

Tristan Davis

From: Tristan Davis on behalf of Records Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 11:43 AM
To: soaresje
Cc: Consumer Contact
Subject: RE: Docket No. 20250122-WS

Good Morning,

We will be placing your comments below in consumer correspondence in Docket No. 20250122, and forwarding them to the Office of Consumer Assistance.

Thank you!

Tristan Davis

Commission Deputy Clerk I
Florida Public Service Commission
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From: soaresje <soaresje@bellsouth.net>
Sent: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 11:37 AM
To: Records Clerk <CLERK@PSC.STATE.FL.US>
Subject: Docket No. 20250122-WS

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Docket No. 20250122-WS

I urge the Commission to deny the proposed rate increase outlined in Document No. 03735-2026 Staff Report dated June 23, 2026. Approving this increase would essentially reward the Utility and Sun Communities for years of mismanagement and substandard water quality over the past six years. |

I assert that both Sun Communities and Sun Communities Acquisitions, LLC D/B/A Buttonwood Bay Utilities, operating as Buttonwood Bay Utilities, have misrepresented their corporate connection and business relationship to the Florida Public Service Commission and to the customers of Buttonwood Bay. |

Docket No. 20250122-WS Date: June 23, 2026. The rate increase is completely unacceptable. The Commission was not provided adequate information about the prior 6 years of poor water quality, mismanagement, over billing and the years of fighting with Sun Communities to improve the water quality.

The significant burden imposed on the residents of Buttonwood Bay regarding the high costs associated with acquiring quality drinking water and the damage to clothing caused by poor water quality is not taken into account. "Sun Communities Acquisitions, LLC, D/B/A Buttonwood Bay Utilities has provided misleading information to the Commission concerning homeowners' water usage. A substantial portion, approximately 60 to 70 percent, of the water consumed is utilized for lawn irrigation. Sun Communities enforce this requirement in their rental agreements, making it a mandatory obligation. Failure to water the lawn results in a violation issued by Sun Communities.

I have been a homeowner for 7 years and a temporary resident for 11 years at Buttonwood Bay. This marks the first time I have received an Annual Drinking Water Quality Report. According to report PWS ID# 6284075, I have learned that the water and sewage system is operated by "Sun Communities Acquisitions, LLC, D/B/A Buttonwood Bay Utilities," rather than being managed directly by Sun Communities. This is a piece of information that has not been conveyed to customers over the years, indicating that a Utility is responsible for the operation of the water and sewage system. The critical question arises: who is considered the customer? We acquire water from Sun Communities, not from Sun Communities Acquisitions, LLC, D/B/A Buttonwood Bay Utilities or other past operators. Therefore, is Sun Communities the customer, or are the homeowners in Buttonwood Bay the actual customers?

Additionally, the monthly invoices are issued directly by Sun Communities, rather than by Sun Communities Acquisitions, LLC, doing business as Buttonwood Bay Utilities.

Sun Communities has consistently represented itself as the Utility and supplier of water and sewage services for its customers at Buttonwood Bay.

Water Quality

- For years the water quality has been unacceptable and in violation of EPA standards.
- Low water pressure below EPA standards was and is common. Leading to higher contaminates in water lines.
- Water the color of dark tea. Two times the EPA maximum limit at Buttonwood Bay
- Water Odor is unacceptable.

Docket No. 20250122-WS Date: June 23, 2026

Issue 1

Quality of the Utility's Product

In evaluation of Buttonwood Bay's water product quality, staff reviewed the Utility's compliance with the DEP's primary and secondary drinking water standards. Primary standards protect public health while secondary standards regulate contaminants that may impact the taste, odor, and color of drinking water. Staff reviewed the DEP's triennial Safe Drinking Water chemical analyses of samples taken on March 27, 2024, and the Utility was determined to be in compliance with DEP standards except for the secondary standard of color. Staff also reviewed DEP's last Sanitary Survey Report dated December 30, 2024, in which there were no chemical or bacteriological exceedances noted for the previous 12 months, except the previously noted secondary standard for color.

Comment:

1. The Staff review exclusively focuses on the year 2024 in their assessment. However, the water quality in the previous 6 years was deemed unacceptable.

2. Numerous complaints regarding water quality were directed to the managers of Sun Communities, yet no action was taken in response.
3. It was only after the Florida EPA received complaints about the water quality that they began to examine the Buttonwood Bay water system more thoroughly.
4. Florida's maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for drinking water are defined under the Safe Drinking Water Act and enforced by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in partnership with the U.S. EPA. These standards are designed to protect public health and apply to public water systems serving communities or non-transient non-community systems. Through testing conducted by the EPA, it was found that the contaminant level in Buttonwood Bay's water was 30.1, which exceeds the maximum permissible level of 15 parts for contamination.
5. The EPA's inspection revealed that the water system filters were four years overdue for replacement. Sun Communities was aware of the outdated filters but refused to replace them. A representative from U.S. Water mentioned, "They know what the issues are with the water system, but they are unwilling to invest any money to rectify the situation."
6. The water was unsuitable for drinking, leading to stains on clothing during laundering; toilets also became discolored, forcing residents to buy drinking water from sources outside the park. Hot water tanks require frequent flushing due to a buildup of contaminants.
7. Additionally, private water filters within the park require frequent replacements due to the presence of black sludge and contaminants in the water. Another cost factor for the customer is not addressed.
8. During their inspection, the EPA discovered that the water system filters were four years overdue for replacement. Sun Communities was aware of the outdated filters but refused to replace them. A representative from U.S. Water remarked, "They know what the issues are with the water system, but they are unwilling to invest any money to rectify the situation."

Sun Communities Management responded to numerous complaints directed to the Sun's Park manager regarding the water quality was there was no problem with the water system; it was merely a slight discoloration of the water. **The water resembled the color of dark tea. This also encompassed a foul smell.** Despite numerous complains Park Management took no action to correct the water problem. Or did they offer that we could file a complaint with the Commission. Again, representing themselves as the Utility.

Rule 25-30-251 (1) and F.A.C The rule states that each utility is required to maintain a record of all interruptions in service which affects 10 percent or more of its customers and to notify the Commission of these interruptions. Record must show the cause of the interruption, date, time, duration, remedy, and steps taken to prevent recurrence. Buttonwood experienced numerous interruptions in service over the last 5 years that affected more than 10 percent of the park. I believe this when unreported to the Commission.

Comment:

In the past 6 years, there have been several disruptions in water services impacting over 10 percent of the customer base. Furthermore, I believe that the Utility or the Sun Communities failed to provide the necessary notifications regarding these water service interruptions to the Commission, as mandated by Rule 25-30-251 (1) and F.A.C.

Furthermore, the management of Sun Communities has failed to consistently communicate with customers regarding water interruptions, which is a common occurrence. Customers were frequently not informed about the necessity to boil water when potential contaminants could be present due to a water line break or maintenance requiring boiling water. As a result, many were left unaware of the contamination risk until well after the situation had occurred. Over the years, numerous complaints were directed towards Sun Management, yet they persisted in this inadequate management practice. This

concern was also repeatedly addressed during HOA meetings. When the issue was brought to the attention of park management at these meetings, the response was, "we sent out emails." However, these notifications often came long after the problem had arisen and, in some cases, people were never notified. Sun management did not resolve the issue or take any corrective action over the years.

Issue 1: Is the quality of service provided by Buttonwood Bay satisfactory?

Improperly functioning water meters

For many years, Sun Communities has been sending fraudulent invoices to their customers via US Mail (which is paramount to Mail Fraud). Knowingly overcharging water and sewage services is a frequent issue. This includes falsifying water meter readings and dispatching incorrect bills to their clients. Such practices have persisted for an extended period of years.

Although there are numerous examples in billing, here is one example.

I received a water bill from Sun Communities that indicated usage of 18,000 gallons for a single month. The issue is that we were not present at Buttonwood during that month, which means there was no water consumption, no sewage used, and no operation of water sprinklers. Sun Management suggested that there might be a leak in the system on my side of the meter. However, they found no leak on either side of the meter. Sun asserted that they had reread the meter and would adjust the bill accordingly. This resulted in a standard monthly charge. Upon inspecting the meter reading, I discovered that the meter was buried under 18 inches of sand, making it unreadable. After I cleared the sand to access the meter, I noticed that the meter box contained two meters. The adjacent meter had a broken dial that was filled with sand and water, rendering it impossible to read. Consequently, no one could have accurately assessed the meters without first removing the sand from the meter box, and the broken meter was unreadable. Overbilling appears to be a common practice at Sun Communities. It is evident that they were not actually rereading the meters and were instead issuing incorrect bill amounts to water customers. This was not the first instance in which I had to request corrections to our water bills. Numerous examples exist within the buttonwood park where this unlawful billing practice persists. Even after the old meter system was replaced with a new one, billing discrepancies continue throughout the park.

Issue 1: Is the quality of service provided by Buttonwood Bay satisfactory?

The Utility's Attempt to Address Customer Satisfaction

The Utility's Attempt to Address Customer Satisfaction Staff reviewed the complaints filed in the Commission's Consumer Activity Tracking System (CATS), received by the Utility, and filed with the DEP for the test year and four years prior. There were no complaints filed in CATS. The Utility reported one complaint during this timeframe regarding the color of the water, which was resolved by the Utility by switching to different media inside the filters. The DEP responded that it received five complaints regarding several issues, including: (i) severe discoloration and debris, including yellow, rusty, or black water that ruined laundry and clogged home filters; (ii) foul sulfur and sewer odors that worsened over time; (iii) operational failures such as a total loss of water pressure and overdue filter maintenance; and, (iv) poor communication, highlighted by management's failure to notify all residents during critical boil water alerts. This mismanagement of the water system resulted in substantial cost to the customers over several years and continues unabated.

Comments:

The customers were unaware of who to contact because Sun Communities was representing themselves as a water Utility. No one knew that we could file *complaints to the Commission by Commission's Consumer Activity Tracking System (CATS)* Customers. Therefore, many complaints have been filed over the last 6 years. We may complain to Sun Communities. It was later that customers found the avenue to go to EPA with their complaints about the water system. There were limited complaint filed with EPA --most customers did not understand the process and were affair that Sun

Communities will Retaliate against them if they make Complaint outside the park. I believe that the writers of (the June 23, 2026, Memorandum-Staff Report) did not understand that the water system problem had gone on for at least 6 to 7 years. |

Best regards

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