

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of Missouri-American Water Company's)
Request for Authority to Implement A General Rate) **File No. WR-2011-0337**
Increase for Water and Sewer Service Provided in)
Missouri Service Areas)

**ORDER GRANTING EXTENSION OF TIME AND
REQUEST FOR CLARITY**

Issue Date: December 21, 2011

Effective Date: December 21, 2011

On December 19, 2011, the Commission's Staff filed a status report regarding the processing of comment cards being submitted by Missouri American Water Company's ("MAWC") customers. Staff requested an extension of time to submit its report analyzing the comment cards. Staff cites a number of reasons for the request, all of which involve work load issues. Those reasons include: (1) the large number of cards to process; (2) the large number of phone calls, emails and regular mail inquiries generated by the comment cards, which also must be processed; (3) multiple errors associated with MAWC's distribution of the cards; and (4) the Office of the Public Counsel's unwillingness to process cards that contain inquiries specific to its office.¹

Staff has further sought clarity from the Commission with regard to what the Commission wants in Staff's analysis of the comment cards. Staff states:

The Consumer Services Department will be able to provide the total number of returned mail received, the number of public comments received by mail, email and phone calls, and a summary of the responses received to the questions asked on the comment cards regarding reliable service, accurate and easy to understand billing and water quality, to which consumers may have chosen as strongly agree, agree and disagree. In addition, the Consumer Services Department can provide a broad list of issues related to

¹ The Commission has already directed MAWC and Public Counsel to respond to Staff's Status Report.

billing, service and water quality issues, i.e., due date confusion, outages, heavy chlorine, etc.

The Commission recognizes the magnitude of effort involved with processing the comment cards and will grant Staff's request for an extension of time to file its analysis. In terms of clarifying what Staff's analysis should include, the Commission believes that Staff has appropriately outlined the parameters of what should be in the report in its statement above.

The analysis should include only comments received from MAWC's customers and only comments involving MAWC's provision of service, not comments from non-customers or comments about other entities. The Staff should provide the Commission with: (1) the total number of cards it receives and the percentage of returned cards versus those mailed; (2) the total number of cards received from MAWC customers as opposed to non-customers; and, (3) the total number of cards pertaining to MAWC as opposed to comments involving other entities or comments directed at the Commission. Staff should provide the same numeric analysis in terms of the phone calls, emails and letters it receives – from MAWC customers only, addressing only MAWC issues.

Staff's content analysis should only be aimed at those comment cards submitted by MAWC's customers and only towards comments relating to MAWC. The content analysis is outlined appropriately by Staff. It should include a summary of the responses regarding reliable service, accurate and easy to understand billing and water quality; i.e. responses to the formatted questions on the comment cards. Staff should also provide the Commission with a list of issues identified by the customers by general category and provide a single summary statement for each category that captures the essence of the majority of the comments with regard to that category. Staff already has identified a number of these

categories, i.e. bill due date confusion, outages, and heavy chlorine. Staff should provide the same content analysis in terms of the phone calls, emails and letters it receives – from MAWC customers only, addressing only MAWC issues.

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

1. The deadline for the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission to submit its report analyzing customer comment cards is extended until February 10, 2012.
2. Staff's request for clarity with regard to the content of its report is granted. That clarification is provided in the body of this order.
3. This order shall become effective immediately upon issuance.

BY THE COMMISSION



Steven C. Reed
Secretary

(S E A L)

Harold Stearley, Deputy Chief Regulatory
Law Judge, by delegation of authority
pursuant to Section 386.240, RSMo 2000.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 21st day of December, 2011.