System Improvement Charge</u>		
All service areas unless noted differently	2.69%	0.00%

The Water System Improvement Charge is applied to the total water utility bill of each customer under the Company's applicable rates and charges.

SEWER UTILITY SERVICE

	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<u>Monthly Unmetered Service (flat rate)</u>		
All service areas unless noted differently below		
Residential customers	\$ 72.04	\$ 75.53
Commercial customers (per REU)	\$ 100.86	\$ 105.72
(REU = Residential Equivalent Unit)		

Commercial Monthly Metered Service and all Parkway Crossing and Park South Station Service Areas (based on metered water usage)

Base facility charge (zero usage, based on water meter size)

All service areas unless noted differently below

	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<1" meter	\$ 26.11	\$ 26.58
1" meter	\$ 65.28	\$ 66.45
1-1/2" meter	\$ 130.55	\$ 132.90
2" meter	\$ 208.88	\$ 212.64
3" meter	\$ 391.65	\$ 398.70
4" meter	\$ 652.75	\$ 664.50
6" meter	\$1,305.50	\$1,329.00

<u>Usage charge, per 1,000 gallons</u>	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Temporary Rates</u>
All service areas unless noted differently below	\$ 8.92	\$ 9.79

<u>Parkway Crossing and Park South Station Service Areas</u>	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Temporary Rates</u>
Base facility charge (zero usage)	As shown above	As shown above
Usage charge, per 1,000 gallons	\$ 6.45	\$ 6.45

Hawthorne at the Greene Apartments, Woodland Farm Rocky Ridge and Beaver Farms Service Areas – Mecklenburg County:

	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Temporary Rates</u>
Base facility charge (to be collected and delivered to Carolina Water Service, Inc. of North Carolina for treatment of the wastewater), per month (per REU)	\$ 47.94	\$ 47.94
Usage charge, per 1,000 gallons	\$ 6.11	\$ 6.73

<u>Sewer System Improvement Charge</u>	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Temporary Rates</u>
All service areas unless noted differently	1.15%	0.00%

The Public Staff – North Carolina Utilities Commission (Public Staff) is authorized by statute to represent consumers in proceedings before the Commission. Written statements to the Public Staff should include the name of the subdivision where the customer is receiving service, contact information, and any information that the writer wishes to be considered by the Public Staff in its investigation of the matter; these statements should be addressed to Mr. Christopher J. Ayers, Executive Director, Public Staff, 4326 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4300. Written statements may also be faxed to 919-715-6704 or e-mailed to statements@ncuc.net.

The Attorney General is also authorized by statute to represent consumers in proceedings before the Commission. Statements to the Attorney General should be addressed to The Honorable Josh Stein, Attorney General, 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-9001. They may also be e-mailed to utilityAGO@ncdoj.gov.

Information regarding this proceeding can be accessed from the Commission's website at www.ncuc.net under the docket number of this proceeding (W-218 Sub 526).

**TEMPORARY MORATORIUM ON DISCONNECTION FOR NONPAYMENT AND
PROVISIONS FOR PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

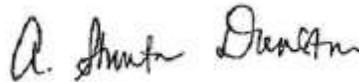
In response to the COVID-19 public health crisis and to Governor Roy Cooper's Declaration of a State of Emergency (Executive Order No.116, March 10, 2020), the North Carolina Utilities Commission issued an Order on March 19, 2020 in Docket No. M-100, Sub 158 which addressed disconnections for nonpayment, reconnections, waivers of certain fees, interest, and payment arrangements. As early as March 13, 2020, Aqua North Carolina initiated actions consistent with the ultimate Commission Order and the Company joins other regulated utilities in strict compliance with the customer protection provisions set forth by the Commission. A complete copy of the Order may be found on the Commission website home page - <https://www.ncuc.net>.

The Commission also provided that, at the end of the State of Emergency, customers having arrearages accrued during the emergency period shall be provided the opportunity to make a reasonable payment arrangement over no less than a six month period and shall not be charged any late fees for late payment for arrearages accrued during the State of Emergency. (The Order does not relieve a customer of their obligation to pay bills for receipt of any utility service covered by the Order).

ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 2nd day of July, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION



A. Shonta Dunston, Deputy Clerk

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH**

DOCKET NO. W-218, SUB 526

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Application by Aqua North Carolina, Inc.,) NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS OF
202 MacKenan Court, Cary, North Carolina) TEMPORARY RATE INCREASE
27511, for Authority to Adjust and Increase) EFFECTIVE ON JULY 30, 2020,
Rates for Water and Sewer Utility Service in) SUBJECT TO UNDERTAKING TO
All Its Service Areas in North Carolina) REFUND

TEMPORARY RATES SUBJECT TO UNDERTAKING TO REFUND

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Aqua North Carolina, Inc. (Aqua or Company), is authorized to increase its rates and charges effective July 30, 2020, on a temporary basis, subject to refund, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 62-135. The July 30, 2020 rate changes are not final rates and remain subject to the North Carolina Utilities Commission's (Commission's) final determination of the just and reasonable rates to be charged by Aqua on a permanent basis pursuant to Aqua's pending general rate case application in Docket No. W-218, Sub 526.

Aqua's choice to implement temporary rates under bond effective for water and sewer utility service rendered on and after July 30, 2020, as allowed pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 62-135 is determined by the Company and is not a decision by the Commission. However, the Commission finds that Aqua in fact has satisfied the statutory requirements necessary to place new rates into effect, on a partial, temporary basis and subject to refund with interest at a rate of 10% per annum, effective July 30, 2020. In approving this Notice to Customers, the Commission takes no position on whether the Company should or should not invoke the temporary rates under bond authorized by statute and notes that the decision of whether to implement temporary rates under bond lies solely with Aqua.

On December 31, 2019, Aqua filed a rate case application with the North Carolina Utilities Commission seeking authority to adjust and increase its rates for providing water and sewer utility service in all of its service areas in North Carolina effective for service rendered on and after January 30, 2020.

In its rate case application, Aqua notified the Commission that, pursuant to the provisions of N.C.G.S. § 62-135, the Company intended to implement its proposed rates on a temporary, interim basis subject to refund, effective for service rendered on and after six months from January 30, 2020, assuming that the Commission: (a) suspended the operation of the Company's proposed rates as requested in the Application; and (b) had not entered a final order by that date. Consistent with the customer notice provisions of

N.C.G.S. § 62-135(a), Aqua further requested that the Notices to Customers attached to the Commission’s order scheduling hearings should include a specific provision which notified customers that the Company intended to implement temporary rates under bond effective for service rendered on and after six months from January 30, 2020.

In the Commission’s Order Scheduling Hearings, Establishing Discovery Guidelines, and Requiring Customer Notice issued on February 14, 2020, in Docket No. W-218, Sub 526, the Commission required the Company to send Notices to Customers which contained notification of the dates, times, and locations of the public hearings scheduled in this case and, at Aqua’s request, customers were also notified of the Company’s intent to implement temporary rates under bond effective for water and sewer utility service rendered on and after July 30, 2020. The Notices to Customers stated that if ultimately found to be excessive by the Commission, these temporary rates are subject to refund to customers with interest at an interest rate to be ordered by the Commission. Thus, the present Notices to Customers is a second notice regarding the temporary rates which Aqua will place in effect on or after July 30, 2020, as specifically allowed by N.C.G.S. § 62-135.

Aqua’s temporary water rates for its Brookwood/LaGrange service areas in Cumberland and Hoke Counties are as follows:

WATER UTILITY SERVICE

<u>Monthly Metered Service (Residential and Commercial customers)</u>	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
Base charge, per month (zero usage, based on meter size)		
<1" meter	\$ 14.03	\$ 15.94
1" meter	\$ 35.08	\$ 39.85
1-1/2" meter	\$ 70.15	\$ 79.70
2" meter	\$ 112.24	\$ 127.52
3" meter	\$ 210.45	\$ 239.10
4" meter	\$ 350.75	\$ 398.50
6" meter	\$ 701.50	\$ 797.00
	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
<u>Usage charge, per 1,000 gallons</u>	\$ 3.76	\$ 4.54
All service areas unless noted differently below		

Bulk Purchased Water Systems

Temporary base monthly charge same as above

Temporary usage charge, per 1,000 gallons based on bulk water provider are unchanged

<u>Monthly Unmetered Service (flat rate)</u>	Existing <u>Rates</u>	Temporary <u>Rates</u>
All service areas unless noted differently below		
Residential customers	\$ 33.17	\$ 37.03
Commercial customers (per REU)	\$ 56.39	\$ 52.27
(REU = Residential Equivalent Unit)		

<u>Water System Improvement Charge</u>	Existing <u>Rate</u>	Temporary <u>Rate</u>
All service areas unless noted differently	3.57%	0.00%

The Water System Improvement Charge is applied to the total water utility bill of each customer under the Company's applicable rates and charges.

The Public Staff – North Carolina Utilities Commission (Public Staff) is authorized by statute to represent consumers in proceedings before the Commission. Written statements to the Public Staff should include the name of the subdivision where the customer is receiving service, contact information, and any information that the writer wishes to be considered by the Public Staff in its investigation of the matter; these statements should be addressed to Mr. Christopher J. Ayers, Executive Director, Public Staff, 4326 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4300. Written statements may also be faxed to 919-715-6704 or e-mailed to statements@ncuc.net.

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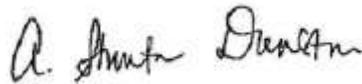
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ISSUED BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION.

This the 2nd day of July, 2020.

NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Shonta Dunston". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A. Shonta Dunston, Deputy Clerk

