



**CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD**  
Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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**UNJUST, UNREASONABLE: AARP ILLINOIS, CUB JOIN FRUSTRATED CUSTOMERS IN SPEAKING OUT AGAINST AQUA ILLINOIS' \$19M RATE-HIKE REQUEST AT PUBLIC FORUM**

AARP Illinois and the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) on Monday urged state regulators to reject Aqua Illinois' proposed \$19.2 million rate-hike request, arguing that it was excessive, unjust and unreasonable at an Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) public forum in Crystal Lake.

In January, Aqua, which serves about 273,000 customers in Illinois, filed for a \$19.2 million rate-hike request with the ICC ([Docket # 24-0044](#)) that could increase water/wastewater bills by as much as \$29.91 per month. Aqua's parent company, Essential Utilities, has raked in \$963.5 million in total profits over the last two years, and the utility last received a rate hike, of about \$7 million, in 2018.

Illinois American Water, another private water utility, has also filed for a rate hike, this one for \$152.4 million. The ICC is scheduled to rule on the rate-hike requests around November/December.

Aside from the escalating bills, Aqua's widely publicized service-quality issues have added to customer frustration, including unacceptable levels of lead in drinking water in University Park in 2019, a water outage in Lake County in 2023 and a boil order in July in Hawthorn Woods.

Responding to a request from AARP Illinois, the ICC scheduled five public forums on proposed private water increases this summer. Regarding Illinois American, there were forums in Jerseyville, Bolingbrook and Champaign. The ICC scheduled two forums for Aqua customers, including the one Monday night in Crystal Lake, and one scheduled for 7-9 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 1, Olivet Nazarene University, Wisner Auditorium, One University Ave., Bourbonnais.

The following are statements from AARP and CUB:

**Philippe Largent, State Director, AARP Illinois**

"AARP Illinois requested these public hearings because Aqua customers deserve the chance to be heard on how this significant increase would impact them. Thousands of older customers, including those on fixed incomes, have written to tell us that these increases will mean they have to make tough choices between paying for water or paying for basic necessities like food and prescription drugs."

**CUB Executive Director Sarah Moskowitz**

"We urge state regulators to reject Aqua Illinois' unjust and unreasonable rate-hike request. An increase of up to nearly \$30 a month would be a hardship for long-suffering Aqua customers, who are fed up with escalating bills and poor service. In its latest rate-hike request, Aqua exposes its true motive by pushing for an obscene profit rate for their shareholders. Clean, affordable water is a necessity, but Aqua has turned it into a profit tool. We urge state regulators to say no to Aqua."

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*AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. To learn about AARP's work in Illinois, visit [www.aarp.org/IL](http://www.aarp.org/IL) or [@AARPIllinois](#).*

*The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) is celebrating its 40th anniversary as Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's award-winning website, [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org).*