

good afternoon. I'm writing to log a protest against the proposed rate increase by Pennichuck Water Works. As a resident of Litchfield I am already paying some of the highest rates in the area for water.

As I understand it the justification is the increased costs Pennichuck is incurring as they add miles of service lines to areas of Litchfield. When it was established that St. Cobain had poisoned the ground water for hundreds of homes in Litchfield and the homes would need to be hooked up to Pennichuck, St. Cobain was supposed to pick up the tab for that work. Those costs were not supposed to be passed on to customers.

Pennichuck is claiming it has had to provide service to new construction. Those costs should be borne by the developers, not the customers at large. The cost of the water main to a development should be distributed in the costs of the houses in the development. Once installed, St. Cobain charges rates that are more than adequate for the maintenance of the system and the profits for the stockholders. If not, why can they charge lower rates for all of the surrounding communities? Raising rates for everyone to cover these costs is merely making the community increase the profits of the developers.

Beyond all of that, it doesn't make sense for Pennichuck to make the residents of Litchfield pay water rates that are magnitudes higher than their other customers in surrounding communities. They have a monopoly. We are not allowed to use wells. They are trying to use that monopoly to gouge the residents of Litchfield. This is exactly the behavior that the PUC is supposed to protect us from.

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