



# NEWS Release

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## **PUC Inquiry and Refund Process for Water and Wastewater Rates**

ROCKPORT, TX – The City of Rockport Addresses Public Utility Commission (PUC) Inquiry and Refund Process for Water and Wastewater Rates.

Rockport, Texas – The City of Rockport has been actively working to resolve an issue regarding its water and wastewater rates for out-of-district users. This process, which began in August 2023, has involved multiple steps and significant interaction with the PUC.

On August 30, 2023, the City adopted new water rates for all users. However, on November 8, 2023, the City was notified of insufficient notification to out-of-district users. To address this, the City determined that withdrawing the new rates was the only viable option.

On December 4, 2023, a petition was filed by ratepayers appealing the City's wholesale water and wastewater rates. By December 13, 2023, the City repealed the out-of-district rates due to jurisdictionally insufficient notification. Subsequently, the City filed for the appeal to be declared moot on December 29, 2023, emphasizing that the petition should be dismissed or denied due to the out of city rates already having been repealed.

By February 29, 2024, the City had refunded affected ratepayers through statement credits made on customers' bills. The City's Director of Finance provided a declaration to the PUC confirming the refunds had been accomplished.

Despite the City's efforts, the PUC continued to seek further proof of refunds. On April 15, 2024, the PUC asked the City to provide detailed information on the number of affected customers and the calculation for each refund. The City sought to comply with the order, although the process was hampered by software limitations. The information received from our third-party vendor did not contain the information necessary to make it easy for the PUC to confirm the refunds.

By July 15, 2024, the City was required to provide per-ratepayer information in detail. Due to delays from the software vendor, the City requested a continuance, which was denied by the Administrative Law Judge. A proposal for a decision recommending dismissal is expected to follow.

Throughout this process, the PUC has twice asked the City to work with the petitioners to dismiss their case, recognizing the City's efforts to correct the error and issue refunds. The City of Rockport remains committed to resolving this matter transparently and efficiently. Overall, one thing is clear, the City made all necessary refunds to the out of city customers. The out of city customers have been made whole. The City worked swiftly to ensure that those customers received the refunds they deserved.

For more information, please visit City of Rockport's website.