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**TRANSCRIPT DUE FEBRUARY 22 UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED BY
PRESIDING JUDGE**

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

Local Public Hearing
February 8, 2016
Ferguson, Missouri
Volume 11

In The Matter Of Missouri-American Water)
Company's Request For Authority To) File Nos. WR-2015-0301
Implement A General Rate Increase For)
Water And Sewer Service Provided In)
Missouri Service Areas)

KENNARD L. JONES, Presiding
SENIOR REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

DANIEL Y. HALL, Chairman,
STEPHEN M. STOLL,
WILLIAM P. KENNEY,
SCOTT T. RUPP,
MAIDA J. COLEMAN,
COMMISSIONERS

REPORTED BY: Debra L. Burris, CSR, CCR
MO Lic. No. 789 * IL Lic. No. 084-004545

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1 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Welcome to
2 the on-the-record portion of the hearing
3 this evening. This is the case -- we are on
4 the record, okay.

5 REPORTER: Yes.

6 JUDGE JONES: This case is
7 WR-2015-0301, Missouri American Water
8 Company's request for a rate increase. My
9 name is Kennard Jones. I'm the judge
10 assigned to this case and presiding over
11 this local public hearing. The Commission
12 is holding a number of hearings around the
13 State, and in addition to this hearing
14 tonight there will be hearings tomorrow in
15 St. Louis County at UMSL and in Arnold,
16 Missouri, as well.

17 Background -- and you may already
18 know this, I don't know, but I'll share it
19 with you -- the Commission acts as a
20 decisionmaker in this case to balance the
21 interests of the various parties; and the
22 staff, the Commission, interested parties:
23 The Company represents its interests; the
24 Office of Public Counsel represents the
25 interest of the general public -- that would

1 be you; and the other parties represent
2 their respective issues.

3 The scheduled evidentiary hearing
4 in this case will be held from February 29th
5 to March 11th in Jefferson City. You may
6 view the hearing live on the Commission's
7 website. This meeting includes a question
8 and answer session, which just ended,
9 followed by this on-the-record portion where
10 you the public may make statements on the
11 record to be included in the docket in this
12 case.

13 There is a court reporter who
14 will be transcribing your statements. And I
15 hope you were able to get your questions
16 answered, because during this portion the
17 public may not ask questions of myself or
18 the Commission because any response we give
19 may appear as a bias in the decision-making
20 process. If anyone still has questions
21 though, there are people here available
22 during the hearing and after that can help
23 you with that.

24 At this time I'll introduce the
25 Commission. To my left is Commissioner

1 Stoll. Would you like to make any comments?

2 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I would just
3 like to -- I just wanted to thank everybody
4 for coming out on this kind of snowy
5 evening. All of our local public hearings
6 it seems like have been this time of year,
7 and it's just that situation that we
8 sometimes have to put up with. So thanks
9 again for coming out, and we're here to
10 listen to your testimony, and we really
11 appreciate those who have chosen to make a
12 statement.

13 And I'll remind everybody that if
14 you didn't want to make a statement but you
15 wanted to have your thoughts read and heard
16 by the Commission, you can always submit
17 those in writing or go online. And our
18 staff I imagine have told you how to do
19 that. So again, welcome and thanks for
20 coming out.

21 JUDGE JONES: And to my right is
22 Commissioner Coleman.

23 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.
24 I'm Maida Coleman, and I am a resident here
25 in St. Louis City actually. And I'd like to

1 mention that although there's only two
2 commissioners here, we do make up a body of
3 five. And the other three will have an
4 opportunity to read the transcription from
5 tonight, and get that information, and ask
6 questions, and be knowledgeable enough to
7 help make a decision in this case.

8 And as was mentioned, there's an
9 evidentiary hearing that's going to be
10 coming up. And we do hope that if you're
11 not able to come to Jefferson City for that,
12 that you would at least pull it up online,
13 listen live, or at least submit your
14 concerns to your public counsel who will be
15 introduced in just a moment I think. But
16 again, thank you so much for coming out
17 tonight.

18 JUDGE JONES: Okay. At this time
19 let's take entries of appearances from the
20 parties that are present. The company
21 representative of Missouri American.

22 TIM LUFT: Thank you, Judge. Tim
23 Luft, Missouri American Water, and I've
24 given the court reporter my information.

25 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr.

1 Luft. The Office of the Public Counsel?

2 TIM OPITZ: Thank you, Judge. My
3 name is Tim Opitz, and I'm an attorney with
4 the Office of Public Council. My address is
5 P.O. Box 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri
6 65102.

7 JUDGE JONES: For the staff of
8 the Commission?

9 WHITNEY PAYNE: Hello. Whitney
10 Payne for the Staff Counsel's office, and
11 I've already given the court reporter my
12 information as well.

13 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. Are
14 there any other parties present who would
15 like to make an entry of appearance? I
16 don't see anyone, okay.

17 Well, I have a list of names here
18 of people who have signed up to make
19 statements on the record. After I go
20 through this list I will invite any other
21 statements from those of you present and
22 anyone else who may come in while this is
23 going on. I'll call your name, and come up
24 to the podium here, raise your right hand,
25 I'll swear you in, I'll prompt you to give

1 your testimony. After which if you can
2 remain at the podium just in case myself,
3 commissioners or any other parties have
4 questions, that'd be appreciated. And with
5 that, let's go ahead and get started. First
6 name on the list is Charles -- is it Meador
7 or Meador?

8 CHARLES MEADOR: Meador.

9 JUDGE JONES: Meador.

10 CHARLES MEADOR: I had a --

11 JUDGE JONES: Mr. Meador, can you
12 raise your right hand? Do you solemnly
13 affirm that the testimony you are about to
14 give is the truth?

15 CHARLES MEADOR: Yes, sir.

16 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
17 You may proceed with your statement.

18 CHARLES MEADOR: I have some
19 questions which were answered in part before
20 I came in by some people representing the
21 Missouri American Water, but I would like to
22 put this on record. The first thing I'll
23 say is that the letter which gave the,
24 regarding the proposed rate increase, was
25 not as clear as I would like it to be.

1 The -- but what I gathered from
2 the first two paragraphs on it, first of all
3 they want to eliminate the surcharge, but
4 roll that surcharge into your billing as a
5 permanent part of it. That is going to make
6 up approximately, according to this, 10
7 percent of the rate they want to increase
8 our bills by, \$51 million plus dollars. And
9 then they want to increase it by another
10 almost 10 percent, 9.73 percent, which they
11 don't explain whether that's going to be put
12 towards the surcharge or what, they just
13 want to increase it by that much more to get
14 their full \$51 million.

15 Second thing is the first revenue
16 stabilization mechanism, as I read it it
17 allows the company to raise or lower their
18 rates as they want. I know the PSE has some
19 input into it, but it allows the company to
20 raise or lower the rates as they want to,
21 perhaps every three to six months, which
22 they've done for the past four years.

23 The second thing is that it says
24 there's an environmental cost adjustment
25 mechanism which will allow another surcharge

1 to allow to recover costs from investments
2 and costs so the company never loses money.
3 The company has to pay the -- the customers
4 have to pay for any loss that the company
5 will suffer. Which doesn't make whole lot
6 of sense to me either.

7 They say investments. Does that
8 mean investments they made into the pipes in
9 the ground, does that mean investments into
10 the stocks or bonds they invest money into?
11 Does that -- I don't know what investments
12 they're talking about. It's not clear in
13 this -- this didn't have enough space to
14 explain everything totally.

15 And I'm here -- I should have
16 said this to begin with -- but I am
17 representing eight different AARP chapters
18 in the State. I was at a meeting last
19 Monday at the president's roundtable at
20 Laclede Groves, on Laclede Groves Avenue in
21 south St. Louis County there at the Lutheran
22 Homes, but there are several of us that meet
23 there every two months. I represent these
24 eight different organizations. They wanted
25 me to say, enter into the record what I've

1 just done. I appreciate your help -- or
2 your time.

3 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.
4 Commissioner Stoll?

5 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I might ask
6 one question. Did you -- I know you
7 mentioned that you had some of your
8 questions answered. Do you still have
9 questions that you'd like answered? If you
10 would, what I was going to suggest is that
11 you talk to Commission staff privately out
12 there. And I know sometimes when they talk
13 about rolling something into the cost, it's
14 good to have a diagram or something. So if,
15 you know, if you need to have that further
16 explained, please do see somebody out there
17 or the young man from the Office of Public
18 Counsel.

19 CHARLES MEADOR: Thank you.

20 JUDGE JONES: Commissioner
21 Coleman, do you have anything?

22 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: No. Thank
23 you, sir.

24 JUDGE JONES: Are there any
25 questions from any of the parties?

1 MR. LUFT: Could you just spell
2 your last name for the record, please?
3 CHARLES MEADOR: My name, yes.
4 My last name M-e-a-d-o-r.
5 MR. LUFT: Thank you.
6 CHARLES MEADOR: Charles Meador.
7 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you
8 for your testimony.
9 JUDGE JONES: Okay, next is Tim
10 Newport.
11 TIM NEWPORT: Thank you, Judge,
12 for this opportunity.
13 JUDGE JONES: Mr. Newport, can
14 you raise your right hand, please?
15 TIM NEWPORT: Yes. Do you
16 solemnly affirm that the testimony that you
17 are about to give is the truth?
18 TIM NEWPORT: Yes.
19 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
20 You may proceed.
21 TIM NEWPORT: Okay. I want to
22 make it known also that I'm a former
23 employee of St. Louis County Water Company
24 and Missouri American Water Company from
25 1995 to 2007. I'm here because I have some

1 questions. I got this notice in the mail on
2 the hearing about the rate increase. And
3 one of my questions is that, what exactly
4 meets the qualifications of an
5 infrastructure repair? And that's what I
6 want to know.

7 Because when I was there
8 lower-lying management was informing us
9 workers at the time to do the change or
10 repair system on simple water main repairs.
11 And what that -- what I'm saying is, is that
12 if we were -- we were told to increase the
13 repair time of certain minor repairs and
14 actually cut water mains out when they
15 didn't need to be cut out so they could
16 recoup the money from the repair from the
17 water users, from the general public that
18 the company serves. So that's my main
19 question. I want to -- I would like that --
20 restate that question. I would like to know
21 what institutes a capital improvement repair
22 into the distribution system.

23 And another issue I have, like I
24 mentioned earlier, is the customer service
25 is just really lacking. And it's gone down

1 in St. Louis County where I live, and St.
2 Charles County, and all the counties that
3 they serve, and all the municipalities that
4 they service. Manpower is down on customer
5 service, response time, and therefore,
6 because their response time is down, these
7 water main breaks are causing, can cause a
8 massive amount of damage to the St. Louis
9 County infrastructure, road repair system.

10 So therefore it's more -- it
11 creates more of a tax burden on taxpayers,
12 who pay to maintain these roads and this
13 infrastructure, with these water mains
14 tearing the roads up and causing other
15 additional damage to bridges and just
16 general infrastructure because of the lack
17 of response time on some of these water main
18 breaks. I know the maintenance crews and
19 the construction crews have been more than
20 cut in half, and that's part of the service
21 department that has been cut, and everybody
22 suffers from that.

23 The response time is delayed.
24 It's not like it used to be. Like I said, I
25 tried to call and report a water main break,

1 and I was talking to an individual down in
2 Florida, and it took two hours to even get
3 somebody in St. Louis County to respond to a
4 water main break. So, you know, that's one
5 of my issues.

6 And I also would like to know
7 what the water company is doing with lead in
8 the water. Our lead in the news nowadays
9 with what's going on up in Flint, Michigan,
10 I want to know if the water company,
11 Missouri American Water Company's taking
12 steps to do additional testing in their
13 distribution systems. I know they test for
14 lead, but I want to know also are they still
15 pouring lead joints in the distribution
16 system to make repairs. Because I know they
17 were definitely doing that when I was there.

18 So I want to know if we can get a
19 direct answer from them, if they're still
20 pouring lead joints in the distribution
21 system. What that means is like when an
22 older -- a bell and spigot system in a
23 piping system used to have lead joints up
24 until about 1941, and then they went to a
25 leadite material. But lead shouldn't be

1 introduced into a drinking system. But it
2 still was introduced to it when I was there
3 until -- and that was -- I left in 2007.

4 So those are some issues I'd like
5 to, you know, have some answers to. And
6 that's my concerns, you know, that affect
7 customer service and, you know, in the
8 infrastructure.

9 JUDGE JONES: I'll ask, were you
10 here for the question and answer portion?

11 TIM NEWPORT: Yes, I was.

12 JUDGE JONES: Did you ask those
13 questions?

14 TIM NEWPORT: I asked one of
15 them.

16 JUDGE JONES: Was it answered to
17 your satisfaction?

18 TIM NEWPORT: No, it was not
19 answered to my satisfaction.

20 JUDGE JONES: The customer
21 service issue?

22 TIM NEWPORT: Yes, it was not
23 answered. But -- and I want to make another
24 statement. If I -- if I'm a business owner
25 and I fail to maintain my business and I'm

1 vying for profit, why should I ask other
2 people to maintain it?

3 I mean, I know it's a little bit
4 different situation with the water utility,
5 but, you know, Missouri American Water
6 Company went around this country and bought
7 water departments all over this country,
8 almost in every state I believe. If you
9 don't want to maintain the system and invest
10 your money into the infrastructure, then
11 probably you shouldn't be buying it. I
12 don't know.

13 But, you know, when are these
14 rate increases -- I know they can do two a
15 year -- but, you know, if you go back and
16 look at bills from the mid '90s, late '90s
17 it's increased drastically. I understand
18 cost of living, inflation, all that, and
19 expense, but they're cutting labor down, you
20 know. They're down 70 workers that go
21 around fixing these water main breaks and
22 installing new water mains, you know. So
23 I'd like -- you know, those are my main
24 points that I'd like addressed.

25 JUDGE JONES: Well, to the

1 infrastructure system charge, I can't answer
2 that question for you.

3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Tim. You
4 said George.

5 JUDGE JONES: No, I said charge.

6 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Charge,
7 okay. Thank you. I'm right next to you and
8 can't hear.

9 JUDGE JONES: I can't answer that
10 question for you. And I'm guessing it was
11 more of a rhetorical question. Because I'm
12 pretty sure if you asked the parties here
13 you might get different answers anyway.
14 Commissioner Stoll?

15 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Would -- I
16 know there are a couple people here from the
17 Commission staff. If you'd raise your hand
18 if you might be able to talk to this
19 gentleman about the infrastructure
20 replacement charge. The gentleman back here
21 could talk to you.

22 There is a definition in the
23 statute, and the courts have also ruled on
24 various replacement issues. So that
25 gentleman could kind of tell you what the

1 standard is. And I guess if you have any
2 specific complaints about customer service,
3 if you could share those with our staff.

4 TIM NEWPORT: Well, I would -- I
5 would expect that the customer service would
6 be going up. You know, with the cost of the
7 water going up, you know, I would expect the
8 customer service to be going up. I
9 shouldn't be calling down to Florida to, to
10 report a water main break in St. Louis
11 County or St. Charles County.

12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: You might
13 ask them about the call center and see if --
14 I mean the person told you they were in
15 Florida?

16 TIM NEWPORT: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Okay. The
18 last comment I'll make is there is a
19 gentleman from the utility workers' union
20 here too, and you might just talk to him
21 about any concern you have about employees.
22 But I would encourage you to talk to some of
23 the folks that are here and hopefully get
24 your questions substantially answered.

25 TIM NEWPORT: Okay.

1 JUDGE JONES: Commissioner
2 Coleman, do you have any comments?
3 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Mr.
4 Newport, thank you for coming out this
5 evening and providing us with your concerns.
6 I would second what Commissioner Stoll has
7 noted, and that is that you do get answers
8 before you leave here tonight from the staff
9 and others who can assist you, all right?
10 TIM NEWPORT: All right.
11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you
12 very much.
13 JUDGE JONES: Any questions from
14 the parties? I don't see any. Thank you,
15 Mr. Newport, for your time. And next on the
16 list is Mayor Thomas P. Schneider of
17 Florissant. Can you raise your right hand,
18 sir? Do you solemnly affirm that the
19 testimony you are about to give is the
20 truth?
21 MAYOR SCHNEIDER: I do.
22 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may
23 proceed.
24 MAYOR SCHNEIDER: Thank you. I
25 just have a letter. I'll leave a copy with

1 you. These are comments on behalf of the
2 City of Florissant regarding Missouri
3 American Water Company's request for rate
4 increase. The City of Florissant is
5 generally satisfied with the level of
6 service that we receive from the Missouri
7 American Water Company, including adequate
8 water pressure throughout the system, timely
9 pipe repairs, and subsequent street repairs,
10 and an attractive new paint job for our
11 water tower, which we worked out with Brad.

12 That being said, the
13 administration of the City of Florissant is
14 not in support of a 19-plus percent rate
15 increase at a time when inflation is very
16 low and the economy of our region is lagging
17 behind other parts of the nation. We
18 challenge Missouri American Water to modify
19 their request to address their immediate
20 needs and propose a more moderate request at
21 this time. Thank you.

22 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr.
23 Schneider. Would you like that included in
24 the record? I mean, you just read it in the
25 record, but do you want it also to be

1 included?

2 MAYOR SCHNEIDER: Yes

3 JUDGE JONES: Is that your only
4 copy?

5 MAYOR SCHNEIDER: No. I can make
6 thousands of them.

7 JUDGE JONES: Okay. In that case
8 I'll just take the one. Is there any party
9 that has any objection to this being a part
10 of this record? I don't see any objections.
11 I'll mark this as Florissant Valley Exhibit
12 1 -- Flo-Valley Exhibit 1. Commissioner
13 Stoll?

14 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I have no
15 questions, but thank you for your testimony,
16 and thank you for coming down here.

17 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you,
18 sir.

19 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
20 Okay. Those are the only three people that
21 signed up to testify. Is there anyone else
22 who would like to -- yes, sir. Good
23 evening.

24 CRAIG BORCHELT: Good evening.

25 JUDGE JONES: Can you raise your

1 right hand? Will you solemnly affirm that
2 the testimony you are about to give is the
3 truth?

4 CRAIG BORCHELT: I do.

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
6 Can you state and spell your name as
7 necessary for the court reporter?

8 CRAIG BORCHELT: Sure. My name
9 is Craig Borchelt. I spell my last name, B,
10 as in bravo, o-r-c-h-e-l-t, from
11 Chesterfield, Missouri.

12 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may
13 proceed.

14 CRAIG BORCHELT: First of all I'd
15 like to thank you for having the hearing
16 tonight and taking the time. That said I
17 would like to note for the record my
18 disappointment as a resident of West
19 St. Louis County. The three hearings on
20 this matter are either in north St. Louis
21 County or south St. Louis County, not in
22 Clayton or in West County. For a
23 metropolitan area the size of over 2 million
24 people, that causes some of us to question
25 the Commission's commitment to having a

1 dialogue in this rate increase. I'm having
2 to come up here about 17 miles from home to
3 be able to have a discussion on a matter
4 that is relatively important. And I think
5 that in the future when you have these
6 hearings I hope that you'll consider a
7 little bit more carefully the geographic
8 location in hearing locations.

9 I don't rise tonight to talk with
10 an issue necessarily with the rate increase.
11 I read the material on your web page. I
12 understand that it's for an infrastructure
13 improvement. And I'll tell you, in my
14 subdivision in Chesterfield which was built
15 in 1980, we have had four water main breaks
16 in the last two years. So I don't on it's
17 face question the need for infrastructure
18 improvements.

19 Frankly I would -- this matter
20 wouldn't have come to my attention at all
21 except that I had a personal interaction
22 with Missouri American Water about
23 infrastructure here in the past three
24 months. It's been disappointing. I found
25 Missouri American's performance to be

1 substandard. And I wanted to raise to your
2 attention in the context of the request for
3 infrastructure improvement, and this
4 regarding personal or individual meters at
5 residences.

6 And I'd like you to pay attention
7 to number one, the issue, and number two,
8 Missouri American Water's performance and
9 compliance with tariffs that your Commission
10 has established. I received a letter from
11 Missouri American Water in mid-November, or
12 I should say late October, stating that they
13 had determined my home water meter was not
14 operating properly for a 10-month period.

15 The letter that I received and an
16 accompanied invoice -- now I had paid every
17 bill I received for 10 months on time no
18 problem -- provided me with a new invoice
19 removing all the payments that I had paid
20 before, or invoicing, and invoicing me for a
21 new amount, and then telling me that I owed
22 them another \$600 for water that had not
23 been properly billed.

24 The due date on the invoice was
25 within two weeks of receipt and had a letter

1 attached. The letter said, we apologize for
2 this inconvenience and understand this is an
3 unexpected additional bill amount. If you
4 are unable to pay this bill by this date, we
5 would like to provide you with assistance.
6 If you wish to discuss payment options,
7 please contact customer service.

8 A couple thoughts. Nothing in
9 the tariff says that I have to be unable to
10 pay the bill amount in order to get an
11 extended period of time to pay this bill.
12 The tariff says I get twice the amount of
13 time that, of the billing period in
14 question. I've talked to Commission staff
15 on the phone about this, and everybody's in
16 agreement.

17 When I called Missouri American
18 Water in response to this letter, at no time
19 did they reference the tariff, even though I
20 had already done my research and I knew what
21 they were required to do. They -- they
22 talked loosely about a payment plan. And
23 when I said I had questions about what was
24 wrong with the meter, how the meter was
25 determined, I was told my bill would be put

1 in a 60-day hold and I would be contacted by
2 a member of the company. 60 days passed, I
3 had received no call. I received another
4 invoice due immediately for \$600.

5 Side note, every time I call
6 Missouri American Water, and I've done so
7 several times, I get a call, a recording
8 that says, we're experiencing a higher than
9 normal call volume, and I'm put on hold for
10 5 to 10 minutes. I wonder how many
11 residents have the ability to sit on hold
12 for 5 to 10 minutes after receiving a letter
13 like this to ask Missouri American Water
14 questions? The representatives on the phone
15 have been very kind, courteous. And when I
16 called the second time I was told, we'll put
17 your invoice on hold for another 30 days,
18 and this time we're going to elevate it to a
19 supervisor and someone will definitely call
20 you back within two to three days.

21 A week went by, I finally called
22 the Commission and filed an informal
23 complaint. I won't go into all the
24 complaint procedures, but tell you that I
25 have finally received a call from Missouri

1 American Water, and I am, I believe that
2 this issue will be resolved satisfactorily.

3 My issue here is -- and my
4 question to them is twofold, one, how did
5 you determine the water meter was not
6 working? They have an automated system, and
7 they have automated billing. For 10 months
8 this went on. The way that they found out
9 -- and they told me this -- was they had a
10 crew of men that were checking all the
11 meters in my neighborhood, and that's when
12 they discovered the meter wasn't working.

13 I'm not clear how they don't
14 understand that, through an automated system
15 that, that reports water usage, and they
16 have an automated billing system. I mean, I
17 have a water meter with an antennae that
18 broadcasts the water amount. It would seem
19 that within a couple of months they would be
20 able to determine that and not levy a \$600
21 bill on a resident of St. Louis County.

22 I have no problem paying for the
23 water that I use, and I don't have a problem
24 conceptually with using past years' data,
25 although I would note this year has been the

1 wettest year on record in St. Louis County.
2 And so to use the summer months when I would
3 normally use an irrigation system from last
4 year for this year is not an accurate
5 comparison. So that -- that's what I'm
6 working with the company for.

7 But in terms of infrastructure
8 improvement, I would ask you, as I've
9 researched this issue, I have found that
10 these home meter failures are a bit more
11 problematic than I would like to believe.
12 So I would hope that as you're looking at a
13 rate increase Missouri American Water would
14 be required to pay attention to residential
15 water meters.

16 It's disappointing that this
17 occurs. It's disappoint that with the
18 automated systems in place, they're not
19 identifying these kind of problems before 10
20 months. I'm an attorney. I have time to
21 sit at a desk. I understand how the MPSC
22 works. I understand how to look tariffs up
23 on the internet. I have internet access. I
24 have time to spend on hold for 10 minutes.
25 I'm wondering what happens to a lot of

1 residents of St. Louis County who don't have
2 that luxury, who don't know about the MPSC,
3 who don't know to go to your web page, who
4 don't, who don't understand that bills are
5 not payable within two weeks.

6 I mean until I specifically
7 referenced that I had read the tariff, as
8 soon as I said the word tariff Missouri
9 American's tune changed. Oh, you've read
10 the tariff, we'll put your bill on hold and
11 we'll have somebody call you up. And even
12 at that point -- that first call was about
13 the last week of October, okay -- November,
14 December, January -- three months it took me
15 to finally get attention on this case.

16 Now again, I believe it'll be
17 properly resolved. I'm confident. Now
18 Missouri American's called me, and they're
19 working through it. But it took multiple
20 phone conversations, it took an informal
21 complaint, it took conversations with the
22 Commission's staff. And literally I was
23 this close to filing a formal complaint,
24 until I finally got a call for what I think
25 is a pretty reasonable issue, trying to

1 understand the basis for the meter failure.
2 And, you know, I really take issue with the
3 way that this bill is represented. We have
4 elderly people -- my parents are 80 years
5 old. They're going to get a packet like
6 this, they might not know that they have a
7 tariff obligation to give them twice the
8 billing period.

9 I didn't know that until I
10 started researching what was going on with
11 this, with this particular company and the
12 tariffs that the Commission has in place.
13 So I would encourage you as you look at
14 these rate increases -- again, I'm not
15 taking issue with the need for
16 infrastructure replacement, but I hope the
17 infrastructure replacement includes meter
18 failures. And I hope that this Commission
19 staff, be it through this rate increase, or
20 as a general rule, you hold this company
21 accountable.

22 To me when this kind of situation
23 occurs there should be a letter that says,
24 by Missouri Public Service Commission tariff
25 regulation you are entitled to twice the

1 amount of the billing period to repay the
2 invoice. It should not say, if you're
3 unable to pay the bill by this date, and it
4 should not have a date, I should not be
5 getting a bill that has a two-week due date.

6 I'm -- I'm savvy enough to take
7 issue with these folks, but I have spent a
8 significant amount of time and effort on
9 what is relatively a simple thing. There's
10 a lot of people in this area who don't have
11 the time, the ability to jump out of work,
12 the ability to sit on hold, or the
13 understanding of the process to be able to
14 fight this kind of thing. And I think
15 that's -- that's inappropriate for Missouri
16 American Water. Thank you for your time.
17 I'd be happy to take any questions.

18 JUDGE JONES: Commissioner Stoll.

19 COMMISSIONER STOLL: First of all
20 thanks for coming out and, you know, telling
21 us about this. We do appreciate it. I
22 won't comment on any of the major issues
23 regarding the company that you touched on at
24 this time, but in the future we will be
25 having a hearing in, someplace in West

1 County. Usually -- in fact, the first local
2 public hearing I ever attended was at -- was
3 it Thornhill Library?

4 JUDGE JONES: Uh-huh.

5 COMMISSIONER STOLL: And
6 evidently this time it was unavailable. And
7 so -- but anyway, we do understand and will
8 make sure that we get a West County location
9 next time too.

10 CRAIG BORCHELT: Thank you very
11 much.

12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: You're
13 welcome. And again, thank you for coming
14 out this evening and sharing those thoughts
15 with us.

16 CRAIG BORCHELT: Certainly.

17 JUDGE JONES: Commissioner
18 Coleman?

19 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you,
20 Attorney, for your testimony. I do have a
21 question. Relative to the assessment of the
22 \$600 in additional billing that you got
23 over, after a ten-month period, I didn't
24 hear you say that you didn't feel that that
25 was a fair assessment. Do you feel that you

1 used \$600 in additional water usage over
2 that 10-month period? You've got a swimming
3 pool or something?

4 CRAIG BORCHELT: No. So -- so
5 what appears to have happened is that the
6 meter did not register water usage during
7 that period. So I was getting invoiced for
8 additional fee, but it was substantially
9 lower than the amount of water that was
10 used. So Missouri American Water, when they
11 determined that the meter was inoperative,
12 used per Commission, per the tariff, the
13 previous years' water usage data for the
14 period of January through October, the 10
15 months that the meter was not in operation.

16 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: I do not
17 quarrel with that. That -- that is in
18 compliance with the tariff. My -- my issue
19 and what I had asked in terms of equity for
20 Missouri American Water to consider is that
21 in this most unusually wet year for a three
22 to four month period, rather than using the
23 elevated water use rates from 2014 when we
24 had 13 inches of rain in June, my query to
25 them initially was can we not use a month

1 that doesn't reflect my, my irrigation
2 system use. I'm happy to have you use
3 March, April, some period of time other than
4 June when I had the irrigation system. I
5 had about a three-month area where I took
6 issue with the amount of water that we used.

7 And that's what I'm in a
8 discussion with them about now. And that is
9 when -- they have now come back and said,
10 let's review your invoices, let's see what
11 you think is fair, let's have a dialogue on
12 -- literally I had a conversation with them
13 on Friday, and I'll probably be talking with
14 them again tomorrow.

15 So I -- you know, again, I'm not
16 trying to not pay water that was used. I'm
17 not taking issue with that at all. I think
18 my -- my bigger issue in speaking to you is
19 two-fold, one, residential meters should not
20 be failing -- actually, three-fold. Two,
21 when they do fail, this problem should be
22 picked up within -- it shouldn't take 10
23 months for them to figure it out. And
24 three, I was really disappointed at the way
25 in my view Missouri American Water -- you

1 know, I really felt like they were trying to
2 not be -- they were not being honest with
3 their requirements under the tariff. Even
4 when I filed the informal complaint with
5 Commission staff, Commission staff called me
6 back and said, well, they say they offered
7 you a payment plan. I said, pull -- pull
8 the phone records, pull the tapes, and let's
9 see what they told me on the phone.

10 Because when I would call again
11 they were very hospitable, very nice.
12 They'd say, we'll put you on hold and have
13 somebody call you again. So I hope that
14 answers your questions.

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Yes.
16 Thank you.

17 CRAIG BORCHELT: Thank you,
18 ma'am.

19 JUDGE JONES: Okay. No questions
20 from any parties. Thank you, Mr. Borchelt.
21 Appreciate it.

22 CRAIG BORCHELT: Thank you Judge.

23 JUDGE JONES: Is there anyone
24 else who'd like to make a statement on the
25 record? Yes, sir. Do you solemnly affirm

1 that the testimony which you are about to
2 give is the truth?

3 ALLAN BATHON: I do.

4 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, and
5 could you please state and spell your name
6 for the court reporter?

7 ALLAN BATHON: My name's Allan
8 Bathan, A-l-l-a-n B-a-t-h-o-n.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. You may
10 proceed, sir.

11 ALLAN BATHON: I am a customer of
12 Missouri American Water, and I am an
13 employee of Missouri American Water, and I
14 am president of Utility Workers' Local 335
15 which represents the employees of Missouri
16 American Water in St. Louis County.

17 Our contract expired October
18 31st, 2015. We entered into contract
19 negotiations in early September of 2015. We
20 negotiated several meetings, came to a
21 tentative agreement, and voted on a
22 tentative agreement December 2nd, 2015,
23 which was rejected by the, by the members.

24 So we met again in early January,
25 reached another tentative agreement with

1 some improvements, and reached a tentative
2 agreement. We decided we would try to vote
3 on, have the membership have a ratification
4 vote as early as we could. We came up with
5 a date of January 25th, but couldn't get a
6 mailing out in time to the members to have
7 the vote. So we decided -- our regular
8 monthly meeting was February 3rd, so we went
9 ahead and scheduled a vote for then. Did
10 not send out any mailings.

11 So chief negotiator for the water
12 company called me and wanted to know when we
13 were going to vote. So I told him February
14 3rd. So about 15 minutes later he called me
15 back and said, is there any way to get the
16 vote before the end of January? And I said,
17 well, let me talk to my committee and see
18 what, what we could do. That was -- we
19 found a place to hold a meeting on January
20 28th. And I figured the sooner we voted,
21 the better it would be, because our raise
22 would kick in on the day we ratified the
23 contract. And the committee was
24 recommending the package to the membership
25 anyway. First vote we didn't recommend the

1 package, we remained neutral.

2 So we were pretty confident that
3 the thing would, the tentative agreement
4 would pass. So we held the vote on January
5 28th after the company said, you know, if
6 you move it up to before the end of January
7 in order to help the rate case. So just for
8 the record, we -- we ratified the contract
9 on January 28th. And it's four-year
10 contract. Runs until the end of, October
11 31st, 2019.

12 JUDGE JONES: Any questions?

13 COMMISSIONER STOLL: No. Thank
14 you for your testimony.

15 JUDGE JONES: Any questions from
16 the parties? Thank you.

17 ALLAN BATHON: Thank you.

18 JUDGE JONES: Is there anyone
19 else who'd like to make a statement on the
20 record? Yes, sir. Would you raise your
21 right hand. Do you solemnly affirm that the
22 testimony you're about to give is the truth?

23 AL RATERMANN: I do.

24 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. And
25 could you please state and spell your name

1 for the court reporter?

2 AL RATERMANN: Yes. It's Al
3 Ratermann, R-a-t-e-r-m-a-n-n.

4 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
5 You may proceed.

6 AL RATERMANN: I am currently the
7 vice president of the Utility Workers' Union
8 of American Local 335. My union represents
9 approximately 355 members that work in the
10 St. Louis District of Missouri American
11 Water. I have worked for Missouri American
12 Water and the previous owner, St. Louis
13 County Water, since 1991. I've been part of
14 the construction department since 1995, and
15 I am a lead person in that department since
16 2004.

17 I work specifically in the field
18 of the obsolete water main replacement. I
19 know the ISRS project very well, as I've
20 worked in that daily. I have served three
21 terms, three past terms as president of
22 Local 335, and three terms as vice president
23 also. Part of the purpose of my testimony
24 this evening is to discuss the unfilled jobs
25 in our Local 335 bargaining unit and

1 Missouri American Water's lack of
2 maintaining an adequate valve maintenance
3 program.

4 As I stated in the question and
5 answer session, since 2010 we are
6 approximately 70 bargaining union members
7 less today than we were then. And as the
8 company stated and recognizes, we have an
9 aging workforce. I believe that the company
10 stated in a data request that the aging
11 workforce, the average eligible -- they
12 state the eligible age for retirement is age
13 61, but I don't know of any of us that can
14 retire at 61 with rising healthcare costs
15 and everything associated with that. So I
16 -- I don't think that's a very accurate
17 number. There's several of our members that
18 are into their 70s already, still working
19 for the company.

20 I believe -- our union believes
21 that Missouri American Water is not using
22 all available resources to adequately
23 prepare bargaining union members to fill
24 open vacancies. For example, there are no
25 employees currently assigned to the shop

1 helper classification, which was designed to
2 be a transition position to employees to go
3 to school, acquire vocational training, and
4 then move into a higher level mechanic's
5 position over a three-year period. To my
6 knowledge Missouri American Water has not
7 hired any employees in the shop helper
8 classification in at least five years.

9 I believe the impact of unfilled
10 jobs could potentially impact adequate
11 service to the consumers, the customers.
12 Unfilled positions in our bargaining unit --
13 which we have 30 some different job
14 classifications -- cover the entire spectrum
15 of our bargaining unit. And I believe that
16 in order to provide safe and adequate
17 service that it is essential to have, to
18 have our members properly staffed.

19 I'm curious as to since 2010 the
20 number of non-union positions that the
21 company has reduced through attrition or for
22 whatever reason. I wonder if they've
23 reduced any? Minimal at best I believe.
24 You would think -- one would assume that as
25 the working positions are reduced, you would

1 have less supervisors and managers to manage
2 your employees, but I don't believe that's
3 the case that we currently are working
4 under.

5 Missouri American's workforce, we
6 are an inhouse workforce, internal
7 workforce, and we believe we are the most
8 readily available workforce to respond to
9 water main breaks, emergencies and immediate
10 customer needs. Customer service
11 classifications are vital for obvious
12 reasons. We change the meters out, we read
13 the meters, we do -- like I said, every
14 aspect in the bargaining unit work for the
15 water company, and have probably for over 70
16 years.

17 In the customer service
18 classification, there are approximately 24
19 fewer employees in that classification today
20 than there were on October 31st of 2010.
21 Also, for example, we have a fleet of over
22 400 vehicles in the St. Louis District, and
23 we have fewer garage mechanics to service
24 these vehicles in a prompt and efficient
25 manner. Unfortunately the company has

1 employees leave for whatever reason, and
2 they're not, as I said, refilling those
3 vacancies.

4 It's ironic to me to note that
5 the company takes great pride in customer
6 service satisfaction ratings. I think
7 something I saw recently said that they had
8 over 90 percent, or close to a 90 percent
9 customer service satisfaction rating. I can
10 only assume that for my own self, that I
11 think that number will drop as the number of
12 employees drop also. I don't think they're
13 going to get the same results that they
14 would like.

15 As I stated, we have an aging
16 workforce. This was acknowledged by the CEO
17 of American Water in an internet video
18 presentation she did last year. I saw the
19 video presentation. She stated that over
20 the next 10 years approximately 50 to 60
21 percent of the employees in the American
22 Water System, and they operate in 30 some
23 states nationwide -- they're the largest
24 investor of water and wastewater utility in
25 the United States of America. So obviously

1 they've identified that employees are being,
2 going to retire.

3 The main question I have is what
4 are they going do about it? What are we
5 going to do about this? And up until this
6 point in time there's been very little, not
7 much of a response, if any, to that very
8 important question that affects everyone in
9 this room who is a customer of the company.

10 It's an obvious deduction that as
11 you have essential senior people -- as I
12 said, or may not have said, I'm entering my
13 25th year of employment with the company, so
14 I've been around for a while -- as I see a
15 few new hires that have come into the
16 company, there's a skills gap between us
17 older workers that have the skills base and
18 knowledge. And that's not something that's
19 developed overnight. That takes time, takes
20 years of, you know, actually on-the-job
21 training and skills training that the
22 company does provide. But -- you know, that
23 -- that concerns me that this, this gap
24 could, you know, further widen.

25 I suggest that as the Commission

1 reviews this case, as a condition that
2 Missouri American Water's filing will
3 include unfilled positions, and that they
4 agree to promptly fill all future vacancies.

5 I'm also concerned about, as I
6 stated earlier, the lack of a valve
7 maintenance exercise program. And I would
8 be happy to explain what that is if you'd
9 like. But briefly stating it is a
10 maintenance procedure whereby valves are
11 operated to ensure that they function
12 properly. Exercising a valve helps to
13 remove the corrosion and sediment that
14 builds up inside the valve, which makes it
15 more difficult to close. If a valve does
16 not completely close during the buildup of
17 erosion and sediment, it will not be
18 effective in isolating the main. In that
19 case a valve at another location needs to be
20 closed, thereby putting additional customers
21 out of service.

22 Valve exercising can be done
23 manually or by using a valve key or using a
24 gas-powered machine possessed by Missouri
25 American Water. To my knowledge the

1 gas-powered machine is not currently being
2 used. Based on the discussions that I've
3 had with coworkers and with my own direct
4 knowledge, I know that in the late '80s and
5 early 1990s Missouri American Water had a
6 crew of three to four maintenance employees
7 who were exclusively assigned to exercise
8 valves. Since then Missouri American Water
9 has not had any employees exclusively
10 assigned to valve exercising.

11 In 2007 American Water, the
12 parent company in Missouri, drafted a valve
13 operation inspection and a maintenance
14 practice, also known as the practice. A
15 true and accurate copy is in the exhibit,
16 the direct testimony that you may or may not
17 be aware of that I filed back in January
18 through our intervention with our utility
19 workers as an intervener in this rate case.

20 The stated purpose of the
21 practice is to ensure that American Water
22 Company's subsidiaries develop and utilize a
23 consistent program to effectively inspect
24 and maintain valves within its distribution
25 system in order to ensure the operational

1 integrity of these assets and to optimize
2 the utilization of personnel resources.
3 Specifically the practice sets out the steps
4 for proper valve exercising, the frequency
5 of maintenance techniques and data
6 collection practices.

7 Other subsidiaries of American
8 Water have currently in place a valve
9 exercise program. Tennessee American Water,
10 to be specific, is one of the companies that
11 has that in effect. And as I earlier
12 stated, we used to do that some years back.

13 Missouri American Water's net
14 income in 2014 was \$42.8 million. Their net
15 income in 2013 was \$38.5 million. And in
16 2012 their net income was \$49 million.
17 American Water, the parent corporation of
18 Missouri American Water, in 2014 their net
19 income was \$423 million. So it's quite
20 obvious to assess from those figures that
21 Missouri American Water is a very
22 profitable, very financially-sound company.
23 They do very well.

24 I would refer anyone that's
25 interested, there's a website if you would

1 care to review the salaries of the American
2 Water corporate executives, that you go to a
3 website called SourceWatch,
4 S-o-u-r-c-e-w-a-t-c-h.com. All the salaries
5 of the officers of American Water are listed
6 on that website. As a customer of the
7 company I am concerned about this district,
8 this new revamped district the company is
9 wanting or requesting.

10 They have previously passed rate
11 cases attempting to have single tariff
12 pricing. Currently we have
13 district-specific pricing. So the St. Louis
14 district is priced separate. I am a firm
15 believer that is an appropriate mechanism
16 for the company to recoup their costs.

17 The analogy that I like to give
18 is if Commissioner Stoll and myself go out
19 to dinner and he orders a steak and I order
20 a hamburger, and it comes time for the bill
21 and all of a sudden he wants me to split the
22 bill with him, I would say, well, hold on,
23 Commissioner, you had a steak, I just had a
24 hamburger, what's up here? He's like, well,
25 that's okay, this is single tariff, we're

1 going to split the cost.

2 So that's my analogy, and I think
3 it, it will hold true. Because if this is
4 successful and -- and even though the
5 company said that they're not at this time
6 pursuing that pricing structure, they are
7 trying to combine St. Louis, Jefferson City
8 and Mexico into one district. And I think
9 it was identified as District 1 by the
10 staff. I inquired earlier in the question
11 and answer session. And that also causes me
12 some concern just because of exorbitant
13 costs that, you know, could potentially
14 happen in one of those other districts. The
15 consumers in St. Louis County who would get
16 no real benefit would help have to pay for
17 that. So as a, as a consumer and a
18 customer, I have an issue with that. I
19 don't think that that is fair.

20 Also in the annual report
21 Missouri American filed in 2014, one of the
22 items they site is that there was a lower
23 labor incentive plan payout where drivers
24 would decrease payroll costs by
25 approximately 12 percent. And I'll -- I'll

1 leave that to you fine Commissioners to
2 investigate that.

3 That's pretty much all I have. I
4 -- I thank you for the opportunity to speak
5 with you, and I would hope you would listen
6 to all of our concerns that we've voiced
7 here this evening. Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you
9 for your testimony. I have no questions for
10 you.

11 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: You did
12 state that your testimony is on record?

13 AL RATERMANN: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: You're
15 already filed that?

16 AL RATERMANN: Yes.

17 JUDGE JONES: Is there anyone
18 else present who would like to make a
19 statement on the record? I see a hand in
20 the back. Please come forward. Will you
21 raise your right hand? Do you solemnly
22 affirm that the testimony that you are about
23 to give is the truth?

24 JEFF COLEMAN: Yes, I do.

25 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.

1 Can you please state and spell your name for
2 court reporter?

3 JEFF COLEMAN: My name is Jeff
4 Coleman, J-e-f-f C-o-l-e-m-a-n.

5 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr.
6 Coleman. You may proceed.

7 JEFF COLEMAN: I am the vice
8 chair of the St. Louis County Central
9 Committee Libertarian Party, also a resident
10 of St. Louis County, and I have been a
11 customer of Missouri American Water for 14
12 years. In St. Louis County where sewer
13 bills from Metropolitan Sewer District are
14 determined by a customer's water usage,
15 water volume usage on their winter water
16 bills, those bills are, correlate, and the
17 winter water bill is essentially covering a
18 three-month period, which would be typically
19 91 days, if you divide the number of days in
20 a year by 4.

21 I've reviewed all of my winter
22 water bills for the 14-year period that I've
23 had an account with Missouri American Water,
24 and I found it curious that none of them
25 were 91 days or less. All of my bills were

1 either a few days or up to a full week or
2 more longer than what one would expect a
3 quarter to be. Anywhere from 93 days to 98
4 days is what I've seen on my bills.

5 I don't think that Missouri
6 American Water is singling out my account
7 for padding the length of those winter
8 quarters, I suspect it probably applies to
9 all customers in Missouri American Water in
10 St. Louis County. And that is -- that would
11 appear to be increasing my sewer rates, and
12 presumably every sewer customer's rate in
13 St. Louis County by an average of 5 percent
14 per year based on what I'm seeing as an
15 average of 5 percent longer water cycles for
16 the winter quarter as compared to the rest
17 of the year.

18 I can only speculate that, for
19 whatever reason, the Missouri American Water
20 and the Metropolitan Sewer District are
21 working together to pad a few extra days and
22 pad, you know, approximately about 5 percent
23 on average to my sewer rates and every one
24 else's sewer rates, and I'm curious as to
25 why that's happening. And I would urge all

1 customers of Missouri American Water in
2 St. Louis County to review their winter
3 water bills closely and find out if they are
4 experiencing the same extra days included in
5 their water quarter that I've been
6 experiencing for the entire time that I've
7 been a customer of Missouri American. Thank
8 you.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you.
10 Commissioner Stoll?

11 COMMISSIONER STOLL: I might just
12 suggest that you talk to our staff. I know
13 we have accountants and a variety of folks
14 here that may be able to help you with that
15 issue. I don't know the answer to it, so
16 I'm not suggesting that anything wrong is
17 going on. But you might just check and see
18 if there is an explanation.

19 JEFF COLEMAN: Okay. Sure.

20 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you,
22 ir. Thank you, JEFF COLEMAN.

23 JEFF COLEMAN: Thank you, Ms.
24 Coleman.

25 JUDGE JONES: I think I saw

1 another hand near the rear. Good evening.

2 SHARON SHARP: First of all I'm
3 apologizing for being late. I've got to
4 swear in. I forgot. I swear.

5 JUDGE JONES: Do you solemnly --
6 do you solemnly affirm that the testimony
7 you're about to give is the truth?

8 SHARON SHARP: Yes.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you. And
10 could you please state and spell your name
11 for the court reporter?

12 SHARON SHARP: Sharon,
13 S-h-a-r-o-n, Sharp, S-h-a-r-p, like in
14 Peter.

15 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Ms.
16 Sharp. You may proceed.

17 SHARON SHARP: Okay. I am just
18 speaking on behalf of the consumer and
19 people with low to moderate income. Utility
20 companies, I recognize, like any other
21 business, you got to make a profit. And, of
22 course, we expect you to make a profit.
23 However, you cannot expect people of
24 moderate income to be able to meet all the
25 utility rate hikes. It's not just water,

1 it's gas, electric, all of you have rate
2 hikes, when our income does not increase.

3 Your income -- if my income stays
4 the same and you keep increasing five
5 different things, at some point I cannot pay
6 that bill, or I can't eat, or I can't buy
7 medicine, or something's going to give. And
8 I think it's unfair to people who are
9 struggling, and everybody else is just, oh,
10 you're making wonderful big salaries and all
11 that, and -- yes, you do maybe have a
12 program for poverty, but if you make \$1 more
13 than that poverty level, you don't qualify
14 for assistance.

15 So I'm saying -- and to come here
16 two or three times for rate hikes
17 repeatedly, so companies say, okay, I want a
18 15 percent rate hike to get an 8, then they
19 come back six months later and get a 4
20 percent rate hike, the average consumer
21 cannot afford that. We are -- well, not
22 everybody's on fixed income, but I don't
23 know anybody's salary who's going up. Mine
24 stays the same. I cannot afford it.

25 And I want to know what in the

1 world are we supposed to do without becoming
2 bad customers, so that we are being dunned
3 and all that?

4 JUDGE JONES: Is that a
5 rhetorical question?

6 SHARON SHARP: It's basically a
7 rhetorical question, yes, it is. I don't
8 think you have that answer either. Okay.
9 Thank you so much for listening to me.

10 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, SHARON
11 SHARP.

12 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Yeah. Thank
13 you for your testimony.

14 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

15 JUDGE JONES: Okay. Is there
16 anyone else who'd like to make a statement
17 on the record? Yes, sir. Hi. Will you
18 solemnly affirm that the testimony you're
19 about to give is the truth?

20 RAY REHDER: Yes.

21 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir, you
22 may -- oh, will you please state and spell
23 your name for the court reporter also?

24 RAY REHDER: Ray Rehder,
25 R-e-h-d-e-r.

1 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, Mr.
2 Rehder. You may proceed.

3 RAY REHDER: Just a couple
4 things. I want -- from the standpoint of if
5 you're on fixed income, it's fixed. If
6 you're on social security, you don't have
7 anything else coming in, and when you get
8 older and you're not working, you have
9 nothing. And every time everything goes up,
10 you relinquish, for all intents and
11 purposes, you're trying to figure out what
12 you're going to do without to pay for this.

13 Every time there's a rate
14 increase anywhere down the line, somewhere
15 down the line you got to give up something.
16 Either you got a couple days you don't take
17 medicine, or you skip your days on your
18 medicine, or you go from three meals to two.
19 But everybody's got to give up something to
20 do this. And at some point in time people
21 got to understand, fixed income is fixed
22 income. There is nothing coming in.
23 There's no bonuses, there's no paychecks,
24 you're stuck with what you got.

25 And when you started out it might

1 have been fine, but the way everybody keeps
2 increasing costs for everything, food,
3 medicine, even generic drugs have gone up
4 now to the point where you get a generic
5 drug, you're still going to end up paying
6 more than what you were paying for it a year
7 ago. Foods going up.

8 And now St. Louis County, a lot
9 of houses were reassessed, and now your
10 taxes on your house went up. So you're
11 sitting here trying to figure out how to pay
12 all this, then you get hit with a utility
13 bill that goes up. You get to the point
14 where somewhere down the line somebody's got
15 to draw the line and say no more. And then
16 none of us got a cost of living raise this
17 year because, one thing we don't use that
18 much of, gasoline went down, you know.

19 I don't know about a lot of
20 people that are retired, but between the
21 wife and I, we don't drive as much as we did
22 a couple years ago when we were both
23 working, to the point where gasoline's
24 something I don't really use that much of.
25 And I think a lot of the people -- and also,

1 a lot of people that are on social security
2 don't even drive. So, you know, they took a
3 -- they took a loss for something else that
4 they don't even use that they're not even
5 getting a benefit from.

6 Then I do have one other
7 question, and it goes not only for American,
8 Missouri American Water, but for other
9 utilities, you're all investor owned. How
10 much of what you, what these people invest
11 in is being used to pay for some of this
12 stuff instead of us being stuck with the
13 bill for all of it? I mean it gets to the
14 point where you got stockholders, okay --
15 matter of fact, the water company was, I
16 believe it was 64.2 a share today for their
17 stock. And up to this point right now as of
18 the end of, I believe it was September, they
19 had posted an 84 cent dividend. Last year
20 it was a \$1.24 dividend per share, okay.

21 Why isn't some of that money
22 being applied to some of these expenses that
23 everybody wants to dump on us as a rate
24 increase. Granted, some of the stuff was
25 already paid for, from one of the questions

1 asked earlier, they said that technically
2 part of the rate increase was to pay for
3 stuff that was already done and recoup that
4 money. Well, why wasn't some of that money
5 recouped out of your investors, out of the
6 stock that you sold. That's all I have.

7 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you
8 for your testimony.

9 JUDGE JONES: Thank you, sir.
10 Anyone else who'd like to make a statement
11 on the record? I don't see anyone, so with
12 that we will go off the record. And we
13 appreciate you all coming out.

14 COMMISSIONER STOLL: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER COLEMAN: Thank you.

16
17 (END OF HEARING.)

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#	47:14, 47:18, 49:21 2015 [3] - 36:18, 36:19, 36:22 2016 [2] - 1:4, 61:17 2019 [1] - 38:11 2230 [1] - 6:5 24 [1] - 42:18 25th [2] - 37:5, 44:13 28th [3] - 37:20, 38:5, 38:9 29th [1] - 3:4 2nd [1] - 36:22	8	age [2] - 40:12 aging [3] - 40:9, 40:10, 43:15 ago [2] - 58:7, 58:22 agree [1] - 45:4 agreement [7] - 25:16, 36:21, 36:22, 36:25, 37:2, 38:3, 61:6 ahead [2] - 7:5, 37:9 AL [5] - 38:23, 39:2, 39:6, 50:13, 50:16 Al [1] - 39:2 ALLAN [5] - 36:3, 36:7, 36:8, 36:11, 38:17 Allan [1] - 36:7 allow [2] - 8:25, 9:1 allows [2] - 8:17, 8:19 almost [2] - 8:10, 16:8 America [1] - 43:25 AMERICAN [1] - 1:1 American [57] - 2:7, 5:21, 5:23, 7:21, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:3, 20:7, 20:18, 23:22, 24:8, 24:11, 25:17, 26:6, 26:13, 27:1, 28:13, 31:16, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:16, 39:8, 39:10, 39:11, 40:1, 40:21, 41:6, 43:17, 43:21, 45:2, 45:25, 46:5, 46:8, 46:11, 46:21, 47:7, 47:9, 47:13, 47:17, 47:18, 47:21, 48:1, 48:5, 49:21, 51:11, 51:23, 52:6, 52:9, 52:19, 53:1, 53:7, 59:7, 59:8 American's [4] - 23:25, 29:9, 29:18, 42:5 amount [10] - 13:8, 24:21, 25:3, 25:10, 25:12, 27:18, 31:1, 31:8, 33:9, 34:6 analogy [2] - 48:17, 49:2 annual [1] - 49:20 answer [9] - 3:8, 14:19, 15:10, 17:1, 17:9, 40:5, 49:11, 53:15, 56:8 answered [8] - 3:16, 7:19, 10:8, 10:9, 15:16, 15:19, 15:23, 18:24 answers [4] - 15:5,	17:13, 19:7, 35:14 antennae [1] - 27:17 anyway [3] - 17:13, 32:7, 37:25 apologize [1] - 25:1 apologizing [1] - 54:3 appear [2] - 3:19, 52:11 appearance [1] - 6:15 appearances [1] - 5:19 applied [1] - 59:22 applies [1] - 52:8 Appreciate [1] - 35:21 appreciate [4] - 4:11, 10:1, 31:21, 60:13 appreciated [1] - 7:4 appropriate [1] - 48:15 April [1] - 34:3 area [3] - 22:23, 31:10, 34:5 Arnold [1] - 2:15 aspect [1] - 42:14 assess [1] - 47:20 assessment [2] - 32:21, 32:25 assets [1] - 47:1 assigned [4] - 2:10, 40:25, 46:7, 46:10 assist [1] - 19:9 assistance [2] - 25:5, 55:14 associated [1] - 40:15 assume [2] - 41:24, 43:10 attached [1] - 25:1 attempting [1] - 48:11 attended [1] - 32:2 attention [5] - 23:20, 24:2, 24:6, 28:14, 29:15 attorney [2] - 6:3, 28:20 Attorney [1] - 32:20 attractive [1] - 20:10 attrition [1] - 41:21 AUTHORITY [1] - 61:15 automated [5] - 27:6, 27:7, 27:14, 27:16, 28:18 available [3] - 3:21, 40:22, 42:8 Avenue [1] - 9:20 average [5] - 40:11, 52:13, 52:15, 52:23, 55:20 aware [1] - 46:17
\$	\$1.24 [1] - 59:20 \$423 [1] - 47:19 \$49 [1] - 47:16 \$51 [2] - 8:8, 8:14 \$600 [5] - 24:22, 26:4, 27:20, 32:22, 33:1	9	9.73 [1] - 8:10 90 [2] - 43:8 91 [2] - 51:19, 51:25 93 [1] - 52:3 98 [1] - 52:3	
'	30 [3] - 26:17, 41:13, 43:22 314 [1] - 1:25 31698 [1] - 1:24 31st [3] - 36:18, 38:11, 42:20 3344 [1] - 1:7 335 [4] - 36:14, 39:8, 39:22, 39:25 355 [1] - 39:9 38.5 [1] - 47:15 3rd [2] - 37:8, 37:14	A	AARP [1] - 9:17 ability [3] - 26:11, 31:11, 31:12 able [8] - 3:15, 5:11, 17:18, 23:3, 27:20, 31:13, 53:14, 54:24 access [1] - 28:23 accompanied [1] - 24:16 according [1] - 8:6 account [2] - 51:23, 52:6 accountable [1] - 30:21 accountants [1] - 53:13 accurate [4] - 28:4, 40:16, 46:15, 61:12 acknowledged [1] - 43:16 acquire [1] - 41:3 acts [1] - 2:19 addition [1] - 2:13 additional [7] - 13:15, 14:12, 25:3, 32:22, 33:1, 33:8, 45:20 address [2] - 6:4, 20:19 addressed [1] - 16:24 adequate [4] - 20:7, 40:2, 41:10, 41:16 adequately [1] - 40:22 adjustment [1] - 8:24 administration [1] - 20:13 affect [1] - 15:6 affects [1] - 44:8 affirm [9] - 7:13, 11:16, 19:18, 22:1, 35:25, 38:21, 50:22, 54:6, 56:18 afford [2] - 55:21, 55:24 aforesaid [1] - 61:13	
'80s [1] - 46:4 '90s [2] - 16:16	3			
0	4			
084-004545 [1] - 1:20	4 [2] - 51:20, 55:19 400 [1] - 42:22 42.8 [1] - 47:14 481-8616 [1] - 1:25			
1	5			
1 [4] - 21:12, 49:9, 55:12 10 [11] - 8:6, 8:10, 24:17, 26:10, 26:12, 27:7, 28:19, 28:24, 33:14, 34:22, 43:20 10-month [2] - 24:14, 33:2 11th [1] - 3:5 12 [1] - 49:25 13 [1] - 33:24 134 [1] - 1:7 14 [1] - 51:11 14-year [1] - 51:22 15 [2] - 37:14, 55:18 17 [1] - 23:2 19-plus [1] - 20:14 1941 [1] - 14:24 1980 [1] - 23:15 1990s [1] - 46:5 1991 [1] - 39:13 1995 [2] - 11:25, 39:14	5 [5] - 26:10, 26:12, 52:13, 52:15, 52:22 50 [1] - 43:20			
	6			
2	60 [2] - 26:2, 43:20 60-day [1] - 26:1 61 [2] - 40:13, 40:14 63131 [1] - 1:24 63135 [1] - 1:8 64.2 [1] - 59:16 65102 [1] - 6:6			
2 [1] - 22:23 2004 [1] - 39:16 2007 [3] - 11:25, 15:3, 46:11 2010 [3] - 40:5, 41:19, 42:20 2012 [1] - 47:16 2013 [1] - 47:15 2014 [4] - 33:23,	7			
	70 [3] - 16:20, 40:6, 42:15 70s [1] - 40:18 789 [1] - 1:20			

B				
<p>B-a-t-h-o-n [1] - 36:8 background [1] - 2:17 bad [1] - 56:2 balance [1] - 2:20 bargaining [6] - 39:25, 40:6, 40:23, 41:12, 41:15, 42:14 base [1] - 44:17 based [2] - 46:2, 52:14 basis [1] - 30:1 Bathan [1] - 36:8 BATHON [4] - 36:3, 36:7, 36:11, 38:17 becoming [1] - 56:1 begin [1] - 9:16 behalf [2] - 20:1, 54:18 behind [1] - 20:17 believer [1] - 48:15 believes [1] - 40:20 bell [1] - 14:22 benefit [2] - 49:16, 59:5 best [1] - 41:23 BESTOWED [1] - 61:15 better [1] - 37:21 between [2] - 44:16, 58:20 bias [1] - 3:19 big [1] - 55:10 bigger [1] - 34:18 bill [17] - 24:17, 25:3, 25:4, 25:10, 25:11, 25:25, 27:21, 29:10, 30:3, 31:3, 31:5, 48:20, 48:22, 51:17, 55:6, 58:13, 59:13 billed [1] - 24:23 billing [7] - 8:4, 25:13, 27:7, 27:16, 30:8, 31:1, 32:22 bills [10] - 8:8, 16:16, 29:4, 51:13, 51:16, 51:22, 51:25, 52:4, 53:3 bit [3] - 16:3, 23:7, 28:10 body [1] - 5:2 bonds [1] - 9:10 bonuses [1] - 57:23 BORCHELT [9] - 21:24, 22:4, 22:8, 22:14, 32:10, 32:16, 33:4, 35:17, 35:22 Borchelt [2] - 22:9, 35:20 bought [1] - 16:6</p>	<p>Box [2] - 1:24, 6:5 Brad [1] - 20:11 bravo [1] - 22:10 break [3] - 13:25, 14:4, 18:10 breaks [5] - 13:7, 13:18, 16:21, 23:15, 42:9 bridges [1] - 13:15 briefly [1] - 45:9 broadcasts [1] - 27:18 builds [1] - 45:14 buildup [1] - 45:16 built [1] - 23:14 burden [1] - 13:11 BURRIS [1] - 61:21 BURRIS [1] - 61:3 Burris [1] - 1:20 business [3] - 15:24, 15:25, 54:21 buy [1] - 55:6 buying [1] - 16:11 BY [1] - 61:15</p>	<p>changed [1] - 29:9 chapters [1] - 9:17 charge [4] - 17:1, 17:5, 17:6, 17:20 Charles [4] - 7:6, 11:6, 13:2, 18:11 CHARLES [1] - 7:8 CHARLES [6] - 7:10, 7:15, 7:18, 10:19, 11:3, 11:6 check [1] - 53:17 checking [1] - 27:10 Chesterfield [2] - 22:11, 23:14 chief [1] - 37:11 chosen [1] - 4:11 City [8] - 3:5, 4:25, 5:11, 6:5, 20:2, 20:4, 20:13, 49:7 classification [4] - 41:1, 41:8, 42:18, 42:19 classifications [2] - 41:14, 42:11 Clayton [1] - 22:22 clear [3] - 7:25, 9:12, 27:13 close [4] - 29:23, 43:8, 45:15, 45:16 closed [1] - 45:20 closely [1] - 53:3 Coleman [8] - 4:22, 4:24, 10:21, 19:2, 32:18, 51:4, 51:6, 53:24 COLEMAN [21] - 4:23, 10:22, 17:3, 17:6, 19:3, 19:11, 21:17, 32:19, 33:16, 35:15, 50:11, 50:14, 50:24, 51:3, 51:7, 53:19, 53:21, 53:22, 53:23, 56:14, 60:15 collection [1] - 47:6 College [1] - 1:6 combine [1] - 49:7 coming [12] - 4:4, 4:9, 4:20, 5:10, 5:16, 19:4, 21:16, 31:20, 32:13, 57:7, 57:22, 60:13 comment [2] - 18:18, 31:22 comments [3] - 4:1, 19:2, 20:1 Commission [19] - 2:11, 2:19, 2:22, 3:18, 3:25, 4:16, 6:8, 10:11, 17:17, 24:9, 25:14, 26:22, 30:12,</p>	<p>30:18, 30:24, 33:12, 35:5, 44:25 Commission's [3] - 3:6, 22:25, 29:22 commissioner [2] - 10:4, 31:18 Commissioner [11] - 3:25, 4:22, 10:20, 17:14, 19:1, 19:6, 21:12, 32:17, 48:18, 48:23, 53:10 COMMISSIONER [32] - 4:2, 4:23, 10:5, 10:22, 11:7, 17:3, 17:6, 17:15, 18:12, 18:17, 19:3, 19:11, 21:14, 21:17, 31:19, 32:5, 32:12, 32:19, 33:16, 35:15, 38:13, 50:8, 50:11, 50:14, 53:11, 53:20, 53:21, 56:12, 56:14, 60:7, 60:14, 60:15 Commissioners [1] - 50:1 commissioners [2] - 5:2, 7:3 commitment [1] - 22:25 committee [2] - 37:17, 37:23 Committee [1] - 51:9 Community [1] - 1:6 companies [3] - 47:10, 54:20, 55:17 company [34] - 5:20, 8:17, 8:19, 9:2, 9:3, 9:4, 12:18, 14:7, 14:10, 26:2, 28:6, 30:11, 30:20, 31:23, 37:12, 38:5, 40:8, 40:9, 40:19, 41:21, 42:15, 42:25, 43:5, 44:9, 44:13, 44:16, 44:22, 46:12, 47:22, 48:7, 48:8, 48:16, 49:5, 59:15 Company [5] - 2:23, 11:23, 11:24, 16:6, 20:7 Company's [4] - 2:8, 14:11, 20:3, 46:22 compared [1] - 52:16 comparison [1] - 28:5 complaint [5] - 26:23, 26:24, 29:21, 29:23, 35:4 complaints [1] - 18:2 completely [1] - 45:16 compliance [2] - 24:9,</p>	<p>33:18 conceptually [1] - 27:24 concern [2] - 18:21, 49:12 concerned [2] - 45:5, 48:7 concerns [5] - 5:14, 15:6, 19:5, 44:23, 50:6 condition [1] - 45:1 confident [2] - 29:17, 38:2 consider [2] - 23:6, 33:20 consistent [1] - 46:23 construction [2] - 13:19, 39:14 consumer [3] - 49:17, 54:18, 55:20 consumers [2] - 41:11, 49:15 contact [1] - 25:7 contacted [1] - 26:1 context [1] - 24:2 contract [5] - 36:17, 36:18, 37:23, 38:8, 38:10 conversation [1] - 34:12 conversations [2] - 29:20, 29:21 copy [3] - 19:25, 21:4, 46:15 corporate [1] - 48:2 corporation [1] - 47:17 correlate [1] - 51:16 corrosion [1] - 45:13 cost [6] - 8:24, 10:13, 16:18, 18:6, 49:1, 58:16 costs [7] - 9:1, 9:2, 40:14, 48:16, 49:13, 49:24, 58:2 Council [1] - 6:4 Counsel [3] - 2:24, 6:1, 10:18 counsel [1] - 5:14 Counsel's [1] - 6:10 counties [1] - 13:2 country [2] - 16:6, 16:7 County [28] - 2:15, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:2, 13:9, 14:3, 18:11, 22:19, 22:21, 22:22, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 32:1, 32:8, 36:16, 39:13, 49:15,</p>
	<p>C</p> <p>C-o-l-e-m-a-n [1] - 51:4 cannot [4] - 54:23, 55:5, 55:21, 55:24 capital [1] - 12:21 care [1] - 48:1 carefully [1] - 23:7 case [15] - 2:3, 2:6, 2:10, 2:20, 3:4, 3:12, 5:7, 7:2, 21:7, 29:15, 38:7, 42:3, 45:1, 45:19, 46:19 cases [1] - 48:11 caused [1] - 61:10 causes [2] - 22:24, 49:11 causing [2] - 13:7, 13:14 CCR [2] - 1:20, 61:21 cent [1] - 59:19 Center [1] - 1:6 center [1] - 18:13 Central [1] - 51:8 CEO [1] - 43:16 certain [1] - 12:13 Certainly [1] - 32:16 CERTIFICATE [1] - 61:1 Certified [1] - 61:3 certify [1] - 61:5 chair [1] - 51:8 challenge [1] - 20:18 change [2] - 12:9, 42:12</p>	<p>changed [1] - 29:9 chapters [1] - 9:17 charge [4] - 17:1, 17:5, 17:6, 17:20 Charles [4] - 7:6, 11:6, 13:2, 18:11 CHARLES [1] - 7:8 CHARLES [6] - 7:10, 7:15, 7:18, 10:19, 11:3, 11:6 check [1] - 53:17 checking [1] - 27:10 Chesterfield [2] - 22:11, 23:14 chief [1] - 37:11 chosen [1] - 4:11 City [8] - 3:5, 4:25, 5:11, 6:5, 20:2, 20:4, 20:13, 49:7 classification [4] - 41:1, 41:8, 42:18, 42:19 classifications [2] - 41:14, 42:11 Clayton [1] - 22:22 clear [3] - 7:25, 9:12, 27:13 close [4] - 29:23, 43:8, 45:15, 45:16 closed [1] - 45:20 closely [1] - 53:3 Coleman [8] - 4:22, 4:24, 10:21, 19:2, 32:18, 51:4, 51:6, 53:24 COLEMAN [21] - 4:23, 10:22, 17:3, 17:6, 19:3, 19:11, 21:17, 32:19, 33:16, 35:15, 50:11, 50:14, 50:24, 51:3, 51:7, 53:19, 53:21, 53:22, 53:23, 56:14, 60:15 collection [1] - 47:6 College [1] - 1:6 combine [1] - 49:7 coming [12] - 4:4, 4:9, 4:20, 5:10, 5:16, 19:4, 21:16, 31:20, 32:13, 57:7, 57:22, 60:13 comment [2] - 18:18, 31:22 comments [3] - 4:1, 19:2, 20:1 Commission [19] - 2:11, 2:19, 2:22, 3:18, 3:25, 4:16, 6:8, 10:11, 17:17, 24:9, 25:14, 26:22, 30:12,</p>	<p>30:18, 30:24, 33:12, 35:5, 44:25 Commission's [3] - 3:6, 22:25, 29:22 commissioner [2] - 10:4, 31:18 Commissioner [11] - 3:25, 4:22, 10:20, 17:14, 19:1, 19:6, 21:12, 32:17, 48:18, 48:23, 53:10 COMMISSIONER [32] - 4:2, 4:23, 10:5, 10:22, 11:7, 17:3, 17:6, 17:15, 18:12, 18:17, 19:3, 19:11, 21:14, 21:17, 31:19, 32:5, 32:12, 32:19, 33:16, 35:15, 38:13, 50:8, 50:11, 50:14, 53:11, 53:20, 53:21, 56:12, 56:14, 60:7, 60:14, 60:15 Commissioners [1] - 50:1 commissioners [2] - 5:2, 7:3 commitment [1] - 22:25 committee [2] - 37:17, 37:23 Committee [1] - 51:9 Community [1] - 1:6 companies [3] - 47:10, 54:20, 55:17 company [34] - 5:20, 8:17, 8:19, 9:2, 9:3, 9:4, 12:18, 14:7, 14:10, 26:2, 28:6, 30:11, 30:20, 31:23, 37:12, 38:5, 40:8, 40:9, 40:19, 41:21, 42:15, 42:25, 43:5, 44:9, 44:13, 44:16, 44:22, 46:12, 47:22, 48:7, 48:8, 48:16, 49:5, 59:15 Company [5] - 2:23, 11:23, 11:24, 16:6, 20:7 Company's [4] - 2:8, 14:11, 20:3, 46:22 compared [1] - 52:16 comparison [1] - 28:5 complaint [5] - 26:23, 26:24, 29:21, 29:23, 35:4 complaints [1] - 18:2 completely [1] - 45:16 compliance [2] - 24:9,</p>	<p>33:18 conceptually [1] - 27:24 concern [2] - 18:21, 49:12 concerned [2] - 45:5, 48:7 concerns [5] - 5:14, 15:6, 19:5, 44:23, 50:6 condition [1] - 45:1 confident [2] - 29:17, 38:2 consider [2] - 23:6, 33:20 consistent [1] - 46:23 construction [2] - 13:19, 39:14 consumer [3] - 49:17, 54:18, 55:20 consumers [2] - 41:11, 49:15 contact [1] - 25:7 contacted [1] - 26:1 context [1] - 24:2 contract [5] - 36:17, 36:18, 37:23, 38:8, 38:10 conversation [1] - 34:12 conversations [2] - 29:20, 29:21 copy [3] - 19:25, 21:4, 46:15 corporate [1] - 48:2 corporation [1] - 47:17 correlate [1] - 51:16 corrosion [1] - 45:13 cost [6] - 8:24, 10:13, 16:18, 18:6, 49:1, 58:16 costs [7] - 9:1, 9:2, 40:14, 48:16, 49:13, 49:24, 58:2 Council [1] - 6:4 Counsel [3] - 2:24, 6:1, 10:18 counsel [1] - 5:14 Counsel's [1] - 6:10 counties [1] - 13:2 country [2] - 16:6, 16:7 County [28] - 2:15, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:2, 13:9, 14:3, 18:11, 22:19, 22:21, 22:22, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 32:1, 32:8, 36:16, 39:13, 49:15,</p>

<p>51:8, 51:10, 51:12, 52:10, 52:13, 53:2, 58:8</p> <p>couple [6] - 17:16, 25:8, 27:19, 57:3, 57:16, 58:22</p> <p>course [1] - 54:22</p> <p>Court [1] - 61:4</p> <p>court [9] - 3:13, 5:24, 6:11, 22:7, 36:6, 39:1, 51:2, 54:11, 56:23</p> <p>courteous [1] - 26:15</p> <p>courts [1] - 17:23</p> <p>cover [1] - 41:14</p> <p>covering [1] - 51:17</p> <p>coworkers [1] - 46:3</p> <p>CRAIG [9] - 21:24, 22:4, 22:8, 22:14, 32:10, 32:16, 33:4, 35:17, 35:22</p> <p>Craig [1] - 22:9</p> <p>creates [1] - 13:11</p> <p>crew [2] - 27:10, 46:6</p> <p>crews [2] - 13:18, 13:19</p> <p>CSR [2] - 1:20, 61:22</p> <p>curious [3] - 41:19, 51:24, 52:24</p> <p>customer [19] - 12:24, 13:4, 15:7, 15:20, 18:2, 18:5, 18:8, 25:7, 36:11, 42:10, 42:17, 43:5, 43:9, 44:9, 48:6, 49:18, 51:11, 53:7</p> <p>customer's [2] - 51:14, 52:12</p> <p>customers [6] - 9:3, 41:11, 45:20, 52:9, 53:1, 56:2</p> <p>cut [4] - 12:14, 12:15, 13:20, 13:21</p> <p>cutting [1] - 16:19</p> <p>cycles [1] - 52:15</p>	<p>51:25, 52:1, 52:3, 52:4, 52:21, 53:4, 57:16, 57:17</p> <p>dEBRA [1] - 61:21</p> <p>DEBRA [1] - 61:3</p> <p>Debra [1] - 1:20</p> <p>December [2] - 29:14, 36:22</p> <p>decided [2] - 37:2, 37:7</p> <p>decision [2] - 3:19, 5:7</p> <p>decision-making [1] - 3:19</p> <p>decisionmaker [1] - 2:20</p> <p>decrease [1] - 49:24</p> <p>deduction [1] - 44:10</p> <p>definitely [2] - 14:17, 26:19</p> <p>definition [1] - 17:22</p> <p>delayed [1] - 13:23</p> <p>department [3] - 13:21, 39:14, 39:15</p> <p>departments [1] - 16:7</p> <p>designed [1] - 41:1</p> <p>desk [1] - 28:21</p> <p>determine [2] - 27:5, 27:20</p> <p>determined [4] - 24:13, 25:25, 33:11, 51:14</p> <p>develop [1] - 46:22</p> <p>developed [1] - 44:19</p> <p>diagram [1] - 10:14</p> <p>dialogue [2] - 23:1, 34:11</p> <p>different [6] - 9:17, 9:24, 16:4, 17:13, 41:13, 55:5</p> <p>difficult [1] - 45:15</p> <p>dinner [1] - 48:19</p> <p>direct [3] - 14:19, 46:3, 46:16</p> <p>disappoint [1] - 28:17</p> <p>disappointed [1] - 34:24</p> <p>disappointing [2] - 23:24, 28:16</p> <p>disappointment [1] - 22:18</p> <p>discovered [1] - 27:12</p> <p>discuss [2] - 25:6, 39:24</p> <p>discussion [2] - 23:3, 34:8</p> <p>discussions [1] - 46:2</p> <p>distribution [5] - 12:22, 14:13, 14:15, 14:20, 46:24</p>	<p>district [5] - 48:7, 48:8, 48:13, 48:14, 49:8</p> <p>District [5] - 39:10, 42:22, 49:9, 51:13, 52:20</p> <p>district-specific [1] - 48:13</p> <p>districts [1] - 49:14</p> <p>divide [1] - 51:19</p> <p>dividend [2] - 59:19, 59:20</p> <p>docket [1] - 3:11</p> <p>dollars [1] - 8:8</p> <p>done [6] - 8:22, 10:1, 25:20, 26:6, 45:22, 60:3</p> <p>down [12] - 12:25, 13:4, 13:6, 14:1, 16:19, 16:20, 18:9, 21:16, 57:14, 57:15, 58:14, 58:18</p> <p>drafted [1] - 46:12</p> <p>drastically [1] - 16:17</p> <p>draw [1] - 58:15</p> <p>drinking [1] - 15:1</p> <p>drive [2] - 58:21, 59:2</p> <p>drivers [1] - 49:23</p> <p>drop [2] - 43:11, 43:12</p> <p>drug [1] - 58:5</p> <p>drugs [1] - 58:3</p> <p>due [3] - 24:24, 26:4, 31:5</p> <p>dump [1] - 59:23</p> <p>dunned [1] - 56:2</p> <p>during [4] - 3:16, 3:22, 33:6, 45:16</p>	<p>42:9</p> <p>employee [2] - 11:23, 36:13</p> <p>employees [13] - 18:21, 36:15, 40:25, 41:2, 41:7, 42:2, 42:19, 43:1, 43:12, 43:21, 44:1, 46:6, 46:9</p> <p>employment [1] - 44:13</p> <p>encourage [2] - 18:22, 30:13</p> <p>END [1] - 60:17</p> <p>end [5] - 37:16, 38:6, 38:10, 58:5, 59:18</p> <p>ended [1] - 3:8</p> <p>ensure [3] - 45:11, 46:21, 46:25</p> <p>enter [1] - 9:25</p> <p>entered [1] - 36:18</p> <p>entering [1] - 44:12</p> <p>entire [2] - 41:14, 53:6</p> <p>entitled [1] - 30:25</p> <p>entries [1] - 5:19</p> <p>entry [1] - 6:15</p> <p>environmental [1] - 8:24</p> <p>equity [1] - 33:19</p> <p>erosion [1] - 45:17</p> <p>essential [2] - 41:17, 44:11</p> <p>essentially [1] - 51:17</p> <p>established [1] - 24:10</p> <p>evening [9] - 2:3, 4:5, 19:5, 21:23, 21:24, 32:14, 39:24, 50:7, 54:1</p> <p>evidentiary [2] - 3:3, 5:9</p> <p>evidently [1] - 32:6</p> <p>exactly [1] - 12:3</p> <p>examination [1] - 61:9</p> <p>example [2] - 40:24, 42:21</p> <p>except [1] - 23:21</p> <p>exclusively [2] - 46:7, 46:9</p> <p>executives [1] - 48:2</p> <p>exercise [3] - 45:7, 46:7, 47:9</p> <p>exercising [4] - 45:12, 45:22, 46:10, 47:4</p> <p>Exhibit [2] - 21:11, 21:12</p> <p>exhibit [1] - 46:15</p> <p>exorbitant [1] - 49:12</p> <p>expect [5] - 18:5, 18:7, 52:2, 54:22, 54:23</p>	<p>expense [1] - 16:19</p> <p>expenses [1] - 59:22</p> <p>experiencing [3] - 26:8, 53:4, 53:6</p> <p>expired [1] - 36:17</p> <p>explain [3] - 8:11, 9:14, 45:8</p> <p>explained [1] - 10:16</p> <p>explanation [1] - 53:18</p> <p>extended [1] - 25:11</p> <p>extra [2] - 52:21, 53:4</p>
F				
				<p>face [1] - 23:17</p> <p>fact [2] - 32:1, 59:15</p> <p>fail [2] - 15:25, 34:21</p> <p>failing [1] - 34:20</p> <p>failure [1] - 30:1</p> <p>failures [2] - 28:10, 30:18</p> <p>fair [3] - 32:25, 34:11, 49:19</p> <p>February [4] - 1:4, 3:4, 37:8, 37:13</p> <p>fee [1] - 33:8</p> <p>felt [1] - 35:1</p> <p>Ferguson [1] - 1:8</p> <p>few [3] - 44:15, 52:1, 52:21</p> <p>fewer [2] - 42:19, 42:23</p> <p>field [1] - 39:17</p> <p>fight [1] - 31:14</p> <p>figure [3] - 34:23, 57:11, 58:11</p> <p>figured [1] - 37:20</p> <p>figures [1] - 47:20</p> <p>filed [5] - 26:22, 35:4, 46:17, 49:21, 50:15</p> <p>filing [2] - 29:23, 45:2</p> <p>fill [2] - 40:23, 45:4</p> <p>finally [4] - 26:21, 26:25, 29:15, 29:24</p> <p>financially [1] - 47:22</p> <p>financially-sound [1] - 47:22</p> <p>fine [2] - 50:1, 58:1</p> <p>firm [1] - 48:14</p> <p>First [2] - 7:5, 31:19</p> <p>first [9] - 7:22, 8:2, 8:15, 22:14, 29:12, 32:1, 37:25, 54:2</p> <p>five [3] - 5:3, 41:8, 55:4</p> <p>fixed [5] - 55:22, 57:5, 57:21</p> <p>fixing [1] - 16:21</p> <p>fleet [1] - 42:21</p>
E				
				<p>early [4] - 36:19, 36:24, 37:4, 46:5</p> <p>eat [1] - 55:6</p> <p>economy [1] - 20:16</p> <p>effect [1] - 47:11</p> <p>effective [1] - 45:18</p> <p>effectively [1] - 46:23</p> <p>efficient [1] - 42:24</p> <p>effort [1] - 31:8</p> <p>eight [2] - 9:17, 9:24</p> <p>either [5] - 9:6, 22:20, 52:1, 56:8, 57:16</p> <p>elderly [1] - 30:4</p> <p>electric [1] - 55:1</p> <p>elevate [1] - 26:18</p> <p>elevated [1] - 33:23</p> <p>eligible [2] - 40:11, 40:12</p> <p>eliminate [1] - 8:3</p> <p>emergencies [1] -</p>
D				
<p>daily [1] - 39:20</p> <p>damage [2] - 13:8, 13:15</p> <p>data [4] - 27:24, 33:13, 40:10, 47:5</p> <p>date [6] - 24:24, 25:4, 31:3, 31:4, 31:5, 37:5</p> <p>DATE [1] - 1:4</p> <p>DAY [1] - 61:17</p> <p>days [13] - 26:2, 26:17, 26:20, 51:19,</p>				

<p>Flint [1] - 14:9 Flo [1] - 21:12 Flo-Valley [1] - 21:12 Florida [3] - 14:2, 18:9, 18:15 Florissant [6] - 1:6, 19:17, 20:2, 20:4, 20:13, 21:11 fold [2] - 34:19, 34:20 folks [3] - 18:23, 31:7, 53:13 followed [1] - 3:9 food [1] - 58:2 foods [1] - 58:7 FOR [1] - 1:2 format [1] - 54:4 formal [1] - 29:23 former [1] - 11:22 forward [1] - 50:20 four [5] - 8:22, 23:15, 33:22, 38:9, 46:6 four-year [1] - 38:9 frankly [1] - 23:19 frequency [1] - 47:4 Friday [1] - 34:13 full [2] - 8:14, 52:1 function [1] - 45:11 future [3] - 23:5, 31:24, 45:4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">H</p> <p>h.com [1] - 48:4 half [1] - 13:20 hamburger [2] - 48:20, 48:24 hand [11] - 6:24, 7:12, 11:14, 17:17, 19:17, 22:1, 38:21, 50:19, 50:21, 54:1, 61:16 happy [3] - 31:17, 34:2, 45:8 healthcare [1] - 40:14 hear [2] - 17:8, 32:24 heard [1] - 4:15 HEARING [2] - 1:1, 60:17 hearing [12] - 2:2, 2:11, 2:13, 3:3, 3:6, 3:22, 5:9, 12:2, 22:15, 23:8, 31:25, 32:2 hearings [5] - 2:12, 2:14, 4:5, 22:19, 23:6 held [2] - 3:4, 38:4 Hello [1] - 6:9 help [6] - 3:22, 5:7, 10:1, 38:7, 49:16, 53:14 helper [2] - 41:1, 41:7 helps [1] - 45:12 hereby [1] - 61:5 hereunto [1] - 61:16 hi [1] - 56:17 higher [2] - 26:8, 41:4 hike [2] - 55:18, 55:20 hikes [3] - 54:25, 55:2, 55:16 hired [1] - 41:7 hires [1] - 44:15 hit [1] - 58:12 hold [12] - 26:1, 26:9, 26:11, 26:17, 28:24, 29:10, 30:20, 31:12, 35:12, 37:19, 48:22, 49:3 holding [1] - 2:12 home [3] - 23:2, 24:13, 28:10 Homes [1] - 9:22 honest [1] - 35:2 hope [8] - 3:15, 5:10, 23:6, 28:12, 30:16, 30:18, 35:13, 50:5 hopefully [1] - 18:23 hospitable [1] - 35:11 hours [1] - 14:2 house [1] - 58:10 houses [1] - 58:9</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p>identified [2] - 44:1, 49:9 identifying [1] - 28:19 IL [2] - 1:20, 61:22 Illinois [1] - 61:5 imagine [1] - 4:18 immediate [2] - 20:19, 42:9 immediately [1] - 26:4 impact [2] - 41:9, 41:10 important [2] - 23:4, 44:8 improvement [4] - 12:21, 23:13, 24:3, 28:8 improvements [2] - 23:18, 37:1 inappropriate [1] - 31:15 incentive [1] - 49:23 inches [1] - 33:24 include [1] - 45:3 included [4] - 3:11, 20:23, 21:1, 53:4 includes [2] - 3:7, 30:17 including [1] - 20:7 income [13] - 47:14, 47:15, 47:16, 47:19, 54:19, 54:24, 55:2, 55:3, 55:22, 57:5, 57:21, 57:22 inconvenience [1] - 25:2 increase [17] - 2:8, 7:24, 8:7, 8:9, 8:13, 12:2, 12:12, 20:4, 20:15, 23:1, 23:10, 28:13, 30:19, 55:2, 57:14, 59:24, 60:2 increased [1] - 16:17 INCREASES [1] - 1:2 increases [2] - 16:14, 30:14 increasing [3] - 52:11, 55:4, 58:2 individual [2] - 14:1, 24:4 inflation [2] - 16:18, 20:15 informal [3] - 26:22, 29:20, 35:4 information [3] - 5:5, 5:24, 6:12 informing [1] - 12:8 infrastructure [15] - 12:5, 13:9, 13:13,</p>	<p>13:16, 15:8, 16:10, 17:1, 17:19, 23:12, 23:17, 23:23, 24:3, 28:7, 30:16, 30:17 inhouse [1] - 42:6 Innovation [1] - 1:7 inoperative [1] - 33:11 input [1] - 8:19 inquired [1] - 49:10 inside [1] - 45:14 inspect [1] - 46:23 inspection [1] - 46:13 installing [1] - 16:22 instead [1] - 59:12 institutes [1] - 12:21 integrity [1] - 47:1 intents [1] - 57:10 interaction [1] - 23:21 interest [1] - 2:25 interested [2] - 2:22, 47:25 interests [2] - 2:21, 2:23 internal [1] - 42:6 internet [3] - 28:23, 43:17 intervener [1] - 46:19 intervention [1] - 46:18 introduce [1] - 3:24 introduced [3] - 5:15, 15:1, 15:2 invest [3] - 9:10, 16:9, 59:10 investigate [1] - 50:2 investments [5] - 9:1, 9:7, 9:8, 9:9, 9:11 investor [2] - 43:24, 59:9 investors [1] - 60:5 invite [1] - 6:20 invoice [6] - 24:16, 24:18, 24:24, 26:4, 26:17, 31:2 invoiced [1] - 33:7 invoices [1] - 34:10 invoicing [2] - 24:20 ir [1] - 53:22 ironic [1] - 43:4 irrigation [3] - 28:3, 34:1, 34:4 isolating [1] - 45:18 ISRS [1] - 39:19 issue [17] - 12:23, 15:21, 23:10, 24:7, 27:2, 27:3, 28:9, 29:25, 30:2, 30:15, 31:7, 33:18, 34:6, 34:17, 34:18, 49:18, 53:15</p>	<p>issues [5] - 3:2, 14:5, 15:4, 17:24, 31:22 it'll [1] - 29:16 items [1] - 49:22</p> <p style="text-align: center;">J</p> <p>January [10] - 29:14, 33:14, 36:24, 37:5, 37:16, 37:19, 38:4, 38:6, 38:9, 46:17 JEFF [7] - 50:24, 51:3, 51:4, 51:7, 53:19, 53:22, 53:23 Jeff [1] - 51:3 Jefferson [4] - 3:5, 5:11, 6:5, 49:7 job [3] - 20:10, 41:13, 44:20 jobs [2] - 39:24, 41:10 joints [3] - 14:15, 14:20, 14:23 JONES [59] - 2:1, 2:6, 4:21, 5:18, 5:25, 6:7, 6:13, 7:9, 7:11, 7:16, 10:3, 10:20, 10:24, 11:9, 11:13, 11:19, 15:9, 15:12, 15:16, 15:20, 16:25, 17:5, 17:9, 19:1, 19:13, 19:22, 20:22, 21:3, 21:7, 21:19, 21:25, 22:5, 22:12, 31:18, 32:4, 32:17, 35:19, 35:23, 36:4, 36:9, 38:12, 38:15, 38:18, 38:24, 39:4, 50:17, 50:25, 51:5, 53:9, 53:25, 54:5, 54:9, 54:15, 56:4, 56:10, 56:15, 56:21, 57:1, 60:9 Jones [2] - 2:9, 61:7 Judge [5] - 5:22, 6:2, 11:11, 35:22, 61:7 judge [2] - 2:9, 35:19 JUDGE [58] - 2:1, 2:6, 4:21, 5:18, 5:25, 6:7, 6:13, 7:9, 7:11, 7:16, 10:3, 10:20, 10:24, 11:9, 11:13, 11:19, 15:9, 15:12, 15:16, 15:20, 16:25, 17:5, 17:9, 19:1, 19:13, 19:22, 20:22, 21:3, 21:7, 21:19, 21:25, 22:5, 22:12, 31:18, 32:4, 32:17, 35:23, 36:4, 36:9, 38:12, 38:15, 38:18, 38:24,</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">G</p> <p>gap [2] - 44:16, 44:23 garage [1] - 42:23 gas [3] - 45:24, 46:1, 55:1 gas-powered [2] - 45:24, 46:1 gasoline [1] - 58:18 gasoline's [1] - 58:23 gathered [1] - 8:1 general [4] - 2:25, 12:17, 13:16, 30:20 generally [1] - 20:5 generic [2] - 58:3, 58:4 gentleman [4] - 17:19, 17:20, 17:25, 18:19 geographic [1] - 23:7 George [1] - 17:4 given [3] - 5:24, 6:11, 61:13 granted [1] - 59:24 great [1] - 43:5 ground [1] - 9:9 Groves [2] - 9:20 guess [1] - 18:1 guessing [1] - 17:10</p>				

<p>39:4, 50:17, 50:25, 51:5, 53:9, 53:25, 54:5, 54:9, 54:15, 56:4, 56:10, 56:15, 56:21, 57:1, 60:9 jump [1] - 31:11 June [2] - 33:24, 34:4</p>	<p>Libertarian [1] - 51:9 Library [1] - 32:3 Lic [2] - 1:20 line [4] - 57:14, 57:15, 58:14, 58:15 list [4] - 6:17, 6:20, 7:6, 19:16 listed [1] - 48:5 listen [3] - 4:10, 5:13, 50:5 listening [1] - 56:9 literally [2] - 29:22, 34:12 live [3] - 3:6, 5:13, 13:1 living [2] - 16:18, 58:16 Local [4] - 36:14, 39:8, 39:22, 39:25 local [3] - 2:11, 4:5, 32:1 location [3] - 23:8, 32:8, 45:19 LOCATION [1] - 1:6 locations [1] - 23:8 look [3] - 16:16, 28:22, 30:13 looking [1] - 28:12 loosely [1] - 25:22 loses [1] - 9:2 loss [2] - 9:4, 59:3 Louis [29] - 1:24, 2:15, 4:25, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:8, 14:3, 18:10, 22:19, 22:20, 22:21, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 36:16, 39:10, 39:12, 42:22, 48:13, 49:7, 49:15, 51:8, 51:10, 51:12, 52:10, 52:13, 53:2, 58:8 low [2] - 20:16, 54:19 lower [5] - 8:17, 8:20, 12:8, 33:9, 49:22 lower-lying [1] - 12:8 LUFT [3] - 5:22, 11:1, 11:5 Luft [2] - 5:23, 6:1 Lutheran [1] - 9:21 luxury [1] - 29:2 lying [1] - 12:8</p>	<p>mailing [1] - 37:6 mailings [1] - 37:10 main [14] - 12:10, 12:18, 13:7, 13:17, 13:25, 14:4, 16:21, 16:23, 18:10, 23:15, 39:18, 42:9, 44:3, 45:18 mains [3] - 12:14, 13:13, 16:22 maintain [5] - 13:12, 15:25, 16:2, 16:9, 46:24 maintaining [1] - 40:2 maintenance [7] - 13:18, 40:2, 45:7, 45:10, 46:6, 46:13, 47:5 major [1] - 31:22 man [1] - 10:17 manage [1] - 42:1 management [1] - 12:8 managers [1] - 42:1 manner [1] - 42:25 Manpower [1] - 13:4 manually [1] - 45:23 March [2] - 3:5, 34:3 mark [1] - 21:11 massive [1] - 13:8 material [2] - 14:25, 23:11 matter [4] - 22:20, 23:3, 23:19, 59:15 Mayor [1] - 19:16 MAYOR [4] - 19:21, 19:24, 21:2, 21:5 ME [1] - 61:16 Meador [5] - 7:6, 7:7, 7:8, 7:9, 11:6 MEADOR [7] - 7:8, 7:10, 7:15, 7:18, 10:19, 11:3, 11:6 meador [1] - 7:11 meals [1] - 57:18 mean [8] - 9:8, 9:9, 16:3, 18:14, 20:24, 27:16, 29:6, 59:13 means [1] - 14:21 mechanic's [1] - 41:4 mechanics [1] - 42:23 mechanism [3] - 8:16, 8:25, 48:15 medicine [4] - 55:7, 57:17, 57:18, 58:3 meet [2] - 9:22, 54:24 meeting [4] - 3:7, 9:18, 37:8, 37:19 meetings [1] - 36:20 meets [1] - 12:4</p>	<p>member [1] - 26:2 members [7] - 36:23, 37:6, 39:9, 40:6, 40:17, 40:23, 41:18 membership [2] - 37:3, 37:24 men [1] - 27:10 mention [1] - 5:1 mentioned [3] - 5:8, 10:7, 12:24 met [1] - 36:24 meter [12] - 24:13, 25:24, 27:5, 27:12, 27:17, 28:10, 30:1, 30:17, 33:6, 33:11, 33:15 meters [6] - 24:4, 27:11, 28:15, 34:19, 42:12, 42:13 Metropolitan [2] - 51:13, 52:20 metropolitan [1] - 22:23 Mexico [1] - 49:8 Michigan [1] - 14:9 mid [2] - 16:16, 24:11 mid-November [1] - 24:11 might [9] - 10:5, 17:13, 17:18, 18:12, 18:20, 30:6, 53:11, 53:17, 57:25 miles [1] - 23:2 million [7] - 8:8, 8:14, 22:23, 47:14, 47:15, 47:16, 47:19 mine [1] - 55:23 minimal [1] - 41:23 minor [1] - 12:13 minutes [4] - 26:10, 26:12, 28:24, 37:14 MISSOURI [1] - 1:1 Missouri [57] - 1:24, 2:7, 2:16, 5:21, 5:23, 6:5, 7:21, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:2, 20:6, 20:18, 22:11, 23:22, 23:25, 24:8, 24:11, 25:17, 26:6, 26:13, 26:25, 28:13, 29:8, 29:18, 30:24, 31:15, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:15, 39:10, 39:11, 40:1, 40:21, 41:6, 42:5, 45:2, 45:24, 46:5, 46:8, 46:12, 47:13, 47:18, 47:21, 49:21, 51:11, 51:23, 52:5, 52:9, 52:19,</p>	<p>53:1, 53:7, 59:8, 61:5 MO [3] - 1:8, 1:20, 61:21 moderate [3] - 20:20, 54:19, 54:24 modify [1] - 20:18 moment [1] - 5:15 Monday [1] - 9:19 money [7] - 9:2, 9:10, 12:16, 16:10, 59:21, 60:4 month [5] - 32:23, 33:22, 33:25, 34:5, 51:18 monthly [1] - 37:8 months [12] - 8:21, 9:23, 23:24, 24:17, 27:7, 27:19, 28:2, 28:20, 29:14, 33:15, 34:23, 55:19 most [2] - 33:21, 42:7 move [2] - 38:6, 41:4 MPSC [2] - 28:21, 29:2 MR [2] - 11:1, 11:5 multiple [1] - 29:19 municipalities [1] - 13:3</p>					
K									
<p>keep [1] - 55:4 keeps [1] - 58:1 Kennard [1] - 2:9 key [1] - 45:23 kick [1] - 37:22 kind [6] - 4:4, 17:25, 26:15, 28:19, 30:22, 31:14 knowledge [4] - 41:6, 44:18, 45:25, 46:4 knowledgeable [1] - 5:6 known [2] - 11:22, 46:14</p>	<p>LOCATION [1] - 1:6 locations [1] - 23:8 look [3] - 16:16, 28:22, 30:13 looking [1] - 28:12 loosely [1] - 25:22 loses [1] - 9:2 loss [2] - 9:4, 59:3 Louis [29] - 1:24, 2:15, 4:25, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:8, 14:3, 18:10, 22:19, 22:20, 22:21, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 36:16, 39:10, 39:12, 42:22, 48:13, 49:7, 49:15, 51:8, 51:10, 51:12, 52:10, 52:13, 53:2, 58:8 low [2] - 20:16, 54:19 lower [5] - 8:17, 8:20, 12:8, 33:9, 49:22 lower-lying [1] - 12:8 LUFT [3] - 5:22, 11:1, 11:5 Luft [2] - 5:23, 6:1 Lutheran [1] - 9:21 luxury [1] - 29:2 lying [1] - 12:8</p>	<p>mailing [1] - 37:6 mailings [1] - 37:10 main [14] - 12:10, 12:18, 13:7, 13:17, 13:25, 14:4, 16:21, 16:23, 18:10, 23:15, 39:18, 42:9, 44:3, 45:18 mains [3] - 12:14, 13:13, 16:22 maintain [5] - 13:12, 15:25, 16:2, 16:9, 46:24 maintaining [1] - 40:2 maintenance [7] - 13:18, 40:2, 45:7, 45:10, 46:6, 46:13, 47:5 major [1] - 31:22 man [1] - 10:17 manage [1] - 42:1 management [1] - 12:8 managers [1] - 42:1 manner [1] - 42:25 Manpower [1] - 13:4 manually [1] - 45:23 March [2] - 3:5, 34:3 mark [1] - 21:11 massive [1] - 13:8 material [2] - 14:25, 23:11 matter [4] - 22:20, 23:3, 23:19, 59:15 Mayor [1] - 19:16 MAYOR [4] - 19:21, 19:24, 21:2, 21:5 ME [1] - 61:16 Meador [5] - 7:6, 7:7, 7:8, 7:9, 11:6 MEADOR [7] - 7:8, 7:10, 7:15, 7:18, 10:19, 11:3, 11:6 meador [1] - 7:11 meals [1] - 57:18 mean [8] - 9:8, 9:9, 16:3, 18:14, 20:24, 27:16, 29:6, 59:13 means [1] - 14:21 mechanic's [1] - 41:4 mechanics [1] - 42:23 mechanism [3] - 8:16, 8:25, 48:15 medicine [4] - 55:7, 57:17, 57:18, 58:3 meet [2] - 9:22, 54:24 meeting [4] - 3:7, 9:18, 37:8, 37:19 meetings [1] - 36:20 meets [1] - 12:4</p>	<p>member [1] - 26:2 members [7] - 36:23, 37:6, 39:9, 40:6, 40:17, 40:23, 41:18 membership [2] - 37:3, 37:24 men [1] - 27:10 mention [1] - 5:1 mentioned [3] - 5:8, 10:7, 12:24 met [1] - 36:24 meter [12] - 24:13, 25:24, 27:5, 27:12, 27:17, 28:10, 30:1, 30:17, 33:6, 33:11, 33:15 meters [6] - 24:4, 27:11, 28:15, 34:19, 42:12, 42:13 Metropolitan [2] - 51:13, 52:20 metropolitan [1] - 22:23 Mexico [1] - 49:8 Michigan [1] - 14:9 mid [2] - 16:16, 24:11 mid-November [1] - 24:11 might [9] - 10:5, 17:13, 17:18, 18:12, 18:20, 30:6, 53:11, 53:17, 57:25 miles [1] - 23:2 million [7] - 8:8, 8:14, 22:23, 47:14, 47:15, 47:16, 47:19 mine [1] - 55:23 minimal [1] - 41:23 minor [1] - 12:13 minutes [4] - 26:10, 26:12, 28:24, 37:14 MISSOURI [1] - 1:1 Missouri [57] - 1:24, 2:7, 2:16, 5:21, 5:23, 6:5, 7:21, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:2, 20:6, 20:18, 22:11, 23:22, 23:25, 24:8, 24:11, 25:17, 26:6, 26:13, 26:25, 28:13, 29:8, 29:18, 30:24, 31:15, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:15, 39:10, 39:11, 40:1, 40:21, 41:6, 42:5, 45:2, 45:24, 46:5, 46:8, 46:12, 47:13, 47:18, 47:21, 49:21, 51:11, 51:23, 52:5, 52:9, 52:19,</p>	<p>53:1, 53:7, 59:8, 61:5 MO [3] - 1:8, 1:20, 61:21 moderate [3] - 20:20, 54:19, 54:24 modify [1] - 20:18 moment [1] - 5:15 Monday [1] - 9:19 money [7] - 9:2, 9:10, 12:16, 16:10, 59:21, 60:4 month [5] - 32:23, 33:22, 33:25, 34:5, 51:18 monthly [1] - 37:8 months [12] - 8:21, 9:23, 23:24, 24:17, 27:7, 27:19, 28:2, 28:20, 29:14, 33:15, 34:23, 55:19 most [2] - 33:21, 42:7 move [2] - 38:6, 41:4 MPSC [2] - 28:21, 29:2 MR [2] - 11:1, 11:5 multiple [1] - 29:19 municipalities [1] - 13:3</p>					
L									
<p>labor [2] - 16:19, 49:23 lack [3] - 13:16, 40:1, 45:6 lacking [1] - 12:25 Laclede [2] - 9:20 lagging [1] - 20:16 largest [1] - 43:23 last [10] - 9:18, 11:2, 11:4, 18:18, 22:9, 23:16, 28:3, 29:13, 43:18, 59:19 late [4] - 16:16, 24:12, 46:4, 54:3 lead [8] - 14:7, 14:8, 14:14, 14:15, 14:20, 14:23, 14:25, 39:15 leadite [1] - 14:25 least [3] - 5:12, 5:13, 41:8 leave [4] - 19:8, 19:25, 43:1, 50:1 left [2] - 3:25, 15:3 length [1] - 52:7 less [3] - 40:7, 42:1, 51:25 letter [9] - 7:23, 19:25, 24:10, 24:15, 24:25, 25:1, 25:18, 26:12, 30:23 level [3] - 20:5, 41:4, 55:13 levy [1] - 27:20</p>	<p>LOCATION [1] - 1:6 locations [1] - 23:8 look [3] - 16:16, 28:22, 30:13 looking [1] - 28:12 loosely [1] - 25:22 loses [1] - 9:2 loss [2] - 9:4, 59:3 Louis [29] - 1:24, 2:15, 4:25, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:8, 14:3, 18:10, 22:19, 22:20, 22:21, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 36:16, 39:10, 39:12, 42:22, 48:13, 49:7, 49:15, 51:8, 51:10, 51:12, 52:10, 52:13, 53:2, 58:8 low [2] - 20:16, 54:19 lower [5] - 8:17, 8:20, 12:8, 33:9, 49:22 lower-lying [1] - 12:8 LUFT [3] - 5:22, 11:1, 11:5 Luft [2] - 5:23, 6:1 Lutheran [1] - 9:21 luxury [1] - 29:2 lying [1] - 12:8</p>	<p>mailing [1] - 37:6 mailings [1] - 37:10 main [14] - 12:10, 12:18, 13:7, 13:17, 13:25, 14:4, 16:21, 16:23, 18:10, 23:15, 39:18, 42:9, 44:3, 45:18 mains [3] - 12:14, 13:13, 16:22 maintain [5] - 13:12, 15:25, 16:2, 16:9, 46:24 maintaining [1] - 40:2 maintenance [7] - 13:18, 40:2, 45:7, 45:10, 46:6, 46:13, 47:5 major [1] - 31:22 man [1] - 10:17 manage [1] - 42:1 management [1] - 12:8 managers [1] - 42:1 manner [1] - 42:25 Manpower [1] - 13:4 manually [1] - 45:23 March [2] - 3:5, 34:3 mark [1] - 21:11 massive [1] - 13:8 material [2] - 14:25, 23:11 matter [4] - 22:20, 23:3, 23:19, 59:15 Mayor [1] - 19:16 MAYOR [4] - 19:21, 19:24, 21:2, 21:5 ME [1] - 61:16 Meador [5] - 7:6, 7:7, 7:8, 7:9, 11:6 MEADOR [7] - 7:8, 7:10, 7:15, 7:18, 10:19, 11:3, 11:6 meador [1] - 7:11 meals [1] - 57:18 mean [8] - 9:8, 9:9, 16:3, 18:14, 20:24, 27:16, 29:6, 59:13 means [1] - 14:21 mechanic's [1] - 41:4 mechanics [1] - 42:23 mechanism [3] - 8:16, 8:25, 48:15 medicine [4] - 55:7, 57:17, 57:18, 58:3 meet [2] - 9:22, 54:24 meeting [4] - 3:7, 9:18, 37:8, 37:19 meetings [1] - 36:20 meets [1] - 12:4</p>	<p>member [1] - 26:2 members [7] - 36:23, 37:6, 39:9, 40:6, 40:17, 40:23, 41:18 membership [2] - 37:3, 37:24 men [1] - 27:10 mention [1] - 5:1 mentioned [3] - 5:8, 10:7, 12:24 met [1] - 36:24 meter [12] - 24:13, 25:24, 27:5, 27:12, 27:17, 28:10, 30:1, 30:17, 33:6, 33:11, 33:15 meters [6] - 24:4, 27:11, 28:15, 34:19, 42:12, 42:13 Metropolitan [2] - 51:13, 52:20 metropolitan [1] - 22:23 Mexico [1] - 49:8 Michigan [1] - 14:9 mid [2] - 16:16, 24:11 mid-November [1] - 24:11 might [9] - 10:5, 17:13, 17:18, 18:12, 18:20, 30:6, 53:11, 53:17, 57:25 miles [1] - 23:2 million [7] - 8:8, 8:14, 22:23, 47:14, 47:15, 47:16, 47:19 mine [1] - 55:23 minimal [1] - 41:23 minor [1] - 12:13 minutes [4] - 26:10, 26:12, 28:24, 37:14 MISSOURI [1] - 1:1 Missouri [57] - 1:24, 2:7, 2:16, 5:21, 5:23, 6:5, 7:21, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:2, 20:6, 20:18, 22:11, 23:22, 23:25, 24:8, 24:11, 25:17, 26:6, 26:13, 26:25, 28:13, 29:8, 29:18, 30:24, 31:15, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:15, 39:10, 39:11, 40:1, 40:21, 41:6, 42:5, 45:2, 45:24, 46:5, 46:8, 46:12, 47:13, 47:18, 47:21, 49:21, 51:11, 51:23, 52:5, 52:9, 52:19,</p>	<p>53:1, 53:7, 59:8, 61:5 MO [3] - 1:8, 1:20, 61:21 moderate [3] - 20:20, 54:19, 54:24 modify [1] - 20:18 moment [1] - 5:15 Monday [1] - 9:19 money [7] - 9:2, 9:10, 12:16, 16:10, 59:21, 60:4 month [5] - 32:23, 33:22, 33:25, 34:5, 51:18 monthly [1] - 37:8 months [12] - 8:21, 9:23, 23:24, 24:17, 27:7, 27:19, 28:2, 28:20, 29:14, 33:15, 34:23, 55:19 most [2] - 33:21, 42:7 move [2] - 38:6, 41:4 MPSC [2] - 28:21, 29:2 MR [2] - 11:1, 11:5 multiple [1] - 29:19 municipalities [1] - 13:3</p>					
M									
<p>M-e-a-d-o-r [1] - 11:4 ma'am [1] - 35:18 machine [2] - 45:24, 46:1 Maida [1] - 4:24 mail [1] - 12:1</p>				<p>name [16] - 2:9, 6:3, 6:23, 7:6, 11:2, 11:3, 11:4, 22:6, 22:8, 22:9, 36:5, 38:25, 51:1, 51:3, 54:10, 56:23 name's [1] - 36:7 named [1] - 61:7 names [1] - 6:17 nation [1] - 20:17 nationwide [1] - 43:23 near [1] - 54:1 necessarily [1]</p>					

<p>24:18, 24:21, 44:15, 48:8 Newport [3] - 11:10, 19:4, 19:15 NEWPORT [12] - 11:11, 11:15, 11:18, 11:21, 15:11, 15:14, 15:18, 15:22, 18:4, 18:16, 18:25, 19:10 newport [1] - 11:13 news [1] - 14:8 next [5] - 11:9, 17:7, 19:15, 32:9, 43:20 nice [1] - 35:11 non [1] - 41:20 non-union [1] - 41:20 none [2] - 51:24, 58:16 normal [1] - 26:9 normally [1] - 28:3 north [1] - 22:20 note [4] - 22:17, 26:5, 27:25, 43:4 noted [1] - 19:7 Nothing [1] - 25:8 nothing [3] - 57:9, 57:22, 61:8 notice [1] - 12:1 November [2] - 24:11, 29:13 nowadays [1] - 14:8 number [8] - 2:12, 24:7, 40:17, 41:20, 43:11, 51:19</p>	<p>2:2, 3:9 one [18] - 10:6, 12:3, 14:4, 15:14, 21:8, 24:7, 27:4, 34:19, 41:24, 47:10, 49:8, 49:14, 49:21, 52:2, 52:23, 58:17, 59:6, 59:25 online [2] - 4:17, 5:12 open [1] - 40:24 operate [1] - 43:22 operated [1] - 45:11 operating [1] - 24:14 operation [2] - 33:15, 46:13 operational [1] - 46:25 OPITZ [1] - 6:2 Opitz [1] - 6:3 opportunity [3] - 5:4, 11:12, 50:4 optimize [1] - 47:1 options [1] - 25:6 ORCHELT [1] - 22:10 order [5] - 25:10, 38:7, 41:16, 46:25, 48:19 orders [1] - 48:19 organizations [1] - 9:24 overnight [1] - 44:19 owed [1] - 24:21 own [2] - 43:10, 46:3 owned [1] - 59:9 owner [2] - 15:24, 39:12</p>	<p>Party [1] - 51:9 party [1] - 21:8 pass [1] - 38:4 passed [2] - 26:2, 48:10 past [4] - 8:22, 23:23, 27:24, 39:21 pay [16] - 9:3, 9:4, 13:12, 24:6, 25:4, 25:10, 25:11, 28:14, 31:3, 34:16, 49:16, 55:5, 57:12, 58:11, 59:11, 60:2 payable [1] - 29:5 paychecks [1] - 57:23 paying [3] - 27:22, 58:5, 58:6 payment [3] - 25:6, 25:22, 35:7 payments [1] - 24:19 PAYNE [1] - 6:9 Payne [1] - 6:10 payout [1] - 49:23 payroll [1] - 49:24 people [18] - 3:21, 6:18, 7:20, 16:2, 17:16, 21:20, 22:24, 30:4, 31:10, 44:11, 54:19, 54:23, 55:8, 57:20, 58:20, 58:25, 59:1, 59:10 per [4] - 33:12, 52:14, 59:20 percent [13] - 8:7, 8:10, 20:14, 43:8, 43:21, 49:25, 52:13, 52:15, 52:22, 55:18, 55:20 performance [2] - 23:25, 24:8 perhaps [1] - 8:21 period [14] - 24:14, 25:11, 25:13, 30:8, 31:1, 32:23, 33:2, 33:7, 33:14, 33:22, 34:3, 41:5, 51:18, 51:22 permanent [1] - 8:5 Pershall [1] - 1:7 person [2] - 18:14, 39:15 personal [2] - 23:21, 24:4 personnel [1] - 47:2 Peter [1] - 54:14 phone [5] - 25:15, 26:14, 29:20, 35:8, 35:9 picked [1] - 34:22 pipe [1] - 20:9</p>	<p>pipes [1] - 9:8 pipng [1] - 14:23 place [4] - 28:18, 30:12, 37:19, 47:8 plan [3] - 25:22, 35:7, 49:23 plus [1] - 8:8 podium [2] - 6:24, 7:2 point [9] - 29:12, 44:6, 55:5, 57:20, 58:4, 58:13, 58:23, 59:14, 59:17 points [1] - 16:24 pool [1] - 33:3 portion [4] - 2:2, 3:9, 3:16, 15:10 position [2] - 41:2, 41:5 positions [4] - 41:12, 41:20, 41:25, 45:3 possessed [1] - 45:24 posted [1] - 59:19 potentially [2] - 41:10, 49:13 pouring [2] - 14:15, 14:20 poverty [2] - 55:12, 55:13 powered [2] - 45:24, 46:1 practice [4] - 46:14, 46:21, 47:3 practices [1] - 47:6 prepare [1] - 40:23 present [4] - 5:20, 6:14, 6:21, 50:18 presentation [2] - 43:18, 43:19 president [4] - 36:14, 39:7, 39:21, 39:22 president's [1] - 9:19 presiding [1] - 2:10 pressure [1] - 20:8 presumably [1] - 52:12 pretty [4] - 17:12, 29:25, 38:2, 50:3 previous [2] - 33:13, 39:12 previously [1] - 48:10 priced [1] - 48:14 pricing [3] - 48:12, 48:13, 49:6 pride [1] - 43:5 PRIMO [1] - 1:23 privately [1] - 10:11 problem [4] - 24:18, 27:22, 27:23, 34:21 problematic [1] - 28:11</p>	<p>problems [1] - 28:19 procedure [1] - 45:10 procedures [1] - 26:24 proceed [9] - 7:17, 11:20, 19:23, 22:13, 36:10, 39:5, 51:6, 54:16, 57:2 process [2] - 3:20, 31:13 profit [3] - 16:1, 54:21, 54:22 profitable [1] - 47:22 program [5] - 40:3, 45:7, 46:23, 47:9, 55:12 project [1] - 39:19 prompt [2] - 6:25, 42:24 promptly [1] - 45:4 proper [1] - 47:4 properly [5] - 24:14, 24:23, 29:17, 41:18, 45:12 propose [1] - 20:20 proposed [1] - 7:24 provide [3] - 25:5, 41:16, 44:22 provided [1] - 24:18 providing [1] - 19:5 PSE [1] - 8:18 public [8] - 2:11, 2:25, 3:10, 3:17, 4:5, 5:14, 12:17, 32:2 Public [5] - 2:24, 6:1, 6:4, 10:17, 30:24 pull [4] - 5:12, 35:7, 35:8 purpose [2] - 39:23, 46:20 purposes [1] - 57:11 pursuant [1] - 61:6 pursuing [1] - 49:6 put [8] - 4:8, 7:22, 8:11, 25:25, 26:9, 26:16, 29:10, 35:12 putting [1] - 45:20</p>
O	P			
<p>objection [1] - 21:9 objections [1] - 21:10 obligation [1] - 30:7 obsolete [1] - 39:18 obvious [3] - 42:11, 44:10, 47:20 obviously [1] - 43:25 occurs [2] - 28:17, 30:23 October [6] - 24:12, 29:13, 33:14, 36:17, 38:10, 42:20 OF [2] - 60:17, 61:17 offered [1] - 35:6 Office [4] - 2:24, 6:1, 6:4, 10:17 office [1] - 6:10 officers [1] - 48:5 old [1] - 30:5 older [3] - 14:22, 44:17, 57:8 on-the-job [1] - 44:20 on-the-record [2] -</p>	<p>P.O [2] - 1:24, 6:5 package [2] - 37:24, 38:1 packet [1] - 30:5 pad [2] - 52:21, 52:22 padding [1] - 52:7 page [2] - 23:11, 29:3 paid [3] - 24:16, 24:19, 59:25 paint [1] - 20:10 paragraphs [1] - 8:2 parent [2] - 46:12, 47:17 parents [1] - 30:4 part [7] - 7:19, 8:5, 13:20, 21:9, 39:13, 39:23, 60:2 particular [1] - 30:11 parties [11] - 2:21, 2:22, 3:1, 5:20, 6:14, 7:3, 10:25, 17:12, 19:14, 35:20, 38:16 parts [1] - 20:17</p>			Q
				<p>qualifications [1] - 12:4 qualify [1] - 55:13 quarrel [1] - 33:17 quarter [3] - 52:3, 52:16, 53:5 quarters [1] - 52:8 query [1] - 33:24 questions [24] - 3:15, 3:17, 3:20, 5:6, 7:4, 7:19, 10:8, 10:9,</p>

10:25, 12:1, 12:3,
15:13, 18:24, 19:13,
21:15, 25:23, 26:14,
31:17, 35:14, 35:19,
38:12, 38:15, 50:9,
59:25
quite [1] - 47:19

R

R-a-t-e-r-m-a-n-n [1] - 39:3
R-e-h-d-e-r [1] - 56:25
rain [1] - 33:24
raise [13] - 6:24, 7:12, 8:17, 8:20, 11:14, 17:17, 19:17, 21:25, 24:1, 37:21, 38:20, 50:21, 58:16
RATE [1] - 1:2
rate [24] - 2:8, 7:24, 8:7, 12:2, 16:14, 20:3, 20:14, 23:1, 23:10, 28:13, 30:14, 30:19, 38:7, 46:19, 48:10, 52:12, 54:25, 55:1, 55:16, 55:18, 55:20, 57:13, 59:23, 60:2
RATERMANN [5] - 38:23, 39:2, 39:6, 50:13, 50:16
Ratermann [1] - 39:3
rates [6] - 8:18, 8:20, 33:23, 52:11, 52:23, 52:24
rather [1] - 33:22
ratification [1] - 37:3
ratified [2] - 37:22, 38:8
rating [1] - 43:9
ratings [1] - 43:6
RAY [3] - 56:20, 56:24, 57:3
Ray [1] - 56:24
reached [2] - 36:25, 37:1
read [8] - 4:15, 5:4, 8:16, 20:24, 23:11, 29:7, 29:9, 42:12
readily [1] - 42:8
real [1] - 49:16
really [6] - 4:10, 12:25, 30:2, 34:24, 35:1, 58:24
rear [1] - 54:1
reason [3] - 41:22, 43:1, 52:19
reasonable [1] - 29:25
reasons [1] - 42:12

reassessed [1] - 58:9
receipt [1] - 24:25
receive [1] - 20:6
received [6] - 24:10, 24:15, 24:17, 26:3, 26:25
receiving [1] - 26:12
recently [1] - 43:7
recognize [1] - 54:20
recognizes [1] - 40:8
recommend [1] - 37:25
recommending [1] - 37:24
record [21] - 2:2, 2:4, 3:9, 3:11, 6:19, 7:22, 9:25, 11:2, 20:24, 20:25, 21:10, 22:17, 28:1, 35:25, 38:8, 38:20, 50:12, 50:19, 56:17, 60:11, 60:12
recording [1] - 26:7
records [1] - 35:8
recoup [3] - 12:16, 48:16, 60:3
recouped [1] - 60:5
recover [1] - 9:1
reduced [3] - 41:21, 41:23, 41:25
refer [1] - 47:24
reference [1] - 25:19
referenced [1] - 29:7
refilling [1] - 43:2
reflect [1] - 34:1
regarding [4] - 7:24, 20:2, 24:4, 31:23
REGARDING [1] - 1:1
region [1] - 20:16
register [1] - 33:6
regular [1] - 37:7
regulation [1] - 30:25
REHDER [3] - 56:20, 56:24, 57:3
Rehder [2] - 56:24, 57:2
rejected [1] - 36:23
relative [1] - 32:21
relatively [2] - 23:4, 31:9
relinquish [1] - 57:10
remain [1] - 7:2
remained [1] - 38:1
remind [1] - 4:13
remove [1] - 45:13
removing [1] - 24:19
repair [6] - 12:5, 12:10, 12:13, 12:16, 12:21, 13:9
repairs [5] - 12:10,

12:13, 14:16, 20:9
repay [1] - 31:1
repeatedly [1] - 55:17
replacement [5] - 17:20, 17:24, 30:16, 30:17, 39:18
report [3] - 13:25, 18:10, 49:20
Reported [1] - 1:20
Reporter [1] - 61:4
reporter [9] - 3:13, 5:24, 6:11, 22:7, 36:6, 39:1, 51:2, 54:11, 56:23
REPORTER [1] - 2:5
REPORTER'S [1] - 61:1
REPORTING [1] - 1:23
reports [1] - 27:15
represent [2] - 3:1, 9:23
representative [1] - 5:21
representatives [1] - 26:14
represented [1] - 30:3
representing [2] - 7:20, 9:17
represents [4] - 2:23, 2:24, 36:15, 39:8
REQUEST [1] - 1:2
request [6] - 2:8, 20:3, 20:19, 20:20, 24:2, 40:10
requesting [1] - 48:9
required [2] - 25:21, 28:14
requirements [1] - 35:3
research [1] - 25:20
researched [1] - 28:9
researching [1] - 30:10
residences [1] - 24:5
resident [4] - 4:24, 22:18, 27:21, 51:9
residential [2] - 28:14, 34:19
residents [2] - 26:11, 29:1
resolved [2] - 27:2, 29:17
resources [2] - 40:22, 47:2
respective [1] - 3:2
respond [2] - 14:3, 42:8
response [7] - 3:18, 13:5, 13:6, 13:17, 13:23, 25:18, 44:7

rest [1] - 52:16
restate [1] - 12:20
results [1] - 43:13
retire [2] - 40:14, 44:2
retired [1] - 58:20
retirement [1] - 40:12
revamped [1] - 48:8
revenue [1] - 8:15
review [3] - 34:10, 48:1, 53:2
reviewed [1] - 51:21
reviews [1] - 45:1
rhetorical [3] - 17:11, 56:5, 56:7
rise [1] - 23:9
rising [1] - 40:14
Road [1] - 1:7
road [1] - 13:9
roads [2] - 13:12, 13:14
roll [1] - 8:4
rolling [1] - 10:13
Room [1] - 1:7
room [1] - 44:9
roundtable [1] - 9:19
rule [1] - 30:20
ruled [1] - 17:23
runs [1] - 38:10

S

S-o-u-r-c-e-w-a-t-c-h.
com [1] - 48:4
safe [1] - 41:16
salaries [3] - 48:1, 48:4, 55:10
salary [1] - 55:23
satisfaction [4] - 15:17, 15:19, 43:6, 43:9
satisfactorily [1] - 27:2
satisfied [1] - 20:5
savvy [1] - 31:6
saw [3] - 43:7, 43:18, 53:25
scheduled [2] - 3:3, 37:9
Schneider [2] - 19:16, 20:23
SCHNEIDER [4] - 19:21, 19:24, 21:2, 21:5
school [1] - 41:3
second [4] - 8:15, 8:23, 19:6, 26:16
security [2] - 57:6, 59:1
sediment [2] - 45:13, 45:17

see [12] - 6:16, 10:16, 18:13, 19:14, 21:10, 34:10, 35:9, 37:17, 44:14, 50:19, 53:17, 60:11
seeing [1] - 52:14
seem [1] - 27:18
self [1] - 43:10
send [1] - 37:10
senior [1] - 44:11
sense [1] - 9:6
separate [1] - 48:14
September [2] - 36:19, 59:18
serve [1] - 13:3
served [1] - 39:20
services [1] - 12:18
Service [1] - 30:24
SERVICE [1] - 1:23
service [19] - 12:24, 13:4, 13:5, 13:20, 15:7, 15:21, 18:2, 18:5, 18:8, 20:6, 25:7, 41:11, 41:17, 42:10, 42:17, 42:23, 43:6, 43:9, 45:21
session [3] - 3:8, 40:5, 49:11
set [1] - 61:16
sets [1] - 47:3
several [4] - 9:22, 26:7, 36:20, 40:17
sewer [5] - 51:12, 52:11, 52:12, 52:23, 52:24
Sewer [2] - 51:13, 52:20
share [4] - 2:18, 18:3, 59:16, 59:20
sharing [1] - 32:14
SHARON [7] - 54:2, 54:8, 54:12, 54:13, 54:17, 56:6, 56:10
Sharon [1] - 54:12
SHARP [7] - 54:2, 54:8, 54:12, 54:13, 54:17, 56:6, 56:11
Sharp [2] - 54:13, 54:16
shop [2] - 40:25, 41:7
side [1] - 26:5
signed [2] - 6:18, 21:21
significant [1] - 31:8
simple [2] - 12:10, 31:9
single [2] - 48:11, 48:25
singling [1] - 52:6
sit [3] - 26:11, 28:21,

<p>31:12 site [1] - 49:22 sitting [1] - 58:11 situation [3] - 4:7, 16:4, 30:22 six [2] - 8:21, 55:19 size [1] - 22:23 skills [3] - 44:16, 44:17, 44:21 skip [1] - 57:17 snowy [1] - 4:4 social [2] - 57:6, 59:1 sold [1] - 60:6 solemnly [10] - 7:12, 11:16, 19:18, 22:1, 35:25, 38:21, 50:21, 54:5, 54:6, 56:18 someone [1] - 26:19 someplace [1] - 31:25 something's [1] - 55:7 sometimes [2] - 4:8, 10:12 somewhere [2] - 57:14, 58:14 soon [1] - 29:8 sooner [1] - 37:20 sound [1] - 47:22 SourceWatch [1] - 48:3 south [2] - 9:21, 22:21 space [1] - 9:13 speaking [2] - 34:18, 54:18 specific [3] - 18:2, 47:10, 48:13 specifically [3] - 29:6, 39:17, 47:3 spectrum [1] - 41:14 speculate [1] - 52:18 spell [8] - 11:1, 22:6, 22:9, 36:5, 38:25, 51:1, 54:10, 56:22 spend [1] - 28:24 spent [1] - 31:7 spigot [1] - 14:22 split [2] - 48:21, 49:1 St [31] - 1:24, 2:15, 4:25, 9:21, 11:23, 13:1, 13:8, 14:3, 18:10, 18:11, 22:19, 22:20, 22:21, 27:21, 28:1, 29:1, 36:16, 39:10, 39:12, 42:22, 48:13, 49:7, 49:15, 51:8, 51:10, 51:12, 52:10, 52:13, 53:2, 58:8 stabilization [1] - 8:16 Staff [1] - 6:10 staff [14] - 2:22, 4:18,</p>	<p>6:7, 10:11, 17:17, 18:3, 19:8, 25:14, 29:22, 30:19, 35:5, 49:10, 53:12 staffed [1] - 41:18 standard [1] - 18:1 standpoint [1] - 57:4 started [3] - 7:5, 30:10, 57:25 state [9] - 16:8, 22:6, 36:5, 38:25, 40:12, 50:12, 51:1, 54:10, 56:22 State [2] - 2:13, 9:18 statement [9] - 4:12, 4:14, 7:17, 15:24, 35:24, 38:19, 50:19, 56:16, 60:10 statements [4] - 3:10, 3:14, 6:19, 6:21 states [1] - 43:23 States [2] - 43:25, 61:4 stating [2] - 24:12, 45:9 statute [1] - 17:23 stays [2] - 55:3, 55:24 steak [2] - 48:19, 48:23 steps [2] - 14:12, 47:3 still [7] - 3:20, 10:8, 14:14, 14:19, 15:2, 40:18, 58:5 stock [2] - 59:17, 60:6 stockholders [1] - 59:14 stocks [1] - 9:10 Stoll [8] - 4:1, 10:4, 17:14, 19:6, 21:13, 31:18, 48:18, 53:10 STOLL [17] - 4:2, 10:5, 11:7, 17:15, 18:12, 18:17, 21:14, 31:19, 32:5, 32:12, 38:13, 50:8, 53:11, 53:20, 56:12, 60:7, 60:14 street [1] - 20:9 structure [1] - 49:6 struggling [1] - 55:9 stuck [2] - 57:24, 59:12 stuff [3] - 59:12, 59:24, 60:3 subdivision [1] - 23:14 submit [2] - 4:16, 5:13 subsequent [1] - 20:9 subsidiaries [2] - 46:22, 47:7 substandard [1] -</p>	<p>24:1 substantially [2] - 18:24, 33:8 successful [1] - 49:4 sudden [1] - 48:21 suffer [1] - 9:5 suffers [1] - 13:22 suggest [3] - 10:10, 44:25, 53:12 suggesting [1] - 53:16 summer [1] - 28:2 supervisor [1] - 26:19 supervisors [1] - 42:1 support [1] - 20:14 supposed [1] - 56:1 surcharge [4] - 8:3, 8:4, 8:12, 8:25 suspect [1] - 52:8 swear [3] - 6:25, 54:4 swimming [1] - 33:2 sworn [1] - 61:8 system [18] - 12:10, 12:22, 13:9, 14:16, 14:21, 14:22, 14:23, 15:1, 16:9, 17:1, 20:8, 27:6, 27:14, 27:16, 28:3, 34:2, 34:4, 46:25 System [1] - 43:22 systems [2] - 14:13, 28:18</p>	<p>11:16, 19:19, 21:15, 22:2, 32:20, 36:1, 38:14, 38:22, 39:23, 46:16, 50:9, 50:12, 50:22, 54:6, 56:13, 56:18, 60:8, 61:12 testing [1] - 14:12 that'd [1] - 7:4 THE [1] - 61:15 thereafter [1] - 61:10 thereby [1] - 45:20 therefore [2] - 13:5, 13:10 they've [3] - 8:22, 41:22, 44:1 Thomas [1] - 19:16 Thornhill [1] - 32:3 thoughts [3] - 4:15, 25:8, 32:14 thousands [1] - 21:6 three [19] - 5:3, 8:21, 21:20, 22:19, 23:23, 26:20, 29:14, 33:21, 34:5, 34:20, 34:24, 39:20, 39:21, 39:22, 41:5, 46:6, 51:18, 55:16, 57:18 three-fold [1] - 34:20 three-month [2] - 34:5, 51:18 three-year [1] - 41:5 throughout [1] - 20:8 TIM [14] - 5:22, 6:2, 11:11, 11:15, 11:18, 11:21, 15:11, 15:14, 15:18, 15:22, 18:4, 18:16, 18:25, 19:10 Tim [4] - 5:22, 6:3, 11:9, 17:3 timely [1] - 20:8 today [3] - 40:7, 42:19, 59:16 together [1] - 52:21 tomorrow [2] - 2:14, 34:14 tonight [6] - 2:14, 5:5, 5:17, 19:8, 22:16, 23:9 took [8] - 14:2, 29:14, 29:19, 29:20, 29:21, 34:5, 59:2, 59:3 totally [1] - 9:14 touched [1] - 31:23 towards [1] - 8:12 tower [1] - 20:11 training [3] - 41:3, 44:21 transcribed [1] - 61:10 transcribing [1] - 3:14 transcription [2] - 5:4,</p>	<p>61:12 transition [1] - 41:2 tried [1] - 13:25 true [3] - 46:15, 49:3, 61:11 truth [11] - 7:14, 11:17, 19:20, 22:3, 36:2, 38:22, 50:23, 54:7, 56:19, 61:8, 61:9 try [1] - 37:2 trying [6] - 29:25, 34:16, 35:1, 49:7, 57:11, 58:11 tune [1] - 29:9 twice [3] - 25:12, 30:7, 30:25 Two [1] - 34:20 two [14] - 5:1, 8:2, 9:23, 14:2, 16:14, 23:16, 24:7, 24:25, 26:20, 29:5, 31:5, 34:19, 55:16, 57:18 two-fold [1] - 34:19 two-week [1] - 31:5 twofold [1] - 27:4 typewriting [1] - 61:11 typically [1] - 51:18</p>
U				
<p>UMSL [1] - 2:15 unable [3] - 25:4, 25:9, 31:3 unavailable [1] - 32:6 under [2] - 35:3, 42:4 unexpected [1] - 25:3 unfair [1] - 55:8 unfilled [3] - 39:24, 41:9, 45:3 Unfilled [1] - 41:12 Unfortunately [1] - 42:25 union [6] - 18:19, 39:8, 40:6, 40:20, 40:23, 41:20 Union [1] - 39:7 unit [4] - 39:25, 41:12, 41:15, 42:14 United [1] - 43:25 unusually [1] - 33:21 up [34] - 4:8, 5:2, 5:10, 5:12, 6:18, 6:23, 8:6, 13:14, 14:9, 14:23, 18:6, 18:7, 18:8, 21:21, 23:2, 28:22, 29:11, 34:22, 37:4, 38:6, 44:5, 45:14, 48:24, 52:1, 55:23, 57:9, 57:15, 57:19,</p>				

<p>58:3, 58:5, 58:7, 58:10, 58:13, 59:17 UPON [1] - 61:15 urge [1] - 52:25 usage [6] - 27:15, 33:1, 33:6, 33:13, 51:14, 51:15 users [1] - 12:17 utilities [1] - 59:9 utility [6] - 16:4, 18:19, 43:24, 46:18, 54:25, 58:12 Utility [3] - 36:14, 39:7, 54:19 utilization [1] - 47:2 utilize [1] - 46:22</p>	<p>13:13, 13:17, 13:25, 14:4, 14:7, 14:8, 14:10, 16:4, 16:7, 16:21, 16:22, 18:7, 18:10, 20:8, 20:11, 23:15, 24:13, 24:22, 27:5, 27:15, 27:17, 27:18, 27:23, 28:15, 33:1, 33:6, 33:9, 33:13, 33:23, 34:6, 34:16, 37:11, 39:18, 42:9, 42:15, 43:24, 51:14, 51:15, 51:17, 51:22, 52:15, 53:3, 53:5, 54:25, 59:15 Water [50] - 2:7, 5:23, 7:21, 11:23, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:3, 20:7, 20:18, 23:22, 24:11, 25:18, 26:6, 26:13, 27:1, 28:13, 31:16, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:16, 39:11, 39:12, 39:13, 40:21, 41:6, 43:17, 43:22, 45:25, 46:5, 46:8, 46:11, 46:21, 47:8, 47:9, 47:17, 47:18, 47:21, 48:2, 48:5, 51:11, 51:23, 52:6, 52:9, 52:19, 53:1, 59:8 Water's [4] - 24:8, 40:1, 45:2, 47:13 web [2] - 23:11, 29:3 website [4] - 3:7, 47:25, 48:3, 48:6 week [4] - 26:21, 29:13, 31:5, 52:1 weeks [2] - 24:25, 29:5 welcome [3] - 2:1, 4:19, 32:13 West [4] - 22:18, 22:22, 31:25, 32:8 wet [1] - 33:21 wettest [1] - 28:1 whereby [1] - 45:10 WHITNEY [1] - 6:9 Whitney [1] - 6:9 who'd [4] - 35:24, 38:19, 56:16, 60:10 whole [1] - 9:5 widen [1] - 44:24 wife [1] - 58:21 winter [6] - 51:15, 51:17, 51:21, 52:7, 52:16, 53:2 wish [1] - 25:6 witnesses [2] - 61:6,</p>	<p>61:13 wonder [2] - 26:10, 41:22 wonderful [1] - 55:10 wondering [1] - 28:25 word [1] - 29:8 workers [4] - 12:9, 16:20, 44:17, 46:19 workers' [1] - 18:19 Workers' [2] - 36:14, 39:7 workforce [7] - 40:9, 40:11, 42:5, 42:6, 42:7, 42:8, 43:16 Workforce [1] - 1:6 works [1] - 28:22 world [1] - 56:1 WR-2015-0301 [1] - 2:7 writing [1] - 4:17</p>
V		
<p>vacancies [3] - 40:24, 43:3, 45:4 Valley [3] - 1:6, 21:11, 21:12 valve [12] - 40:2, 45:6, 45:12, 45:14, 45:15, 45:19, 45:22, 45:23, 46:10, 46:12, 47:4, 47:8 valves [3] - 45:10, 46:8, 46:24 variety [1] - 53:13 various [2] - 2:21, 17:24 vehicles [2] - 42:22, 42:24 vice [3] - 39:7, 39:22, 51:7 video [2] - 43:17, 43:19 view [2] - 3:6, 34:25 vital [1] - 42:11 vocational [1] - 41:3 voiced [1] - 50:6 volume [2] - 26:9, 51:15 vote [8] - 37:2, 37:4, 37:7, 37:9, 37:13, 37:16, 37:25, 38:4 voted [2] - 36:21, 37:20 vying [1] - 16:1</p>	<p>Water [50] - 2:7, 5:23, 7:21, 11:23, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:3, 20:7, 20:18, 23:22, 24:11, 25:18, 26:6, 26:13, 27:1, 28:13, 31:16, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:16, 39:11, 39:12, 39:13, 40:21, 41:6, 43:17, 43:22, 45:25, 46:5, 46:8, 46:11, 46:21, 47:8, 47:9, 47:17, 47:18, 47:21, 48:2, 48:5, 51:11, 51:23, 52:6, 52:9, 52:19, 53:1, 59:8 Water's [4] - 24:8, 40:1, 45:2, 47:13 web [2] - 23:11, 29:3 website [4] - 3:7, 47:25, 48:3, 48:6 week [4] - 26:21, 29:13, 31:5, 52:1 weeks [2] - 24:25, 29:5 welcome [3] - 2:1, 4:19, 32:13 West [4] - 22:18, 22:22, 31:25, 32:8 wet [1] - 33:21 wettest [1] - 28:1 whereby [1] - 45:10 WHITNEY [1] - 6:9 Whitney [1] - 6:9 who'd [4] - 35:24, 38:19, 56:16, 60:10 whole [1] - 9:5 widen [1] - 44:24 wife [1] - 58:21 winter [6] - 51:15, 51:17, 51:21, 52:7, 52:16, 53:2 wish [1] - 25:6 witnesses [2] - 61:6,</p>	<p>year [17] - 4:6, 16:15, 27:25, 28:1, 28:4, 33:21, 38:9, 41:5, 43:18, 44:13, 51:20, 52:14, 52:17, 58:6, 58:17, 59:19 years [10] - 8:22, 23:16, 30:4, 41:8, 42:16, 43:20, 44:20, 47:12, 51:12, 58:22 years' [2] - 27:24, 33:13 young [1] - 10:17</p>
W		
<p>wants [2] - 48:21, 59:23 wastewater [1] - 43:24 WATER [1] - 1:1 water [50] - 12:10, 12:14, 12:17, 13:7,</p>	<p>Water [50] - 2:7, 5:23, 7:21, 11:23, 11:24, 14:11, 16:5, 20:3, 20:7, 20:18, 23:22, 24:11, 25:18, 26:6, 26:13, 27:1, 28:13, 31:16, 33:10, 33:20, 34:25, 36:12, 36:13, 36:16, 39:11, 39:12, 39:13, 40:21, 41:6, 43:17, 43:22, 45:25, 46:5, 46:8, 46:11, 46:21, 47:8, 47:9, 47:17, 47:18, 47:21, 48:2, 48:5, 51:11, 51:23, 52:6, 52:9, 52:19, 53:1, 59:8 Water's [4] - 24:8, 40:1, 45:2, 47:13 web [2] - 23:11, 29:3 website [4] - 3:7, 47:25, 48:3, 48:6 week [4] - 26:21, 29:13, 31:5, 52:1 weeks [2] - 24:25, 29:5 welcome [3] - 2:1, 4:19, 32:13 West [4] - 22:18, 22:22, 31:25, 32:8 wet [1] - 33:21 wettest [1] - 28:1 whereby [1] - 45:10 WHITNEY [1] - 6:9 Whitney [1] - 6:9 who'd [4] - 35:24, 38:19, 56:16, 60:10 whole [1] - 9:5 widen [1] - 44:24 wife [1] - 58:21 winter [6] - 51:15, 51:17, 51:21, 52:7, 52:16, 53:2 wish [1] - 25:6 witnesses [2] - 61:6,</p>	<p>year [17] - 4:6, 16:15, 27:25, 28:1, 28:4, 33:21, 38:9, 41:5, 43:18, 44:13, 51:20, 52:14, 52:17, 58:6, 58:17, 59:19 years [10] - 8:22, 23:16, 30:4, 41:8, 42:16, 43:20, 44:20, 47:12, 51:12, 58:22 years' [2] - 27:24, 33:13 young [1] - 10:17</p>