



Public Service Commission

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TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0850

-M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M-

DATE: May 8, 2017

TO: Carlotta Stauffer, Commission Clerk

FROM: Mary Anne Helton, Deputy General Counsel *MAH*

RE: Docket 160101-WS - Application for increase in water and wastewater rates in Charlotte, Highlands, Lake, Lee, Marion, Orange, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Seminole Counties by Utilities, Inc. of Florida.

Please place the attached correspondence, dated May 1, 2017, from DEP to Commissioner Mariano in the above referenced docket file.

Thank you.

MAH/nah



**Florida Department of
Environmental Protection**

Southwest District Office
13051 North Telecom Parkway
Temple Terrace, Florida 33637-0926

Rick Scott
Governor

Carlos Lopez-Cantera
Lt. Governor

Ryan E. Matthews
Interim Secretary

May 1, 2017

Commissioner Jack Mariano
Pasco County District 5
Phone: (727) 847-8100
jmariano@pascocountyfl.net

Dear Commissioner Mariano:

Thank you so much for your recent letter regarding the Summertree community. We appreciate your concerns regarding your constituents. I would like to update you on the status of DEP's investigation into the situation at Summertree.

Although Utilities Inc. and Pasco County Utilities have had intermittent test results that indicated low levels of chlorine, there is no immediate health risk or need for Summertree residents to change their daily routines or to find an alternate source of water. As you know, throughout Florida, chlorine is used to eliminate bacteria in public water supplies. Recent test results for Summertree indicated that chlorine levels did not meet the minimum level established in federal drinking water standards. However, tests also revealed that ***there is no bacteria in the Summertree water system, which is why the water is safe for residents to drink.***

DEP was on hand when the latest tests were conducted and advised Summertree of the need to increase chlorine levels. Daily testing will continue to ensure that chlorine levels are in compliance with federal standards. DEP is closely monitoring the more frequent sampling that is now required, and the department is working with the utilities to perform analyses of these systems to identify any needed operational improvements to increase levels of chlorine as quickly as possible. DEP is experienced with working with water providers to address the challenge of balancing the flow of water with the proper application of chlorine.

Summertree residents may notice water coming out of maintenance flush points in the Summertree system or from fire hydrants. Flushing water lines is a key part of distribution system maintenance and is an industry-wide practice used to maintain water quality. This can be safely performed without impacts to daily use and will help maintain chlorine levels in the system.

Summertree is legally required to meet state and federal drinking water standards. Whenever sampling or other evaluations verify compliance issues, DEP holds utilities accountable and works with them to identify and implement corrective actions as quickly as possible to protect water resources and ensure a safe water supply.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection enforces rules that are protective of our air, water and land to safeguard Florida's natural resources and enhance its ecosystems. I hope you find this update helpful. Thank you again for reaching out.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Yeargan, P.G.
Southwest District Director

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