

Diane Holt

From: bybarker@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2018 8:43 AM
To: Beverly Barker; Diane Holt; Erik Jorgensen; Matthew Evans
Subject: Case Comment Form: Byron Barker

Name: Byron Barker
Case Number:
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Address: 2106 E STATE ST STE B
Eagle ID, 83616

Name of Utility Company: Eagle Water Sale To Suez
Comment: Commenting on Eagle Water Company proposed sale to Suez.

For the record, I am completely against the sale to Suez.

I have been a customer of Eagle Water for almost 20 years. I do not know the owners nor have any connection with the company at any level except paying my bill monthly water bill, I never have I felt that the service was less than expected. We have always received notification yearly on water tests and compliance, mandated by the State or the EPA. I don't buy into the media spin that Suez is propagating about how substandard the system is and the \$13.4 million that they will need to reinvest is to replace meters and so forth, this almost subliminally tries to convey that Eagle Water Company is akin to Flint, Michigan, through their costs to repair the system. Every meter that I have had set on the new homes I build have been brand-new meters, Suez would lead you to believe that somehow they are setting 50-year-old corroded lead based meters and that they would have to revamp all of Eagle waters system, they would also lead you to believe that all the pipes are bad. However the new subdivisions that I'm building in seem to have brand-new pipe in the ground. This is just a ploy to justify their price increase. I know Shocking!

I understand government agencies like things easy, In their quest to make things easy for themselves they want one company to provide service for water, electricity, trash, or any other things that they manage. This all sounds good in theory, the government agency get to make their lives easy while the end-user continues to pay more and more because of lack of competition.

Once you allow big conglomerates to monopolize a market you have effectively aided in the elimination of competition. Once Suez is the only game in town what stops them from raising the price, year after year or at the expiration of each contract? How is it that the Eagle Water Company has gone decades without raising their water prices and provided the same service that we will get with Suez. How is it that the Eagle Water Company is a small business who has provided more than adequate paying jobs to the citizens of Idaho it employees, resulting in good paying jobs from management positions right down to the guys who put the pipes and meters in the ground , thus keeping jobs and profits to be reinvested back into Idaho . How is it that a massive company like Suez with its centralized management, centralized payment centers and a corporate structure that routes all profit away from Idaho somehow is not be able to compete with tiny little Eagle Water Company? When you effectively allow a Trojan horse to come in and monopolize the water system in our city what happens when you become dissatisfied with their service or their prices get out of control? This is already their intent notifying everyone that their prices are going up with a big-time percentage increase. This is a textbook example of what the Chinese business model is - Buy up all the small businesses that compete against you or make them look like they are not doing an adequate job and run them out of business, own 100% of the market share, ensuring that no startup company or small business has the capital to invest and compete with you. This model ensures that they will never have competition and that the Idaho Public Utilities Commission will never have a option to deal with anyone but them, effectively holding the Idaho Public Utilities Commission hostage.

When multiple small businesses compete in the public utility arena or any other arena for that sake all the laws of economics are satisfied, profits stay in and are most likely spent in the state supporting other small businesses, thus stimulating growth and reinvestment in the state of Idaho. If one small business is not doing a good job another small business can bid on that job providing either better service and pricing , ensuring that prices can't be rigged or fixed.

I am completely opposed to the monopolizing and dismantling the backbone of Idaho, which is the small business. I encourage you to oppose the sale of Eagle water company to suez to keep jobs, fairness and competition in the marketplace.

Sincerely,

Byron Barker

Unique Identifier: 184.99.116.199

706 N. Harvey Lane
Eagle, ID 83616
December 13, 2018

Idaho Public Utilities Commission
472 W. Washington Street
Boise, ID 83702

Subject: Comments on the Sale of Eagle Water Company to Suez

Members of the Idaho PUC:

My name is John E. Healy. I have lived in Eagle for 24-1/2 years at the address shown above. I am 79 years old, retired, and living on a fixed income. I have been a customer of Eagle Water Company (EWC) since I moved to Eagle. The service provided by EWC has been excellent. The drinking water has been as good as I have ever had.

My purpose here is to comment on the proposed sale of EWC to Suez. I am opposed to this sale. I am not sure that Suez will provide the same quality of service as EWC.

- Suez claimed in their letter to Eagle residents that EWC serves 12,000 people. EWC has about 4,000 customers. Did Suez inflate this figure, or is Suez assuming that each connection serves three people?
- Residential Rate Increases: Suez states that residential customers will see a 204% increase in monthly rates based on calculated usages. This could provide a hardship for those who are retired, single parent families, and low income families, who could be living on fixed or limited incomes.
- Commercial Rate Increases: Most businesses in Eagle are small businesses. A 303% increase in monthly rates based on calculated averages could affect their bottom line, and future to continue.
- Suez Proposed Rate Increases: Suez has two rates, summer and winter. Which rate did Suez use to set the proposed rate increase?

- Chlorination of water: EWC pumps water from the ground through wells. Because of their water system, they do not have to chlorinate their water. Suez uses well and surface water, and they must chlorinate their water. Drinking water from EWC tastes very good. What affect will adding chlorine to the water system have on the taste of drinking water?
- Growth of a Monopoly: In the letter Suez sent out, they state that they serve 240,000 people in Boise and the surrounding area. I understand the need for monopolies for utilities, and why there are Public Utilities Commissions to regulate them. Approval of this sale will allow Suez to acquire an existing company, take over its system, and dramatically increase residential and commercial rates

I would ask that the PUC consider the following issues when reviewing the sale application:

- Suez's proposed rate increases are excessive. They could impact the living standards of certain people and families – retirees, single parent families, and low income families who may be living on fixed or limited incomes.
- What affect will Suez's new rates have on the small business community in Eagle?
- EWC has a very good system in place. Changing or revising this system could affect service to current customers.
- If Suez decides to mix well and surface water to the EWC area, what affect will chlorination have on the taste of tap water.
- Suez is a large monopoly. Acquiring a competitor could eliminate rate competition.

John E. Healy

