

To: Geoff Marke

From: Jeff Romines

Date: 6-28-2023

Reference: Confluence Rivers PSC Request for Rate Increase

Mr. Marke

This information is provided to you per our conversation concerning the Water & Sewer Rate Increase that Confluence Rivers has before the PSC.

As the Fire Chief of Terre Du Lac Missouri my concern is to provide adequate fire protection for my community and currently the lack of an adequate water system that is owned by Confluence Rivers is not acceptable. Confluence Rivers has done very minimal repairs or work to the water system here at Terre Du Lac and from conversations with the working staff onsite I am told that Confluence Rivers is not going to invest any money into upgrades or any of the water lines or fire hydrants. I have been told that if a fire hydrant goes bad on a 4-inch water main they will remove it and not replace it with a new hydrant. I have also been told that Confluence Rivers does not want the fire department to "pump off of the fire hydrant in fears that we will collapse the water line".

Currently there are approximately 350 fire hydrants in Terre Du Lac. Approximately 90% of those are on a 4-inch water main with the other 10% being on a 6 inch or 8-inch water main. Approximately 90% of the fire hydrants have 2 – 2.5-inch discharges for the Fire Department to access water from if we were to need to use them in case of a fire. The other 10% have the 2 - 2.5 discharges and 1 - 4.5 discharge which is the main discharge needed for fire suppression. By the National Fire Association Standard, a 4-inch water main will at best produce 1000 gallons of water per minute and in my research of past fire flow testing records that the fire department has is 600 gallons of water per minute is the average to be obtained. In our records none of the fire hydrants on the 4-inch water mains will flow over 900 gallons per minute. Approximately 50% of the fire hydrant leak water when is use from within the ground. Approximately 30% of the fire hydrants are not useable for many reasons like shutoff, broken, leak and other issues.

I have tried many times to contact the main management at Confluence Rivers with no return calls at all. I want to discuss these issues along with ways Terre Du Lac can help. I have been advised that there are grants that are available if written under the fire department that could possibly be obtained to cover the cost of installing new water lines and fire hydrants. Also, when Confluence Rivers did repair work on both the water towers many months ago nobody contacted the Terre Du Lac Board, Public Works Department or me as Fire Chief of the work they were going to be doing. The day the repair crew showed up to start work was first notice anybody knew what was going to be done. The work to be done was to take both water towers out of service to clean, seal and paint them one at a time over 6 weeks, but it took almost 5 months. At that moment I rushed to make calls to other surrounding fire departments and add them to my first alarm assignment of all structure fires, so we had plenty of water coming to us if needed. As to this date I have not changed that alarm assignment due to the pervious issues mentioned and not being able to rely on the water system for adequate water.

Since finding out these issues Terre Du Lac has had to spend extra money installing Dry Fire Hydrant systems in 7 of our lakes to access reliable water quicker. We will be taking delivery of a used fire truck soon that will carry more water than our current fire trucks, so we have more water on scene of a fire. We have purchased other firefighting equipment that if we had a reliable water system we would not need. We written a Federal Grant for \$850,00.00 that if we are awarded that grant, we will purchase a new fire truck that will carry more water than the truck we are getting. Also, by having bigger, heavier fire trucks they will tear up our roads more and then Terre Du Lac will be out more money on repairs that again if we had an adequate water system would have to be done.

I know under Mo. State Statue RSMO 320 Section 320.095 it says that no water company can refuse water to anyone in time of an emergency, but it also says that if that person tears anything up in that process they will be liable for repairs. We or Terre Du Lac have no idea exactly what shape the water lines and fire hydrants are in, so who's to say Confluence Rivers won't try to sue us for damages and it not be our fault and then how do we prove it?

There are numerous water leaks all over the community. Some have been repaired and some not. The site workers have stated they don't know how many leaks they have, don't know where all of them are and that thousands of gallons are leaking daily. Our local workers are great, and we all work together very well, but they are only contract labor and Confluence Rivers does not listen to what they have to say, so they try their best.

One of my firefighters even mentioned that his sewer grinder system was working just fine with no issues and Confluence changed it just because and lately I've heard that story many more times. That is a waste of money.

When repairs are made the yards and roads are not returned to the original state they were in before the repair. I have 2 spots in my yard where the water line has been repaired twice that still have not been fixed.

I have tried to keep this short and sweet, but the bottom line there are major issues with the water and sewer systems here in Terre Du Lac and Confluence Rivers knew that and the rate increase that is being asked for is ridiculous for work that has already been done. We know that a rate increase is coming and needed, but not for work that has already been done when there is so much more to be done. It is not fair to increase all the communities involved at the same rate. I know it's probably the easiest for Confluence Rivers to have it as one instead of 28 or however many they have under them, but this way is not the right or fair way of doing things. There is so much more to this story that could be said if there were the time.

I will also attach a few pictures of repairs they have made and not repaired the asphalt, water line leaks, damaged fire hydrants and the 2 types of fire hydrant in Terre Du Lac.

Thank you for your time and beginning concerned enough to fight for our communities. If I can be of any help at any time, please call me.

Respectfully Yours
Jeff Romines
Terre Du Lac Fire Chief
573-915-3569