

THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

ALLOWABLE EX PARTE PRESENTATION

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 Certified Court Reporter

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1 APPEARANCES:

2 COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

3 COMMISSIONER RANDY MITCHELL, CHAIRMAN
4 COMMISSIONER G. O'NEAL HAMILTON
5 COMMISSIONER JOHN E. "BUTCH" HOWARD
6 COMMISSIONER DAVID A. WRIGHT
7 COMMISSIONER ELIZABETH "LIB" FLEMING
8 COMMISSIONER MIGNON L. CLYBURN
9 COMMISSIONER C. ROBERT MOSELEY, AT-LARGE

10 ATTORNEYS FOR CAROLINA WATER SERVICE, et al.

11 WILLOUGHBY & HOEFER, P.A.
12 BY: JOHN HOEFER, ATTORNEY AT LAW
13 1022 Calhoun Street
14 Columbia, South Carolina 29202

15 ATTORNEYS FOR THE OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF:

16 OFFICE OF REGULATORY STAFF
17 BY: LESSIE HAMMONDS, ATTORNEY AT LAW
18 NANETTE EDWARDS, ATTORNEY AT LAW
19 Post Office Box 11263
20 Columbia, South Carolina 29211
21
22
23
24
25

1 MR. CHAIRMAN: At this time I will call this
2 meeting to order. I'm sure you have a presentation for
3 us, Mr. Hoefer.

4 MR. HOEFER: I do, Mr. Chairman.

5 MR. CHAIRMAN: Glad to have y'all with us.

6 MR. HOEFER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
7 members of the Commission. My name is John Hoefer. I'm
8 with the firm Willoughby and Hoefer. We represent five
9 operating subsidiaries of Utilities, Inc. Utilities,
10 Inc. is located in Northbrook, Illinois, and the five
11 operating subsidiaries that are jurisdictional of
12 Utilities that provide water and sewer services in South
13 Carolina are Carolina Water Service, United Utility
14 Companies, Incorporated, Utilities Services of South
15 Carolina, Incorporated, Tega Cay Water Service,
16 Incorporated and Southland Utilities.

17 We are pleased to be here today to have an
18 opportunity to take advantage of the allowable ex parte
19 presentation process that's been established under Act
20 175.

21 I'm going to introduce to you now Jim Cameron
22 who is the chief executive officer and chairman of the
23 board of Utilities, Inc., parent company of the five
24 jurisdictional Utilities. Mr. Cameron will be making
25 the presentation. He will also be introducing to you

1 other members of the company staff who will be making
2 presentations.

3 We will have a power point program that will
4 run during the presentations. If at any time you have
5 any questions, please don't hesitate to interrupt and
6 ask your questions. And I think we have copies of the
7 power point that either have been distributed or will be
8 distributed.

9 And if there is nothing further, Mr. Chairman,
10 then I will --

11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hoefer, the only other
12 thing I would like to recognize is we have Office of
13 Regulatory Staff present who is representing Office of
14 Regulatory Staff today.

15 MS. HAMMONDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
16 Lessie Hammonds.

17 MS. EDWARDS: Nanette Edwards.

18 MR. CHAIRMAN: Glad to have y'all with us
19 today. Okay. Mr. Hoefer.

20 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, let me introduce to
21 you Jim Cameron.

22 MR. CAMERON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon.

24 MR. CAMERON: Mr. Chairman and members of the
25 Commission, as Mr. Hoefer indicated, my name is Jim

1 Cameron. I am chairman and chief executive officer of
2 Utilities, Inc., as I will refer to that in the rest of
3 the presentation as UI. I have been with the company
4 since 1987, and I have served in my present capacity as
5 chairman and CEO since 1996.

6 As you may be aware, Utilities, Inc. is the
7 parent company of Carolina Water Service, United Utility
8 Company, Utilities Services of South Carolina, Tega Cay
9 Water Service, and Southland Utilities. All of these
10 are public utilities providing water and wastewater
11 service in South Carolina.

12 Let me begin by saying how much we do
13 appreciate the opportunity to be with you today to brief
14 the Commission regarding Utilities, Inc. and our
15 operating subsidiaries.

16 Our presentation today will consist of five
17 main parts. I will be providing the commission with an
18 overview of Utilities, Inc. subsidiaries operating in
19 South Carolina. Carl Daniel, who has appeared before
20 this Commission on several occasions, is our regional
21 vice president. He's overseeing South Carolina
22 operations, and he will discuss the system and
23 facilities operating in South Carolina, including a
24 history of our acquisitions within the state.

25 Bruce Haas is our regional director

1 immediately responsible for our South Carolina
2 operations. He should also be well-known to the
3 Commission by virtue of a number of appearances before
4 you, and he will discuss the various type of plants that
5 we operate and the facility upgrades that the company
6 has made.

7 Steve Lubertozi who is also out of our
8 Northbrook office, is our director of regulatory
9 accounting and also a regular witness in proceedings
10 before the Commission, and he will discuss the economic
11 impact our subsidiaries have in South Carolina.

12 And, finally, Patty Owens, who is our director
13 of customer relations and administrative service, will
14 discuss the policies and practices of our subsidiaries
15 with regard to customer service.

16 If at any time, please, during the
17 presentation if you have a question, please feel more
18 than free to go ahead and stop us and ask.

19 To give you a little background, UI is a
20 privately held corporation which has been in business
21 since 1965 with our first utility systems being located
22 in the midwest, primarily in Illinois, which is also
23 where our corporate headquarters is located. Our first
24 system acquisition outside of the midwest was in South
25 Carolina, and that occurred in 1972 in Florence and

1 Horry counties where we served, at the time, 2,200 water
2 and sewer customers. From that beginning, our five
3 operating subsidiaries combined now serve approximately
4 34,000 water and sewer customers in 20 counties
5 throughout South Carolina, and a map of which should be
6 shown on Attachment 1. You can watch it from here.
7 Great.

8 The growth from our beginning to now represent
9 an annual increase of about eight and a half percent a
10 year. Nationwide, UI subsidiaries serve approximately
11 300,000 water and sewer customers in 17 different states
12 as depicted on Attachment 3 of the materials. South
13 Carolina customer base constitutes about 11 percent of
14 our national customer base. And as a total, Utilities,
15 Inc. constitutes about the fifth largest private water
16 and wastewater utility company based on the number of
17 customers, which can be seen in Attachment 4.

18 At the conclusion of our presentation, I will
19 give some closing remarks and will be available to
20 answer any of your questions at that time. But at this
21 point in the presentation, if there are no questions --
22 but if there are, please speak up. If not, I will go
23 ahead and turn this over to Mr. Carl Daniel to brief the
24 Commission regarding the history of our system
25 acquisitions within South Carolina and discuss some of

1 the facilities that we operate.

2 Any questions?

3 MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't see any at this time,
4 but we'll certainly come back to you if any arise.
5 Thank you.

6 MR. CAMERON: Yes, sir.

7 MR. DANIEL: Mr. Chairman, members of the
8 Commission, good afternoon.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon.

10 MR. DANIEL: As Mr. Cameron just stated, I am
11 Carl Daniel, and I serve as regional vice president of
12 Utilities, Incorporated with oversight responsibility
13 for South Carolina operations. In addition to South
14 Carolina, I also oversee operations in other
15 southeastern and mid-Atlantic states.

16 It has been my pleasure to appear before this
17 Commission on many occasions during the 32 years that I
18 have been employed by UI. Although it's been awhile
19 since the last time I've had this opportunity, I
20 appreciate the chance today to renew my acquaintance
21 with the commissioners who were serving the last time I
22 appeared and also to be introduced to the commissioners
23 who have most presently taken office.

24 Of the states I oversee, South Carolina is the
25 second largest based on the number of customers that we

1 serve. Our presence in South Carolina began in 1972
2 with the acquisitions of systems in Florence and Myrtle
3 Beach areas. Attachment 5 of our materials reflects the
4 growth of our South Carolina systems that has been
5 marked by several significant acquisitions and
6 consistent additions to existing systems by virtue of
7 expansions and customer growth. I would like to focus
8 primarily on two of those acquisitions.

9 In 1974 we were approached by the PSC staff
10 and DHEC regarding the potential acquisition of eight
11 water and sewer systems operated by Suburban Utilities
12 which served customers in various parts of the upstate,
13 primarily in the Greenville, Spartanburg and Anderson
14 counties. The largest of these systems operated by
15 Suburban was under a sewer tap moratorium, and this
16 moratorium was by DHEC. And, therefore, Suburban
17 Utilities could not add any additional customers.

18 Additionally, these systems were financially
19 distressed, and no local government entity was willing
20 or able to take these systems over. UI was the logical
21 candidate to acquire the Suburban Utilities systems
22 given our presence in the state and our demonstrated
23 ability to acquire, upgrade and operate existing
24 facilities. Accordingly, UI formed United Utility
25 Companies in 1985 to acquire the Suburban systems, and

1 did so with the Commission's approval.

2 Since that time, United Utility Companies has
3 expanded to serve over 2,200 water and sewer customers
4 in eight counties, and we serve them in an
5 environmentally responsible and financial stable manner.
6 These areas are shown on Attachment 6.

7 A similar scenario developed in 2001 when we
8 were approached by DHEC regarding the systems operated
9 by Utilities of South Carolina and South Carolina Water
10 and Sewer, LLC, both of which were owned by US
11 Utilities. At that time, these systems were being
12 operated in eight counties and were serving some 7,200
13 customers. But US Utilities owed nearly \$450,000 to the
14 state of South Carolina in delinquent drinking water and
15 environmental fees.

16 The delinquency was systematic of greater
17 financial difficulties which had resulted in judgments
18 being taken against US Utilities and bankruptcy
19 proceedings against its parent company. At DHEC's
20 urging and with the approval of the Commission, these
21 systems were acquired in 2002 by our company, Utilities
22 Services of South Carolina, Incorporated. Since then,
23 we've invested several millions of dollars in upgrades
24 and improvements of facilities. We've ensured payment
25 of all drinking water and environmental fees and

1 currently serve nearly 7,300 water and sewer customers
2 in South Carolina. These areas are shown on Attachment
3 7.

4 This, again, has been accomplished in
5 compliance with environmental regulatory requirements
6 and sound financial resources. Both the Suburban
7 Utilities and the US Utilities acquisitions serve to
8 demonstrate our willingness and our ability to be a
9 private provider that the commission and DHEC can count
10 on to take on problem systems when governmental
11 alternatives are not available, and we ensure continuous
12 service in accordance with applicable regulatory
13 standards.

14 In addition to these acquisitions, our
15 companies have also extended existing systems to serve
16 other areas in the state when the alternatives are not
17 available and have grown in response to the population
18 growth in these areas. Attachment 8 to our materials is
19 a map showing the various water and sewer facilities we
20 own and operate throughout the state of South Carolina.
21 Today we are the largest private water and wastewater
22 utility operating in South Carolina based on the number
23 of customers.

24 I sincerely appreciate the time that you've
25 allowed me today. And at this point, unless you have

1 questions, I believe Bruce Haas will brief the
2 Commission on the types of facilities we own and operate
3 in South Carolina.

4 MR. CHAIRMAN: Sir, you mentioned you had
5 spent \$8 million. Was all that money spent in South
6 Carolina on South Carolina's upgraded systems or did I
7 follow you correctly?

8 MR. DANIEL: That is correct.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: And was it any large items that
10 you particularly mentioned in that \$8 million for any
11 upgrades?

12 MR. DANIEL: I said several millions of
13 dollars.

14 MR. CHAIRMAN: Several million?

15 MR. DANIEL: Yes, I didn't specify \$8 million.

16 MR. CHAIRMAN: That was mostly for upgrades of
17 your facilities?

18 MR. DANIEL: Yes. Upgrades in facilities,
19 rebuilding well houses, drilling wells, replacing
20 hydroaromatic tanks and a host of other projects that
21 Bruce Haas will talk about when he takes the stand.

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

23 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Mr. Chairman.

24 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Wright. Excuse
25 me, Commissioner Howard.

1 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Mr. Daniel, you
2 indicated there were \$450,000 in fines, various DHEC
3 fines. Were any of these fines in excess of the
4 \$450,000?

5 MR. DANIEL: I'm not sure as to the exact
6 amount that we paid to satisfy that debt. However,
7 we'll be willing to provide that to you shortly after
8 the hearing -- not the hearing, but this presentation.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions from the Office
10 of Regulatory Staff?

11 MS. HAMMONDS: No questions.

12 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Thank you, sir.

13 MR. DANIEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 MR. HAAS: Mr. Chairman, members of the
15 Commission, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to
16 appear before you today to talk a little bit about the
17 plant facilities that are owned and operated by UI
18 operating subsidiaries in South Carolina.

19 As Mr. Cameron mentioned, I have direct
20 responsibility for the operations of all of our South
21 Carolina systems and supervise 44 employees involved
22 with our operations from our South Carolina headquarters
23 located in West Columbia. I've been employed with UI
24 for 27 years. Attachment 8 demonstrates not only the
25 location, but also the various types of utility systems

1 that we own and operate in South Carolina. Please note
2 that we operate 111 public water systems throughout the
3 state, of which 83 supply portable water from our wells
4 and 28 are supplied by third-party bulk providers. We
5 also operate 36 wastewater systems of which 28 include
6 our own wastewater treatment facilities and eight of
7 which receive bulk treatment service from other
8 entities.

9 The water systems which obtain supply from our
10 own wells typically consist of a well located in a 100
11 foot protected radius -- radius protected free zone.
12 These wells are housed in small buildings like the one
13 shown on Attachment 9, which also protect the pumping
14 and chemical feed equipment as well as the electrical
15 controls.

16 As you see in this particular exhibit, the
17 relatively small size of this facility should not
18 mislead you. With the hydroaromatic tank post-911
19 security features, chemical storage and other equipment
20 taken into account, a facility of this size can range
21 anywhere from \$70,000 to \$100,000 to install what you
22 see here.

23 Attachment 10 depicts a typical warehouse
24 interior for the pumping chemical and electrical
25 equipment. For water systems that are supplied by bulk

1 sources in our connections with our distribution systems
2 are made that typically include a master meter.

3 Attachment 11 shows a typical bulk water end connection
4 with one such as this being able to handle -- capable of
5 handling the flow of approximately 1,000 gallons a
6 minute.

7 Now, what does this really have any bearing,
8 then? A standard typical water customer would have a
9 three-quarter inch water meter, about as big as your
10 thumb. That's the size of pipe that would feed their
11 house, provide maybe five to eight gallons a minute.
12 Here we've got six or eight inch bulk water meter that
13 would be capable of providing that pressure and flow is
14 up to 1,000 gallons thousand a minute or possibly more.

15 In many of our water systems, both well and
16 bulk supplied, we have elevated storage facilities which
17 are designed to meet capacity requirements and to
18 improve pressure. Attachment 12 is a photograph of one
19 of our elevated tanks.

20 For our sewer systems where we treat
21 wastewater, we currently utilize two standard type of
22 plants. In the older, more established systems, we
23 utilize a lagoon system which is a primary treatment
24 method. Attachment 13 depicts this type of system which
25 involves aeration and disinfection processes prior to

1 discharge. We have six of these types of plants.

2 In our plants which have been installed in the
3 more recent years, we utilize a conventional activated
4 sludge system, a picture of which is in our Attachment
5 14. This type of plant provides secondary treatment,
6 and we have 22 of these type of facilities. The
7 particular pictures that you see there now, I believe
8 the sizes are about 300,000 gallons a day treatment
9 capacity and 250,000 on the bottom picture would supply
10 sewer service to approximately anywhere from 650 to
11 1,000 customers for these types of treatment plants.

12 In this process, this activated sludge-type
13 process, an effluent bar screen is utilized to remove
14 the initial debris coming into the treatment plant from
15 the wastewater. The wastewater then flows into basins
16 or holding tanks. Water is aerated and mixed and
17 utilizes bacteria to breakdown the wastewater. The
18 wastewater then flows into a settling tank, or what we
19 call a clarifier, where the solids are separated and
20 removed. The clear effluent is then disinfected,
21 followed by a removal of any remaining chlorine
22 residual, and then it's treated -- the treated effluent
23 is discharged.

24 Finally, in our most recent and major plant
25 upgrade, which is being made or at our Pocola Wastewater

1 Treatment plant in Sumter County, we are installing a
2 system which will provide tertiary treatment. This
3 system includes all of the steps followed for the
4 conventional activated sludge-type system, plus a
5 filtering process which removes fine particulate matter.

6 Attachment 15 shows the construction and
7 installation work that is currently underway at Pocola.
8 This facility, when finished, will provide some of the
9 highest level of treatment utilized for a domestic
10 wastewater treatment system in South Carolina today, and
11 this is being done at a cost of approximately \$1
12 million. And for this type of treatment plant and what
13 you see here, that million dollars equates to
14 approximately \$10 per gallon of treatment capacity
15 installed.

16 Incidentally, the project will take
17 approximately a year and a half to complete, this
18 particular one. That's based on conceptual design,
19 engineering, plans submittal and approval to the
20 regulatory agencies, receipt of construction permits,
21 followed by the actual construction and overseeing of
22 the work being done that you see here. When that is
23 complete, then we must get approval from the regulatory
24 agency, South Carolina DHEC, before we can actually
25 place this into operation.

1 For our sewer systems that receive bulk
2 treatment from other wastewater treatment facilities
3 interconnected with our collection and transportation
4 systems are made. Of course, all of our sewer systems
5 have underground service lines and mains which collect
6 and transport untreated wastewater.

7 Mains can consist of both gravity-type mains
8 and force mains. Force mains are basically connected to
9 pumping stations or lift stations, as we call them,
10 which are used to pump wastewater upgrade or uphill
11 where it can begin flowing by gravity again. Those
12 stations are normally located in larger or hilly-type
13 subdivisions.

14 Attachment 16 depicts the exterior of a
15 typical lift station which includes a backup power
16 generator. Now, if you look at this particular picture,
17 it may not look like much. But what you don't see, you
18 will in the next picture. But what you don't see in
19 this is the wet well. It doesn't look like much, but
20 you're probably looking at \$100,000 for all of the
21 equipment just to put into a station like this.

22 Within a typical lift station, you'll find a
23 wet well or a holding chamber which the untreated
24 wastewater is collected and then an electrical powered
25 pump to pump the wastewater or lift station will lift it

1 up to a higher elevation where it starts flowing with
2 gravity again. This is shown in Attachment 17.
3 Facilities like this one shown will have an investment
4 of about \$100,000 for this.

5 Finally, for our sewer systems which are not
6 interconnected with bulk treatment providers, we
7 discharge the treated wastewater into the environment
8 typically to receding waters throughout our outfall
9 lines. Attachment 18 shows the outfall line from our
10 Friarsgate wastewater treatment facility which
11 discharges into the Saluda River located in Lexington
12 County. Hopefully the picture that you've got, the one
13 on top, you can actually see the pipe under water
14 actually discharging.

15 I mentioned earlier the upgrade to our Pocola
16 system which will take tertiary treatment. Of course,
17 we have other upgrades that are required to be made from
18 time to time to accommodate growth, renovation of
19 facilities that have reached the end of their useful
20 lives, or to address specific operational issues.

21 An example of a growth-induced upgrade is at
22 our Friarsgate facility where demand required us to
23 install additional treatment capacity. Attachment 19 is
24 a set of photographs of this facility showing the
25 original facility, which is the one at the top, along

1 with the facilities following the expansion.

2 An example of a facility where we have
3 completely renovated the plant to improve the operations
4 is our River Hills Wastewater Treatment plant located in
5 York County. We completely renovated that facility,
6 including upgrades to the aeration basin, disinfection,
7 chlorination equipment and de-chlorination equipment,
8 along with replacement of all of the internal plant
9 piping. Also added were additional facilities to allow
10 process control testing at this facility. The old and
11 new facilities will be depicted on Attachment 20.

12 And as an example of an upgrade required as a
13 result of operational issues, is the addition of odor
14 control facilities at the CWS wastewater treatment plant
15 which included, among other things, upgrades to our
16 aeration equipment and the installation of a floating
17 cover over our flow equalization basin which aids in the
18 elimination of odor-absorbing capabilities. This cover,
19 along with odor control equipment and air scrubbers that
20 we had installed, has virtually eliminated any of the
21 odor complaints from this wastewater treatment plant.
22 The odor control equipment and air scrubbers are shown
23 in Attachment 21.

24 If you look at that particular attachment, the
25 two -- two of the components that you see, the gray

1 cylindrical components are actually part of the air
2 scrubber system, and then the remaining -- you'll see
3 the white piping that actually are air lines that pump
4 or actually vacuum pump the air and pump them through
5 these air scrubber systems to remove the odors.
6 Installations, equipment such as this, can reach
7 anywhere from -- I think these were in between \$25,000
8 and \$50,000 for all of the equipment that we installed
9 just for this particular facility.

10 Unless there are any questions for me, I will
11 be happy to answer any questions you might have before I
12 introduce Mr. Steve Lubertozzi.

13 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Moseley.

14 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: How are you, sir?

15 MR. HAAS: Good, sir.

16 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: And I talked to Mr.
17 Joseph here to be sure I don't get out of line on a
18 question I might ask you.

19 MR. HOEFER: You got good advice, I'm sure.

20 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Last year when we had
21 some of the night hearings and day hearings here, the
22 big problem we had was customer service -- quality of
23 customer service. I brought in some samples that we had
24 gotten from some of the public awareness and the others.
25 I wanted to know if you could just briefly discuss that,

1 if you can, for South Carolina.

2 MR. HAAS: I'll do the best I can.

3 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Were you at most of
4 those night hearings we had?

5 MR. HAAS: Yes, sir. In fact, every single
6 one of them.

7 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, if I could just
8 interject one thing. I think those were from the
9 Utilities Services of South Carolina and not CWS, just
10 for purposes of clarity. I would also say that Ms.
11 Owens is going to address customer service and you will
12 have an opportunity to follow up at length about that.

13 MR. CHAIRMAN: I have a question. Did you
14 want to address any -- I know there was some quality
15 issues. Did you want to address that?

16 MR. HAAS: What I recall is we had one
17 facility that the customers had -- our customer had
18 brought in that due to water quality from our flushing
19 of the facilities. If you recall, there were quite a
20 few deficiencies in the previous -- and John, you'll
21 have to make sure that I don't cover things that are not
22 appropriate. But with the USSC facilities, one of the
23 facilities had issues with flushing where we installed a
24 number of additional blow-offs that they didn't have
25 before. We installed additional water valves out there

1 at that particular facility. We had a number of
2 complaints due to or issues that were evolved because of
3 contractors installing other lines -- I believe there
4 were gas lines in there, gas or electric -- within the
5 subdivision that hit our lines. So we had to shut down
6 the system to make repairs. Whenever we got done making
7 those repairs, we had to flush the lines and we had
8 those type of complaints.

9 We also installed additional blow-offs to be
10 able to properly flush the system so that if and when
11 you ever do encounter a problem where another utility
12 would hit a line or you have some type of leak that you
13 had to make repairs to, and I think if I recall that
14 particular customer had indicated that that was the
15 water they had taken was following one of our flushing
16 routines. So part of the upgrades to that particular
17 facility were made by installing additional valving in
18 the system that would let us isolate the areas and also
19 additional blow-offs that would probably flush it and,
20 you know, do a better job with that type of maintenance
21 following any repairs to the water line or if it got
22 hit.

23 So that's -- that's basically what I recall
24 from those particular ones.

25 MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Howard?

1 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Good to see you. At one
2 of the night hearings or the particular one I'm
3 interested in that I wanted to question you about, there
4 were a lot of complaints about lagoon, odor and all
5 that. With your upgrades that have been done, have any
6 upgrades been done or are there plans to be done to that
7 Kings Grant facility in Dorchester County?

8 MR. HAAS: We've actually -- if I recall,
9 since that time, we've actually -- the upgrades that
10 we've made would be to the aeration equipment at the
11 treatment plant, which basically allows us to add
12 additional dissolved oxygen in the water. But the long
13 and the short of it, the upgrades to the actual aeration
14 equipment which helps it do a better job, hopefully
15 eliminate any odors that we might have. I didn't recall
16 too many of the complaints per se from Kings Grant,
17 although the -- right there at the treatment plant or
18 adjacent to that where we actually installed -- and
19 honestly I can't remember if we installed it at that
20 time or if it was following those issues where we
21 actually made those upgrades. And the upgrades were
22 adding fine bubble diffusers to the aeration, placement
23 of the aeration drops and adding additional ones would
24 be the types of things that we would do for a -- that
25 type of activated sludge system.

1 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: There were some
2 complaints about the lagoon and that kind of stuff.

3 MR. HAAS: That particular one -- if I recall,
4 the effluent from Kings Grant is actually pumped out
5 into the Ashley River. The person that made the
6 complaints were talking about where discharge -- or
7 adjacent to the plant where the Ashley River, that
8 little, I call it bay or inlet comes in, our discharge
9 is actually pumped a quarter of a mile, several thousand
10 feet, I think, down -- farther downstream where they're
11 actually at. If I remember right, somebody mentioned
12 the marina and putting a boat in there and they were
13 worried about it. That's actually upstream of our
14 discharge.

15 So as far as that went, I would say I couldn't
16 substantiate what they were saying and it didn't make
17 sense because our effluent wasn't even located -- it was
18 kind of like the one that you saw in one of these
19 pictures where it's actually pumped and pumped out
20 farther downstream directly into the Ashley River.

21 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Thank you.

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Fleming.

23 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Good afternoon.

24 MR. HAAS: Good afternoon.

25 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: I wanted to find out --

1 as I understand, we can talk about all of the Utility,
2 Inc.'s companies in the state, right, not just Carolina
3 Water today?

4 MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, ma'am.

5 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: So what is the overall
6 plan for infrastructure improvement? As I understand
7 with ownership of the utility companies tending to move
8 back to the United States with a conversation I believe
9 I had with Mr. Cameron, there will be more emphasis on
10 infrastructure improvement and I wondered what the plan
11 was for this state?

12 MR. HAAS: Well, I guess my --

13 MR. CAMERON: I could address that perhaps
14 better at a subsequent time.

15 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Okay. Well, I'll hold
16 that question for you, then.

17 MR. HAAS: I'll hold it for Mr. Cameron.

18 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Well, I had a couple
19 other questions I wanted to ask. I wanted to find
20 out -- all right. It was mentioned earlier about some
21 of the companies that you took over, the DHEC fines,
22 that they were delinquent. And I wanted to find out,
23 though, since Utilities, Inc. has taken over these
24 companies, what is the track record of DHEC fines? Have
25 you had any fines since you've taken over?

1 MR. HAAS: You refer to them as fines. When
2 we actually took over US Utilities, I think the amount
3 listed was about \$450,000, which weren't fines per se.
4 They were delinquent safe drinking water act fees and
5 regulatory compliance fees that were owed to DHEC in
6 order to conduct water quality testing and such that
7 DHEC is actually responsible for, for the different
8 water quality at all the different facilities. And
9 we --

10 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Since you've taken
11 over, have you had any problems in that area?

12 MR. HAAS: No. In fact, part of our agreement
13 or what we ended up bringing to the table was to see
14 that all those fees were paid, which then allowed DHEC
15 to continue or begin testing again all of those
16 different facilities for the different water quality
17 parameters. And to date, not only with the USSC or
18 Utilities Service systems, Carolina Water systems, we're
19 completely current in our payment of these fees, and
20 that was one of the large advantages, especially with
21 DHEC, in being so delinquent in paying them, we were
22 able to see that they were made whole and could begin
23 that testing again.

24 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: So that your tract
25 record with you all in this state is that you have not

1 had any fines, then, from DHEC?

2 MR. HAAS: I wouldn't -- I couldn't say we've
3 never had any fines, because I know that there have been
4 a couple over the years.

5 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: But it's been minimal?

6 MR. HAAS: Yes, yes. Nothing significant.

7 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: And the other thing I
8 wanted to follow up on, I know this was -- we discussed
9 this, I believe, at one time. But you were planning to
10 upgrade the cleaning of your sewer lines. I think you
11 were going to move to try to do it once every five
12 years?

13 MR. HAAS: No. Actually, every five years, we
14 would have all of the sewer lines completely cleaned.
15 We have a --

16 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: That's what I mean.

17 MR. HAAS: Okay. Basically our policy is that
18 we clean from 10 to 20 percent of all of our sewer mains
19 each year. Now this amount depends pretty much on a
20 host of variables. Number one, the type of facility,
21 the type of piping that's in place, any problems that
22 we've had, those types of things, and the age of the
23 system. Age of the pipes that are in the ground. So
24 we've actually increased and we'll clean a minimal on
25 some we may only do 10 percent depending on the type of

1 system and if there are no problems or history of
2 problems with that. Also on those would be some older
3 type systems and as a routine or policy we now actually
4 clean 20 percent and, if necessary, even more than that.
5 So that at a minimum, every five years all of that
6 entire system would be cleaned.

7 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Because there was a lot
8 of discussion about a problem with that. So how is that
9 working out now that you've --

10 MR. HAAS: Well, very well, but I guess the
11 intent is to where the places where we may see
12 facilities that are aging that you would have more
13 problems any time that we would have a call with a
14 potential problem, our policy is now that we will now go
15 out there and resolve that immediate issue if there is
16 one. Sometimes people can call in and say, I may have a
17 problem with a sewer backup. We go out there and find
18 that there's no problem with the main. It's actually in
19 their customer service line. But in our case, if it was
20 something that involved our section of line, not only
21 would we immediately take care of that, but we will
22 follow up and have that line televised, TV camera, and
23 see what the problem is and actually determine exactly
24 where if there's a repair that needs to be made and then
25 follow up with a repair.

1 So it's almost like a three- or four-step
2 process after you identify that something needs to be
3 done you immediately take care of that, then you follow
4 up with a TV camera to pinpoint exactly what the problem
5 is or was and then follow up by repairing that.

6 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Sounds like you're
7 trying to really upgrade your standards.

8 MR. HAAS: True.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Wright.

10 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Good afternoon.

11 MR. HAAS: Good afternoon.

12 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Kind of following up a
13 little bit on what Commissioner Howard was questioning,
14 but maybe it was Commissioner Moseley too. The
15 Friarsgate facility in the night hearings that we had in
16 Irmo, you were there, right?

17 MR. HAAS: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: It was brought up, I
19 think I remember the sludge removal from the system and
20 the disposal of it, I believe, as well as an odor. And
21 I know having served out there years ago on the council,
22 the area has grown, and I know a lot of stuff that used
23 to be done kind of secluded, now houses are all around
24 there. And so I know that people are seeing it more.
25 But I don't know if you've changed your processes or

1 have y'all upgraded? Are you doing business different
2 out there than you did?

3 MR. HAAS: Well, after the last hearing, I
4 believe, we have done -- we've added an odor control
5 system out there which was -- it's somewhat similar to
6 this. You'll see some of the piping up on top that
7 we've actually added at the Friarsgate around the
8 digesters and around the top of the treatment plant.
9 And to date, after we made those improvements, I
10 actually will follow-up and I'll throw out a name here,
11 one of the councilmen for Irmo, Mr. Younginer, sent him
12 e-mails from time to time to check on that to see that,
13 hey, we got this installed. Haven't heard anything. No
14 news is good news usually, but have you heard anything?
15 And he said, I've heard nothing.

16 So that seems to be the work that we did, and
17 I'm going to say that was upwards to 50,000 to 75,000
18 where this one here was, I think, close to 50. So we've
19 had pretty good success with this type of changes.
20 We've also made changes to the treatment plant itself,
21 upgraded the aeration and the digester, fine bubble
22 diffusers comes to mind, changing the pipes. So I think
23 we've had pretty good success out there and have, from
24 what I recall, even recently, I don't remember any calls
25 from out there and certainly from my e-mails to

1 Mr. Younginer. So it seems to be working.

2 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Hamilton.

3 COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: How are you today,
4 sir?

5 MR. HAAS: Good, Commissioner.

6 COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: I remember in your
7 testimony you told us that you took the complaints by
8 each customer that you had very, very seriously. And I
9 wonder, if it's not out of order, Mr. Hoefer, to tell us
10 right fast if it is, but I think it would help me to
11 have a summary. A lot of these complaints in each
12 hearing were consistent. Some were far off the end, you
13 know, but most of them were consistent about order,
14 either color, different things like that. If we could
15 get a summary from you telling us what you have -- how
16 you have reacted to those hearings, that the people were
17 heard and what was done by you, what was expanded, I
18 think it would be very helpful to the Commission to have
19 something in writing telling us exactly what has been
20 done.

21 MR. HAAS: Sure. I know Ms. Owens is going to
22 talk a little bit more of the, I guess, the customer
23 service part of it. But as far as specifically
24 addressing those, yeah, I certainly don't see a problem
25 with --

1 COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: Well, I had kind of
2 expected it to be in a passout. She might have one
3 she's going to give us later. But I think it would
4 really be helpful. It would to me.

5 MR. HAAS: Be happy to.

6 MR. HOEFER: Commissioner Hamilton, in the two
7 cases that you're referring to, in both of those cases,
8 odor control equipment was installed -- I say two cases,
9 two systems. The Watergate and the Friarsgate. The
10 odor control equipment was installed before the
11 Commission actually heard the case. In other words,
12 some of it was already underway when the customer showed
13 up at the night hearings, some of it was installed
14 afterwards. I think -- and Mr. Haas can correct me if
15 I'm wrong. But I think in the case of the Watergate
16 plant, in addition to the type of equipment that you see
17 there in that picture, they also installed a new cover
18 that has an absorption capability that was fairly
19 expensive, and that was done prior to the actual
20 evidentiary hearing. And I believe most of the
21 customers from Watergate showed up on the day of the
22 hearing rather than coming to the night hearing in
23 Lexington, which I think was two nights before the
24 evidentiary hearing.

25 So it was one of those situations where they

1 had expressed to you concerns about the odor, but steps
2 had already been taken. And I think I'm correct in
3 saying that the expenses and the capital expenditures in
4 making those improvements were recognized in the rate
5 case, I believe. Mr. Haas can correct me about that
6 later on, but I think they were already done. So we can
7 certainly dig that out of the rate case file and provide
8 it to you.

9 COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: I would like to have
10 it. Thank you.

11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Howard.

12 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Couple follows-up -- or
13 one follow-up. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the reason
14 I didn't question you on the 1,000 foot discharge
15 downstream was the tide effluent at that point in Ashley
16 River is not that great, is it not? Let's say if you're
17 discharging close to -- the Ashley River is close to the
18 Charleston Harbor, the tide effluent would bring it
19 back. But at that point in the Ashley River, I don't
20 believe the tide effluent is that great. Do you know if
21 that's the case or not?

22 MR. HAAS: I surely don't. I would assume
23 there's some drainage that actually comes in by the
24 marina as well, storm drainage discharge and just
25 regular drainage goes through there. So I would think,

1 you know, surface water or water that's flowing through
2 a creek or whatever, would come right through there.

3 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Again, about Kings
4 Grant. There's been a lot of controversy in the
5 Charleston paper about them selling the golf course and
6 building new houses where the golf course was. How
7 would that influx of new homes affect your capacity of
8 both wastewater and water in the Kings Grant area? Your
9 system can handle an influx for the new homes where the
10 golf course was?

11 MR. HAAS: I believe -- well, in Kings Grant,
12 we only provide the wastewater there. We don't have
13 provide the water. But I don't believe the -- I don't
14 believe that they were actually going to be hooking onto
15 our facility for that particular thing. I think they
16 were working something out with Dorchester County. So
17 that wouldn't have actually hooked onto us.

18 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: Wouldn't that be
19 surrounding your facility?

20 MR. HAAS: Nearby our facility, sure. And I
21 know the golf course kind of runs all around there. But
22 any additional homes, from my understanding -- and
23 certainly if someone would contact me and say, hey, we
24 want 500 homes to tie onto you, we would have the
25 capacity. But I believe they're going to Dorchester

1 County or that's what Dorchester was requiring because
2 of the treatment plan.

3 MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have any further
4 questions? Thank you, sir.

5 MR. HAAS: Thank you.

6 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, next the company is
7 going to ask Steve Lubertozi to make a presentation.
8 Before he goes on, I wanted to respond just to one thing
9 that both Commissioner Howard and Commissioner Fleming
10 touched on so we can clarify it for you.

11 When the Utilities Services of South Carolina,
12 Incorporated was formed by the company to acquire the
13 assets of the former Utilities of South Carolina and
14 South Carolina Water and Sewer, LLC systems, the US
15 Utility Systems, I'll refer to them, they were
16 delinquent in their drinking water fees. And I think
17 Mr. Haas touched on that, the drinking water fees and
18 the environmental fees.

19 It's important for you to understand, we
20 think, for purposes of the presentation that you have
21 authorized companies, and these companies do pass
22 through as a line item on their bill the drinking water
23 and environmental fees. The US Utility Systems, their
24 method of operation, they were not even collecting from
25 the customers the fees that were owed to the state of

1 South Carolina that they could have collected without
2 coming to you to ask for a rate increase. They could
3 have simply said these are the drinking water fees. And
4 so that was the importance of that transaction from the
5 standpoint of DHEC that somebody step in and satisfy
6 those delinquent fees. Otherwise, DHEC would be up
7 there at the state house come budget time asking to be
8 made whole.

9 So what y'all did in approving that
10 transaction was really and truly digging DHEC out of a
11 hole in that regard, and that's why we mentioned it.

12 Mr. LUBERTOZZI: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman
13 and members of the Commission. My name is Steve
14 LubertoZZi and it's a pleasure for me to be here with
15 you today.

16 As Mr. Cameron mentioned, I'm the director of
17 regulatory accounting for Utilities, Inc. and I have
18 been employed by the company for approximately five
19 years. I would like to talk with you briefly about
20 economic impact of Utilities, Inc.'s operating
21 subsidiaries in South Carolina.

22 I draw your attention to Attachment 22 which
23 provides a breakdown of plant investment in the year
24 2002. As it shows, current plant investment is
25 approximately \$67 million, \$9 million of which has

1 incurred in the last four years. Incidentally, most of
2 the \$9 million is attributable to direct investment and
3 not in aid of contributions construction. Given that
4 most of our systems have reached a mature stage in
5 economic lives, it is important to note that in the 33
6 years that Utilities, Inc. has been investing in South
7 Carolina, no dividends have been issued from any of the
8 operating subsidiaries. Net income is reinvested
9 through operating subsidiaries in the state of South
10 Carolina.

11 As Attachment 23 shows, we currently employ 52
12 people in South Carolina. This schedule also shows that
13 our total payroll for the most recent calendar year was
14 approximately \$1.9 million. In addition, we provide a
15 variety of employee benefits, including health insurance
16 and retirement investments to these South Carolina
17 employees which total more than \$360,000.

18 Our tax payments in South Carolina for 2005,
19 which included corporate income tax, property taxes,
20 regulatory assessment fees, totaled approximately \$1.5
21 million as shown on Attachment 24. Last year Utilities,
22 Inc. operating subsidiaries spent approximately \$12.6
23 million in the state of South Carolina on goods and
24 services, including purchase of power, fuel, equipment,
25 vehicles and other items as detailed on Attachment 25.

1 In summary, in the last year, the total
2 economic impact of our plant investment, taxes, payroll
3 and employee benefits for operating subsidiaries in
4 South Carolina was approximately \$16 million. By way of
5 comparison, our revenues in South Carolina last year for
6 all five operating subsidiaries totaled approximately
7 \$12 million.

8 I would be pleased to answer any questions you
9 may have before we introduce Ms. Owens to talk to you
10 about customer service.

11 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any questions? Thank you, sir.

12 MR. LUBERTOZZI: Thank you.

13 MS. OWENS: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and
14 members of the Commission. My name is Patty Owens. I'm
15 the director of customer relations and administrative
16 services for Utilities, Inc. and its operating
17 subsidiaries. I've been with the company for 15 years
18 and previously managed rate cases.

19 In my current role, I'm responsible for the
20 oversight of customer service, and I would like to give
21 you a brief overview today of that process, our customer
22 base and our commitment to customer service.

23 Currently we have five operating companies in
24 South Carolina containing 139 systems which provide
25 service to over 34,000 single family equivalents. Our

1 largest company is Carolina Water Service, followed by
2 Utilities Services of South Carolina, United Utilities,
3 Tega Cay and Southland Utilities. Approximately
4 97 percent of our customer base is residential.

5 We currently have 52 employees in South
6 Carolina, 30 percent of which have been working with our
7 systems for over a decade. Although all of our 52 South
8 Carolina employees focus on customer service, employees
9 dedicated exclusively to this function, number eight,
10 including seven customer service representatives and one
11 regional customer service manager. They are all located
12 here in Columbia, and these eight employees provide
13 customer service to all of our South Carolina customers.

14 Our customer service personnel are trained by
15 both the local staff as well as the corporate service
16 manager. Specifically, customer service representatives
17 are trained to be proficient in areas such as our
18 computerized database management, appropriate customer
19 response time, customer service courtesy and
20 personalized attention, and they are periodically
21 required to attend customer service seminars.

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, ma'am. If you could back
23 off the mic just a little bit, I think we might be
24 getting a little --

25 MS. OWENS: Sorry. All employees, regardless

1 of their functional area, are level with the company,
2 receive a customer service guide which discusses the
3 company's operating philosophies with regard to customer
4 service. We know the most important person to our
5 business is the customer. The customer is not an
6 interruption to our work day, but rather the purpose of
7 it and we take this responsibility very seriously.

8 Customers can contact our office 24 hours a
9 day, seven days a week. And in addition to contacting
10 us, our telephone number is printed on our bills, it's
11 located out at our facilities, and they can contact us
12 through our web site. When the office is closed, the
13 customer service -- the customers, excuse me, can call
14 our answering service, which then contacts the
15 appropriate operator on call.

16 The customer service representatives log all
17 customer inquiries into our system regardless of whether
18 it addresses -- the call addresses a service issue, a
19 billing inquiry or a miscellaneous request. A
20 miscellaneous request might include a request to tap
21 onto our system, request to have service turned on or
22 off, to locate a line or a valve, et cetera.

23 When a customer calls the office, the customer
24 service representative can pull up the customer's file
25 immediately while the customer is on the phone to review

1 the customer's history and update our database with any
2 current information. When a call is received, the
3 service representative generates a service order which
4 is then routed to the appropriate operations personnel.

5 Routine billing and account administration
6 matters are handled by the customer service
7 representative and operating issues are handled by our
8 service personnel.

9 Our policy regarding emergencies and policy
10 issues requires that the customer service representative
11 contact the operator immediately to resolve the issue
12 the same day that the call was received. Other
13 inquiries, including billing, meter replacement, a
14 request to turn service on or off, are resolved by the
15 end of the following day. Request for meter taps, line
16 locations, et cetera, are typically resolved within one
17 to three days and scheduled at the customer's
18 convenience. Once the issue has been addressed, the
19 customer is notified by either the office or the
20 operator. And if the operator has been out to the
21 customer site and the customer is not home, he'll leave
22 a door tag with an explanation.

23 Additionally, our staff is required to address
24 and communicate service issues with entities from which
25 we purchase water and wastewater treatment services.

1 Approximately 12,000 of our customers receive water
2 and/or wastewater treatment services from 16 different
3 vendors.

4 In addition to addressing customer inquiries,
5 it's our policy that the customer service staff review
6 billing reports prior to generating each billing. This
7 is done in order to flag and resolve any questionable
8 issue such as high consumption.

9 The corporate staff also tests all billings
10 prior to issuance for accuracy of rates. Meters are
11 read and bills are issued on a monthly basis, which
12 equates to over 267,000 bills annually in the state of
13 South Carolina.

14 Daily interaction between the local and
15 corporate staff is common procedure. Our South Carolina
16 personnel are supported by resources at the corporate
17 office in the functional areas of customer service,
18 billing, management information services, regulatory,
19 operations, HR and accounting. If the local staff
20 requires further assistance in the form of review,
21 clarification, training, reporting or refining of our
22 database, it's provided by the corporate staff.

23 As part of the company's operations, we're
24 always in the market of evaluating and reviewing
25 acquisition opportunities and our competitors in part to

1 confirm our use of industry best practices. We're
2 continually looking at new ways to refine our processes
3 and improve service to customers. As an example, we've
4 offered additional methods of payment for the customers'
5 convenience, which include direct drafts, credit card
6 payments, debit cards, payment over the internet and
7 electronic checks, and we are pleased with the response
8 we've received from the customers in doing so.

9 Another recent improvement to our customer
10 service process which has received positive feedback is
11 our new voice reach program. This program allows us to
12 disseminate automated messages to a large group of
13 customers in a matter of minutes, and that can be used
14 when we intend to schedule work for a particular area
15 such as flushing the lines or in the case of an
16 emergency.

17 Both our customer service personnel and
18 operation staff are committed to providing quality
19 customer service in a quick response time to customer
20 inquiries. Our procedures are designed to meet all of
21 the requirements of the Commission's rules and
22 regulations. Although we believe we have a solid record
23 of demonstrated commitment to customer service, we
24 continually strive to improve our processes and to
25 exceed the expectations of all state holders.

1 As the Commission is aware, an ORS management
2 audit will be conducted and we look forward to receiving
3 their evaluation and any suggestions aimed at further
4 increasing our willingness of customer service and
5 satisfaction.

6 Thank you for your valuable time today. I
7 hope I was able to give you a better picture of what we
8 do and how we do it. And it's important that you know
9 that we are appreciative of the opportunity to continue
10 to serve our South Carolina customers.

11 If you have any questions, I'll be happy to
12 answer them before Mr. Cameron gives his closing
13 comments.

14 MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Any questions?
15 Commissioner Fleming.

16 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Yes. Do you track the
17 number of complaints that you have --

18 MS. OWENS: Absolutely.

19 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: And how many complaints
20 would you say you get a year on average from South
21 Carolina?

22 MS. OWENS: In a year? Carolina Water Service
23 is our largest company regarding water and sewer issues
24 averaged about 100 per month. But we get many, many
25 calls, many more calls than that, regarding

1 miscellaneous requests. Requests to turn service on,
2 requests to tap onto our system, that type of thing.
3 But our complaints, issues regarding service, are
4 roughly for Carolina Water Service about 100 a month.
5 United -- excuse me.

6 Utilities Services of South Carolina is our
7 second largest, approximately 90 regarding service
8 issues. And I would like to say that many of those
9 service issues could stem from the customer side of the
10 property. They could be leaks on the customer side,
11 clogged sewer on the customer side, et cetera.

12 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: And how does that
13 compare per capita with the rest -- with some of the
14 other states on the number of complaints?

15 MS. OWENS: Well, it varies from system to
16 system because of the operating characteristics for the
17 system. But as a percent of our single family
18 equivalents, it's similar. But it will vary from system
19 to system.

20 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: And if you see a number
21 of complaints go up that, I'm sure, raises a red flag,
22 what do you do?

23 MS. OWENS: Absolutely. We run service audit
24 reports on a monthly basis and we provide those reports
25 to the various local offices, in this case it would be

1 here in Columbia, and it is provided to the staff so
2 that they can see the number of complaints on a monthly
3 basis and over a full year period of time and they can
4 look at that and determine was this just something, an
5 isolated incident, or a situation that might -- that
6 might indicate that there's some sort of ongoing issue
7 that maybe needs to be looked at.

8 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Thank you.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, ma'am. Could you tell me
10 the response time generally or do you track that as far
11 as when a complaint comes in and how quickly a complaint
12 is answered or do you have any such statistics on that?

13 MS. OWENS: Sure. Regarding emergencies and
14 quality issues, they are addressed within the same day.
15 So any type of quality issue or emergency, the customer
16 service staff has to call the operator immediately and
17 it is resolved that same day the call is received.
18 Other types of issues are resolved by the end of the
19 following day, such as billing request, meter
20 replacement, that type of thing, meter test and line
21 locates could take up to three days. They're scheduled
22 at the customer's convenience.

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: And a follow-up to Commissioner
24 Fleming's question. As far as quality issues as far as
25 taste or smell, have you seen a decline or increase as

1 far as complaints to the consumer department on that?

2 MS. OWENS: I believe Mr. Haas had mentioned
3 that since we've put in some additional plant,
4 especially in one particular location -- I can't
5 remember if that was Friarsgate or another location --
6 that he has seen a reduced number of complaints.

7 MR. CHAIRMAN: But y'all's office doesn't
8 track that as far as separation as far as taste and --

9 MS. OWENS: Oh, absolutely we do. Right.

10 MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as the number of
11 complaints that are incoming into your office, would you
12 not know the statistics on that as far as they have
13 increased or decreased over the last year?

14 MS. OWENS: Oh, we do track complaints by
15 category. So we would know if a complaint was regarding
16 taste or odor or lack of water -- lack of pressure, that
17 type of thing. Yes, and we can track. We run these
18 reports. It's a monthly report, and it shows each month
19 it's a rolling 12-month period of time. So we can see
20 when the complaints decrease or increase in a particular
21 area --

22 MR. CHAIRMAN: And I guess my next question,
23 then --

24 MS. OWENS: -- per system.

25 MR. CHAIRMAN: -- tell me over the last six

1 months, have you seen a decline in quality issues or
2 have you seen an increase in quality issues as far as
3 taste or smell overall system or are you able to tell me
4 that as far as all the complaints coming in?

5 MS. OWENS: Well, I've reviewed all of last
6 year and also the month of January, and I would say -- I
7 don't recall from month to month what --

8 MR. CHAIRMAN: And I want you to realize why
9 it's very important to us because, as we stated earlier,
10 we go out and hold night hearings and we see that that's
11 the great majority of complaints that we receive, is
12 taste issues and odor issues. So I think as
13 Commissioner Hamilton pointed out earlier, it would be
14 good if you can easily track that on your computer, is
15 that we, from time to time, or maybe even provide the
16 Office of Regulatory Staff with the percentage of, look,
17 this is -- we are decreasing on these type issues or
18 we're increasing on these type issues, since that was a
19 big part of the complaints as we go out and hold these
20 hearings. Are you able to do that?

21 MS. OWENS: Yes, we are. And, actually, we
22 have very low incident rates. I would say approximately
23 70 percent of our calls are not regarding service
24 issues, water or sewer service issues. They are
25 regarding other types of issues as I mentioned,

1 miscellaneous requests and billing issues such as could
2 I have payment arrangements, that type of thing.

3 I think the complaints you heard through the
4 hearings are generated because the commission allows the
5 forum -- provides the forum for the customers when we
6 file rate cases. And the majority of those complaints,
7 the customers have never contacted our office or the ORS
8 or the Commission previously to file a complaint. So we
9 do follow up on that after the hearings. But in most
10 cases, they have never contacted us. Otherwise, they
11 would have been addressed immediately.

12 MR. CHAIRMAN: Let me ask you this: You are
13 the head of the consumer department; is that correct?

14 MS. OWENS: That's correct.

15 MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you read the transcripts
16 from our hearings as far as the information that was
17 provided as on record by these people that were
18 testifying? Have you covered those? Have you read
19 that?

20 MS. OWENS: I've read summaries. Yes, I have.

21 MR. CHAIRMAN: You do that each time we hold
22 hearings? Is that part of your --

23 MS. OWENS: I'm provided with summaries by our
24 regional customer service managers on those scripts.

25 MR. CHAIRMAN: Anyone else? Commissioner

1 Wright.

2 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Just a follow-up on the
3 report. When a complaint is filed, okay, officially --
4 and I recognize that sometimes maybe they don't stay on
5 the line or they get put on hold or something like that,
6 that does happen too. But once you get a complaint
7 logged, okay, and if it's a service quality thing, it
8 goes one place; if it's a repair or something, you go
9 another place with it. Do you get back from the field
10 how the issue was disposed of?

11 MS. OWENS: Absolutely. And that gets logged
12 into our database.

13 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And I think what
14 Commission Hamilton is trying to get to with this is to
15 find out how many complaints you get, but then how they
16 are disposed of and how many of them are satisfied so
17 that we have some kind of -- either through ORS or to
18 us, whatever, just so we have some kind of working
19 knowledge of, you know, what your follow-through rate
20 is.

21 MS. OWENS: What our what?

22 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Follow-through.

23 MS. OWENS: Okay.

24 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: And how these complaints
25 are dealt with and how -- you know, the percentage of

1 people who are calling in and they have some type of an
2 issue, you know, what percentage of them are dealt
3 with --

4 MS. OWENS: Oh, I see what you're saying.

5 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: -- versus what are still
6 open out there. I think that's where he's getting, not
7 necessarily looking at the number of complaints. But
8 what's more important is that the customer is dealt with
9 and successfully. I think the outcome is the
10 follow-through is done.

11 MS. OWENS: I'm sorry. I misunderstood that.

12 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Commissioner, is that
13 kind of what you're looking for?

14 COMMISSIONER HAMILTON: What I asked for was a
15 summary of work that was done because of the complaints
16 and the corrective matters that were taken in the
17 different systems.

18 MS. OWENS: All of our -- any type of customer
19 inquiry or issue that's generated is followed up on by
20 the operator, and the operator then has to provide that
21 resolution to the customer service staff, which then
22 gets logged into our database so that the service order
23 is closed out and we follow up with the customer. So
24 within a number of days, it's completely resolved and
25 closed out.

1 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: So once the complaint
2 has been dealt with, you then have contact back with the
3 customer to make sure that they're satisfied?

4 MS. OWENS: Or to let them know how it was
5 resolved.

6 COMMISSIONER WRIGHT: Okay. Thank you.

7 MR. CHAIRMAN: But I want to ask you one more
8 time, you track this and you can't tell me if the
9 percentage has increased or decreased as far as quality
10 issues and as far as calls that have come in over the
11 last six months, you can't tell me if it's went down or
12 went up?

13 MS. OWENS: I think our quality issues
14 continuously go down because we're addressing those
15 issues and we are making improvements --

16 MR. CHAIRMAN: So it's going down?

17 MS. OWENS: -- to our plant. It's going down.
18 I just --

19 MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Well, I never heard a
20 response to that, whether it was going up or down. But
21 you're telling me those issues are going down?

22 MS. OWENS: I believe so.

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: The percentage is going down?

24 MS. OWENS: And we have a low incident rate.
25 I can give you an average per month, but I looked at the

1 whole year in general and took an average of that and
2 then I looked at the month of January.

3 MR. CHAIRMAN: And they all are seemingly
4 going down, is that what you're telling us?

5 MS. OWENS: Well, we're addressing -- we
6 address the issues as they come up. And if we need to
7 make improvement, we do that. So naturally that would
8 be true. With some of our systems that are aging, we
9 might see more calls than issues with the aging systems.
10 And then as those get addressed and plan gets replaced
11 and so forth, that would naturally come down also.

12 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Howard.

13 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: How are you?

14 MS. OWENS: I'm fine. Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER HOWARD: You've been in your
16 present position -- were you in your present position
17 during the night hearings and the day hearings?

18 MS. OWENS: Yes, I was.

19 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Moseley?

20 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Yes, ma'am. How are
21 you doing?

22 MS. OWENS: I'm doing fine. Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Where are you located
24 at?

25 MS. OWENS: We're located in Northbrook,

1 Illinois.

2 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: So you're not in South
3 Carolina?

4 MS. OWENS: Pardon?

5 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: You're not in South
6 Carolina, then?

7 MS. OWENS: I'm not in South Carolina, but our
8 customer service manager and staff is here in Columbia.

9 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Did you read all the
10 transcripts of all the night hearings and the day
11 hearings?

12 MS. OWENS: I did not read the transcripts. I
13 read summaries that were provided to me.

14 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Summaries that were
15 provided?

16 MS. OWENS: And the order.

17 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: So you're going to be
18 the only one testifying for customer service and quality
19 of service? You. Is anyone else from the local staff
20 going to testify?

21 MS. OWENS: Testify or present to you, you
22 mean?

23 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Present testimony.

24 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, if I may?

25 MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

1 MR. HOEFER: It's not testimony.

2 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Well, I didn't word it
3 right. I apologize.

4 MR. HOEFER: The point I need to make here is
5 that when these customers come for these night hearings,
6 it's in the context of, I don't want my rates to go up.
7 And I think something gets lost in the translation
8 between the cold hard database management system where I
9 think she told you she averages about 100 complaints a
10 month for Carolina Water Service. But they get a lot
11 more calls than that. A lot of times it's -- and I
12 think she said about 70 percent of them are not.

13 And when these customers come to these night
14 hearings and tell you about these complaints, it's
15 almost invariable that one of you will ask, did you
16 complain to the company? Commissioner Wright and
17 Commissioner Clyburn very frequently ask that question,
18 and the answer is no. They don't complain. So it's
19 hard to prove a negative. It's hard to prove we're
20 doing better in odor and smell when she doesn't have it
21 in the database because the customer has not made any
22 complaint.

23 So it's hard for her to answer the two
24 questions. They're not -- it's -- I don't want to use
25 apples and oranges, but I just did. But it's hard for

1 her to answer the question that way you're asking it in
2 light of the information that she is given.

3 I think I made this point in the last couple
4 of cases, but there are systems in place that comply
5 with your regs. Now, your regs used to have a
6 requirement that the database capture on an annual basis
7 a summary of the complaints and your reg was changed. I
8 don't know why the reg was changed. I don't even know
9 when it was changed.

10 So when you asked -- if you ask a witness
11 during a hearing, you can't answer this question right,
12 it's logged in the database somewhere. But she might be
13 able to go to that database but never be able to answer
14 the question about that specific complaint by that
15 customer because if it was never reported to them.

16 MR. CHAIRMAN: But they could answer the ones
17 that were reported and she could tell me exactly the
18 ones that call that, yes, the quality issues are getting
19 better. Those are ones that are call-ins. She could
20 certainly tell me, yes, it's getting better or, no, it
21 isn't, couldn't she?

22 MR. HOEFER: If she had access to the database
23 on the witness stand. But the problem --

24 MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm not talking about the ones
25 that are testifying. I'm talking about the ones that

1 maybe just call in for that particular -- certainly you
2 would have a record of the ones that just pick up the
3 phone and say, I've got a problem with odor.

4 MR. HOEFER: They absolutely do. But that
5 won't answer a lot of the questions that get posed to
6 you at night hearings along the lines of why doesn't the
7 company do this and why doesn't the company do that, and
8 the company hasn't heard from that specific customer.
9 And that's the source of some frustration for the
10 company. They can't answer your questions on those.
11 And what they try to do given the process that's set up
12 is in the rebuttal testimony if they have time, they try
13 to answer those questions for you and, of course, will
14 continue to do that.

15 But I didn't want you to think that they're
16 not being forthcoming. It's just hard to answer that
17 question given what the database captures and the fact
18 that you have human beings inputting information and
19 those human beings are the customers. And if they don't
20 call, there's not any way.

21 MR. CHAIRMAN: Once again, I understand what
22 you're saying as far as comparison to the customers that
23 we hear. But I believe it was explained that, yes, we
24 have categories broken down -- several categories of
25 people that phone into the company. And my only

1 question was, is that getting better or worse? Is that
2 going up or down? And, you know, that's where I was
3 coming from.

4 MR. HOEFER: And she's tried to answer that
5 question. But I sense as the questions go along,
6 there's this little bit of a disconnect between what you
7 hear in a night hearing and what's in her database. And
8 that was really the only point I wanted to make.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: We understand. Any other
10 questions?

11 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Yeah, I'm not through.
12 My question, are y'all going to have, not
13 witnesses, anybody from the company making any
14 statements other than this lady here?

15 MS. OWENS: Mr. Cameron is going to make
16 closings statements and --

17 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: What is his title?
18 What does he do with the company?

19 MS. OWENS: He's our chief executive officer.

20 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: It would have been nice
21 if we had had somebody locally that handled customer
22 complaints. Maybe we could have done that. She's doing
23 an overall pitch, generics, nothing specific. I'm not
24 going to use the word night hearing, John. I apologize
25 for using it. I think you understand where I'm coming

1 from. That's all I've got to say. Thank you.

2 MR. CHAIRMAN: Commissioner Clyburn.

3 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: Ms. Owens, I wanted to
4 ask you in terms of a system that's set up in South
5 Carolina, the intake -- I'll just call it the intake
6 process, is that uniform to, I'm curious, in terms of
7 the company -- in terms of your other holdings, is the
8 intake process uniform?

9 MS. OWENS: Yes, it is.

10 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: And can you tell me in
11 terms of -- I believe you made mention that across --
12 and maybe my notes aren't accurate. You said there are
13 100 complaints per month system -- five system-wise or
14 just CWS? Because I wrote CWS for some reason.

15 MS. OWENS: No, I was referring to CWS, and I
16 was referring to service issues, service complaints.

17 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: Okay. And I believe
18 you said there were 90 with Utilities?

19 MS. OWENS: On average with the Utilities
20 Services of South Carolina. And, there again, that was
21 relating to service issues.

22 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: Okay. I'm curious,
23 since you are in the corporate headquarters. In terms
24 of these five systems as they relate to a percentage of
25 service-oriented complaints, how does South Carolina

1 compare to your other properties on average?

2 MS. OWENS: Well, as I indicated, it's
3 different from company to company and system to system
4 because of the various operating -- different operating
5 characteristic of each system. But I think overall our
6 service issue incidents is very low.

7 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: You're saying that in
8 terms of the South Carolina reported -- in terms of
9 information --

10 MS. OWENS: In terms of all of our companies,
11 and I think it's similar. But you have to look at --
12 they are different because there's different operating
13 characteristics from company to company. But I think
14 our service incidents is low here in the state of South
15 Carolina, and I think it's also low in other areas in
16 comparison to all of the inquiries we get that get
17 logged into our database.

18 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: Maybe I'm having a
19 disconnect. In terms of the number of inquiries,
20 whatever you call them, complaints, intake as it relates
21 to service quality concern, I'm curious in terms of your
22 five companies in South Carolina from a percentage-wise
23 standpoint, I'm wondering do you know how we compare to
24 your other properties nationwide?

25 MS. OWENS: If you're asking do I know what

1 the percentage is of South Carolina of all service
2 complaints combined for all of our companies nationwide,
3 I don't know what that percentage is.

4 COMMISSIONER CLYBURN: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we have any other questions?
6 Thank you very much. We appreciate it.

7 MS. OWENS: Thank you.

8 MR. CAMERON: Mr. Chairman and members of the
9 Commission, I am here to clean up and kind of give a
10 summary of what's gone on. Maybe I can also just kind
11 of, perhaps, add a little bit of clarification on
12 something.

13 It's kind of hard to track some of these
14 customer inquiries. When Patty preferred to incidents,
15 one thing I thought that might have gotten lost is
16 tracking the nature of a customer frustration or a
17 communication, there's a difference between, let's say,
18 a BellSouth truck comes along and cuts a line and all of
19 a sudden there's a lack of water pressure, you could get
20 100 calls with a complaint for one incident that was
21 beyond our control. And then the most important thing
22 is how do we respond to alleviating their anxiety? And
23 probably the most important thing to do is give them
24 some kind of response in terms of what we are doing and
25 when they can expect some kind of resolution to the

1 problem. And that is something we do focus on.

2 You might get 100 calls and you might get 100
3 people show up at a night hearing expressing some
4 frustration. And I absolutely empathize with that. I
5 would say, one, it's kind of an unforced deal. We
6 didn't have really any responsibility for that, but the
7 most important thing we can do is, one, kind of
8 alleviate their concern about the amount of time they're
9 going to be with this problem, try to tell them what
10 we're doing, what we're going to do and be as
11 compassionate and courteous at that time.

12 But you're still going to get a complaint, and
13 you're going to have somebody complain about a service
14 problem because they've got a backup and that may very
15 well be because they've got a clog in their service line
16 on their property. We still record that as a complaint
17 because one thing I think is lost is that through our
18 bills, through our notices, we're the one number they've
19 got to go ahead and call to. They may call to the
20 Commission and the ORS eventually, but the first person
21 they're going to call is, I've got a problem. What are
22 you going to do to help me fix it? And a lot of times
23 it wasn't something that we did, but we are the focal
24 point and we absolutely appreciate our role. And as
25 Patty said, that's the purpose for us being in business.

1 We want to do this. So I just wanted to make the
2 distinction between the kinds of customer complaints or
3 opportunities that we have out there.

4 Commissioner Fleming, you asked a thing about
5 our commitment to the state and infrastructure,
6 especially with the pending ownership transition that's
7 going on. We've been in the state now for -- this is
8 the second -- we started in Illinois. We've been in the
9 state -- this is our second foray into another state.
10 We've been committed here, what, 35 years or so. This
11 is a state which has 52 employees out of the 450 that we
12 have as an entire company. As Steve pointed out, we've
13 got \$67 million of plant out there, 34,000 customers out
14 of 300,000 that we serve out there.

15 This is a very important state. We spent a
16 lot of money in the past. We have not taken money out
17 of state. We keep putting into it. We got a financial
18 buyer who wanted to step up and be the owner. Why? He
19 liked having the opportunity to make an investment.
20 They see this as a very valuable service that people --
21 that it's a long term investment.

22 We have a commitment to the state that goes
23 back 35 years in terms of a track record. We have no
24 intention of taking the money and running. We want to
25 put more money in here. It's a good state. We want to

1 employ the people. We want to go ahead and deploy the
2 resources. We'll back them up in terms of capital,
3 expertise. We are committed to this state.

4 One of the reasons we're here today is I think
5 sometimes it's more important rather than the message,
6 but just the fact we are here, we want to work with the
7 regulators. We're trying to put a human face on who we
8 are. I'm from Northbrook. We've got Steve and Patty
9 there. But we do have, you know, Bruce Haas here. He's
10 been with the company 27 years. This is a very valuable
11 person. We said, You protect this asset down here.

12 We want to have some good people here. We've
13 got, you know, eight people in customer service down
14 here located right here in Columbia. We try to support
15 them both in terms of technology and any resource we can
16 put at our disposal in Northbrook.

17 If I could say one thing, the fact that we're
18 here trying to demonstrate the fact that we want to work
19 with the Commission, we want to meet customers'
20 expectations. It's interesting, you know, if someone
21 said ten years ago they would have this much -- people
22 will pay this much for bottle water, customers'
23 expectations continue to go up every year. We would be
24 doing the same job as we did last year, and that
25 wouldn't be enough this year.

1 So your comment about are we getting better,
2 getting more complaints, if we just did the same next
3 year, we would have more complaints. We have got to get
4 better and we know that and we're putting the attention
5 to that. We're trying to go ahead and be accessible.
6 And, absolutely, one of the things that came out of the
7 order was whether there's an actual customer complaint
8 problem or a customer relations problem or just a
9 relations problem within the state. One of the things
10 I'm here to tell you is we listen and we're trying to go
11 ahead and be better because we know people expect more.

12 So we are committed to this state. Hopefully
13 that's appreciated in terms of customers and everybody
14 and the opportunity that we can continue to invest.

15 Any questions? We're here. And we very much,
16 very much appreciate your time for being here.

17 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?

18 COMMISSIONER FLEMING: Yes. I just wanted to
19 follow up on the infrastructure and I, for one, want to
20 say that I certainly appreciate your coming and being
21 willing to share this information with us today. But
22 what are your future plans? Do you have a plan in place
23 for infrastructure improvements around the state?

24 MR. CAMERON: Absolutely. And one of the
25 things that came up about complaints, how does it

1 compare here versus other states. To begin with, we
2 started investing in South Carolina 35 years ago.
3 Therefore, the nature of the facilities that we have as
4 compared to, say, some of the systems we have in, say,
5 Nevada or Florida, 35 years here, most of these systems
6 have an average age or have an average economic life of
7 about 25 to 35 years.

8 We worked with developers at the very
9 beginning, and there was a lot of construction -- in aid
10 of contribution construction in facilities and we had a
11 lower investment working with these people and that kept
12 the rates low. But guess what? After 25, 30 years,
13 those facilities, even though we've had some good
14 maintenance and patching them up and expanding them and
15 keeping up with regulations, we are running into a point
16 now where a lot of facilities have to be rehabbed or
17 replaced.

18 And if you recall with the -- I still call it
19 US Utilities, the case that we just had. You get a lot
20 of bang for your buck when you spend money and somebody
21 just had bad service, non-compliant service, and you
22 spend the money and you fix it up and you see a quality
23 differential. You don't really get the same kind of
24 appreciation when you spend the same money to say, I'm
25 replacing the plant and the customer sees nothing. But

1 what they haven't seen is they haven't gone down in
2 terms of compliance.

3 We've got customers and the customers are not
4 only the end user, but I consider the customer to be the
5 regulators, the environment, the local politicians,
6 everybody. I mean, we're participants in this state.
7 So we're trying to please a lot of different
8 constituents. We're spending money more than we ever
9 have to replace plants.

10 It's interesting in terms of, what -- I
11 forget. Is it Commissioner Moseley who mentioned the
12 comment about getting more growth up near Friarsgate.
13 Commissioner Wright. If they're not really next to the
14 treatment plant, they don't notice it. I've seen across
15 the country, it's invariable, that we have a treatment
16 plant and it's located in the lowest section of the
17 development and the community grows up and the last lot
18 that anybody buys is the one right next to the sewage
19 treatment plant. And then they buy it, and the next day
20 they call up and say, You know there's an odor problem
21 there? They go, Why didn't you check it out when you
22 bought the lot? But that happens. And when that
23 happens, that's when you start getting a different kind
24 of customer complaint than you ever had before. Then we
25 have to address that.

1 And when you've got sewer mains in the ground
2 and we talked about the thing about the flushing,
3 somebody keeps it going one way and the flow is going
4 one way all the time, it builds up a settlement. And
5 all of a sudden, somebody breaks it and you have to
6 reverse it. All of a sudden it roils the water and it
7 goes the other way.

8 A lot of these things happen just over time,
9 and that's why Bruce is spending money in terms of
10 cleaning these mains. You've got old mains on the sewer
11 side for collections. As time goes along, you'll get
12 tree roots that will basically go through and clog up
13 the mains and you have to go in and rod them out, you
14 have to clean them so you don't have a problem. We're
15 spending a lot of money so people have less problems.

16 And I can tell you this, absolutely sincerely,
17 I have looked around at most companies in this state.
18 Most companies are for sale and a lot of other states to
19 buy them and part of due diligence I look at that and,
20 you know, I absolutely know our systems are a lot better
21 than just about any other system out there. That's in
22 terms of the money we spend, in terms of the people that
23 we go ahead and support in terms of their credentials.
24 This is the thing that requires very specialized
25 expertise.

1 Look at Bruce Haas right now. He's got four
2 of the highest rated licenses in this state in terms of
3 handling water, wastewater, distribution, collection.
4 We've got some very talented people out there that we
5 are putting money to go ahead and make this be a good
6 company and we are willing to go ahead and step up in
7 terms of United Utilities, US Utilities and make it
8 better, we're willing to spend more money for capacity
9 as growth comes out there and we're willing to maintain
10 those facilities.

11 I'm trying to be as sincere as I can. I feel
12 very proud of what we've done today. We're going to be
13 here and we'll spend more money and we want to work with
14 everybody. It does us no good to tick anybody off. We
15 want to go ahead -- if we've got good customers, we
16 spend the money, we're going to make a good investment.
17 That's what our shareholder wants. That's what we want.

18 Any questions?

19 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Question. I don't know
20 what Mr. Hoefer is going to say for this.

21 MR. HOEFER: I'm not going to say anything,
22 Commissioner Moseley.

23 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: We had a complaint back
24 in December on Joseph Godfrey up in Irmo/Chapin
25 73,000 --

1 MR. CAMERON: I'm aware of it.

2 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Good. Can you kind of
3 address how that was handled and everything?

4 MR. CAMERON: Yes, I can.

5 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Is that okay?

6 MR. CAMERON: It's been resolved, but I can
7 tell you anecdotally. How is that?

8 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, a stipulation of
9 dismissal was filed with prejudice. But I haven't
10 gotten a file stamped copy of it back yet. Stipulation
11 of dismissal with prejudice with -- including a
12 statement from Mr. Godfrey that the company didn't do
13 anything wrong and didn't fail to do anything.

14 MR. CHAIRMAN: That's good.

15 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: That's fine.

16 MR. CAMERON: I can go into this.

17 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: I don't want Mr. Hoefer
18 to have to get up again.

19 MR. CHAIRMAN: I can tell you this, I won't
20 call you down.

21 COMMISSIONER MOSELEY: Go ahead.

22 MR. CAMERON: I want you to know that even as
23 the CEO, I do pay attention to what's going on and, yes,
24 we do read the orders and, yes -- if I can get one
25 message across, we listen and we try and get better each

1 time.

2 MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions? Well, on
3 behalf of the Commission, once again, I think it's
4 already been mentioned, we certainly appreciate y'all
5 coming and making this presentation, Mr. Hoefer,
6 certainly it does demonstrate your concern for the
7 people of South Carolina and your concern of the Public
8 Service Commission's concern and ORS. And we do
9 appreciate your appearance today and answering our
10 questions and thank y'all for being here very much.

11 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much.

12 MR. HOEFER: Mr. Chairman, if I might, I would
13 ask if the Commission could hold for one second. There
14 was a reference during one of the colloquies between a
15 Commissioner and witness about a publication or a
16 document. And I'm advised that the rule requires that
17 if a document is referenced, we have to -- or at least
18 we should consider, in consultation with your staff,
19 whether or not that needs to be included.

20 So nobody in this room can get in any trouble,
21 would y'all give us five minutes to allow Ms. Hammonds
22 and us to confer?

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: Sure.

24 (Off the record.)

25 MR. CHAIRMAN: Ms. Hammonds, I assume you're

1 going to clarify this matter?

2 MS. HAMMONDS: I hope so, Mr. Chairman. We've
3 discussed this and pursuant to the statutes, as y'all
4 know, any materials that are referenced in the ex parte
5 briefing have to be attached and posted on the
6 Commission's web site. We have a list of what we
7 believe those materials are, and we would like to put
8 that on the record.

9 MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

10 MS. HAMMONDS: One of the witnesses referenced
11 a customer service guide, and Mr. Hoefer is in the
12 possession of that and we can publish that. We will
13 also provide certain pages from the night hearing
14 transcripts.

15 MR. HOEFER: Actually, it's the pages from the
16 rebuttal testimony of Mr. Haas in the CWS case.

17 MS. HAMMONDS: He'll provide that for the
18 night hearing that was referenced. We'll provide a link
19 to the CWS order which was referenced. A link will be
20 provided to the Godfrey complaint which was referenced,
21 and a link will be provided for Act 175 that was
22 referenced. And that's what we have.

23 MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you in concurrence with
24 that, Mr. Hoefer?

25 MR. HOEFER: The only thing is the Godfrey

1 reference is a stipulation of dismissal. I think that's
2 all we have to provide. One further -- the complaint
3 was referenced, the Godfrey complaint.

4 MS. HAMMONDS: One other thing we do have is
5 the newspaper article that was referenced. If we know
6 which newspaper article that is, we will reference it.
7 If we don't, we don't know how to reference it.

8 MR. CHAIRMAN: Fine. Thank you very much.

9 MS. HAMMONDS: Thank you.

10 MR. CHAIRMAN: Anything further? Once again,
11 we certainly appreciate all participation and we'll be
12 looking forward to hearing from you again. Thank you
13 very much.

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, Kimberly T. Power, Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public for the State of South Carolina at Large, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing Allowable Ex Parte Presentation was taken before me on the date and at the time and location stated on page 1 of this transcript; that the presentations made at the time were recorded stenographically by me and were thereafter transcribed; that the foregoing Allowable Ex Parte Presentation as typed is a true, accurate and complete record of the presentation made at the time to the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am neither related to nor counsel for any party to the cause pending or interested in the events thereof.

Witness my hand, I have hereunto affixed my official seal this 1st day of March, 2006, at Columbia, Richland County, South Carolina.

Kimberly T. Power, CCR
Notary Public
State of South Carolina at Large
My Commission expires:
July 22, 2015

A	
ability 9:23 11:8 75:8	22:25 23:9,17,19 24:12,23 35:22 44:4 48:3
able 9:20 15:4 23:10 27:22 45:7 49:3,20 57:13,13	Additionally 9:18 42:23
absolutely 45:18 46:23 48:9 51:11 58:4 63:4,24 66:6 66:24 69:16,20	additions 9:6
absorption 33:18	address 19:20 22:11,14,15 26:13 42:23 54:6 68:25 71:3
access 57:22	addressed 42:18 47:14 50:11 54:10
accessible 66:5	addresses 41:18,18
accommodate 19:18	addressing 32:24 43:4 53:14 54:5
accomplished 11:4	adjacent 24:18 25:7
account 14:20 42:5	administration 42:5
accounting 6:9 37:17 43:19	administrative 6:13 39:15
accuracy 43:10	advantage 3:18
accurate 60:12 75:7	advantages 27:20
acquaintance 8:20	advice 21:19
acquire 9:21,23,25 36:12	advised 72:16
acquired 10:21	aerated 16:16
acquisition 6:24 9:10 43:25	aeration 15:25 20:6 20:16 24:10,13,22 24:23 31:21
acquisitions 5:24 7:25 9:2,5,8 11:7 11:14	affect 35:7
act 3:19 27:4 73:21	affixed 75:11
activated 16:3,12 17:4 24:25	afternoon 4:22,23 8:8,9 25:23,24 30:10,11 37:12 39:13
actual 17:21 24:13 33:19 66:7	age 28:22,23 67:6
add 9:17 24:11 62:11	agencies 17:20
added 20:9 31:4,7	agency 1:19 17:24
adding 24:22,23	aging 29:12 54:8,9
addition 8:13 11:14 20:13 33:16 38:14 41:9 43:4	ago 30:21 65:21 67:2
additional 9:17 19:23 20:9 22:24	agreement 27:12
	ahead 6:18 7:23 63:19 65:1 66:5 66:11 69:23 70:5 70:6,15 71:21
	aid 38:3 67:9
	aids 20:17
	aimed 45:3
	air 20:19,22 21:1,3 21:4,5
	al 2:8
	alleviate 63:8
	alleviating 62:22
	allow 20:9 72:21
	allowable 1:7 3:18 75:4,7
	allowed 11:25 27:14
	allows 24:11 44:11 50:4
	alternatives 11:11 11:16
	amount 13:6 27:2 28:19 63:8
	Anderson 9:13
	and/or 43:2
	anecdotally 71:7
	annual 7:9 57:6
	annually 43:12
	answer 7:20 21:11 39:8 45:12 56:18 56:23 57:1,11,13 57:16 58:5,10,13 58:16 59:4
	answered 47:12
	answering 41:14 72:9
	anxiety 62:22
	anybody 59:13 68:18 70:14
	apologize 56:3 59:24
	appear 8:16 13:16
	appearance 72:9
	appearances 2:1 6:3
	appeared 5:19 8:22
	apples 56:25
	applicable 11:12
	appreciate 5:13 8:20 11:24 62:6 63:24 66:16,20 72:4,9 74:11
	appreciated 66:13
	appreciation 67:24
	appreciative 45:9
	approached 9:9 10:8
	appropriate 22:22 40:18 41:15 42:4
	approval 10:1,20 17:19,23
	approving 37:9
	approximately 7:3 7:10 15:5 16:10 17:11,14,17 37:18 37:25 38:14,20,22 39:4,6 40:3 43:1 46:7 49:22
	area 27:11 30:22 35:8 41:1 44:14 48:21
	areas 9:3 10:6 11:2 11:16,18 23:18 40:17 43:17 61:15
	arrangements 50:2
	article 74:5,6
	Ashley 25:5,7,20 34:15,17,19
	asked 52:14 57:10 64:4
	asking 37:7 57:1 61:25
	assessment 38:20
	asset 65:11
	assets 36:13
	assistance 43:20
	assume 34:22 72:25
	attached 73:5
	attachment 7:6,12 7:17 9:3 10:6 11:2,18 13:24 14:13,23 15:3,18 15:24 16:4 17:6 18:14 19:2,9,23 20:11,23,24 37:22 38:11,21,25
	attend 40:21
	attention 37:22 40:20 66:4 71:23
	ATTORNEY 2:9 2:14,14
	ATTORNEYS 2:8 2:12
	attributable 38:2
	AT-LARGE 2:6
	audit 45:2 46:23
	authorized 36:21
	automated 44:12
	available 7:19 11:11,17
	average 45:20 53:25 54:1 60:19 61:1 67:6,6
	averaged 45:24
	averages 56:9
	aware 5:6 45:1 71:1
	awareness 21:24
	awhile 8:18
B	
	back 8:4 26:8 34:19 40:22 51:9 53:2 64:23 65:2 70:23 71:10
	background 6:19
	backup 18:15 29:17 63:14
	bacteria 16:17
	bad 67:21
	bang 67:20
	bankruptcy 10:18
	bar 16:13
	base 7:13,14 39:22 40:4
	based 7:16 8:25 11:22 17:18
	basically 18:8 23:23 24:11 28:17 69:12
	basin 20:6,17
	basins 16:15

basis 43:11 46:24 47:3 57:6	breakdown 16:17 37:23	62:20 63:2	Carolina's 12:6	chamber 18:23
bay 25:8	breaks 69:5	call-ins 57:19	case 29:19 33:11,15	chance 8:20
Beach 9:3	brief 5:13 7:23 12:1 39:21	camera 29:22 30:4	34:5,7,21 44:15	changed 30:25 57:7 57:8,9
bearing 15:7	briefing 73:5	Cameron 3:21,24	46:25 67:19 73:16	changes 31:19,20
began 9:1	briefly 21:25 37:19	4:21,22,24 5:1 8:6	cases 33:7,7,8	changing 31:22
beginning 7:2,8 67:9	bring 34:18	8:10 13:19 26:9	39:18 50:6,10	characteristic 61:5
behalf 72:3	bringing 27:13	26:13,17 37:16	57:4	characteristics
beings 58:18,19	broken 58:24	45:12 59:15 62:8	categories 58:24,24	46:16 61:13
believe 12:1 16:7	brought 21:23	66:24 71:1,4,6,16	category 48:15	Charleston 34:18 35:5
23:3 26:8 28:9	22:18 30:18	71:22 72:11	cause 75:10	check 31:12 68:21
30:20 31:4 33:20	Bruce 5:25 12:1,21	candidate 9:21	Cay 3:15 5:8 40:3	checks 44:7
34:5,20 35:11,13	65:9 69:9 70:1	capabilities 20:18	CCR 75:16	chemical 14:14,19 14:24
35:14,25 44:22	bubble 24:22 31:21	capability 33:18	CEO 5:5 71:23	chief 3:22 5:1 59:19
48:2 53:22 58:23	buck 67:20	capable 15:4,13	certain 73:13	chlorination 20:7
60:11,17 73:7	budget 37:7	capacity 5:4 15:17	certainly 8:4 31:25	chlorine 16:21
BellSouth 62:18	building 35:6	16:9 17:14 19:23	32:24 34:7 35:23	clarification 43:21 62:11
benefits 38:15 39:3	buildings 14:12	35:7,25 70:8	57:20 58:1 66:20	clarifier 16:19
best 22:2 44:1 75:8	builds 69:4	capita 46:13	72:4,6 74:11	clarify 36:10 73:1
better 23:20 24:14	bulk 14:4,7,25 15:3	capital 34:3 65:2	CERTIFICATE	clarity 22:10
26:14 45:7 56:20	15:12,16 18:1	capture 57:6	75:1	clean 28:18,24 29:4 62:9 69:14
57:19,20 59:1	19:6	captures 58:17	Certified 1:15 75:2	cleaned 28:14 29:6
66:1,4,11 69:20	business 6:20 31:1	card 44:5	certify 75:3,9	cleaning 28:10 69:10
70:8 71:25	41:5 63:25	cards 44:6	cetera 41:22 42:16	clear 16:20
beyond 62:21	BUTCH 2:4	care 29:21 30:3	46:11	clog 63:15 69:12
big 15:9 21:22	buy 68:19 69:19	Carl 5:19 7:23 8:11	chairman 2:3 3:1,4	clogged 46:11
49:19	buyer 64:18	Carolina 1:1,10,20	3:5,6,22 4:9,11,15	close 31:18 34:17 34:17
bill 36:22	buys 68:18	2:8,10,15 3:13,13	4:18,20,22,23,24	closed 41:12 52:23 52:25
billing 41:19 42:5		3:15 5:7,8,11,19	5:1,5 8:3,7,9 12:4	closing 7:19 45:12
42:13 43:6,6,18	C	5:21,23 6:1,11,25	12:9,14,16,22,23	closings 59:16
47:19 50:1	C 2:6	7:5,13,25 8:13,14	12:24 13:9,12,13	Clyburn 2:5 56:17
billings 43:9	calendar 38:13	8:24 9:1,4 10:9,9	13:14 21:13 22:7	60:2,3,10,17,22
bills 41:10 43:11,12	Calhoun 2:10	10:14,22 11:2,20	22:13 23:25 25:22	61:7,18 62:4
63:18	call 3:1 16:19 18:9	11:22 12:3,6	26:4 30:9 32:2	cold 56:8
bit 13:16 30:13	25:8 29:13,16	13:18,21,22 14:1	34:11 36:3,6	collect 18:5
32:22 40:23 59:6	41:13,15,18 42:2	17:10,24 22:1,9	37:12 39:11,13	collected 18:24 37:1
62:11	42:12 47:16,17	26:2 27:18 36:11	40:22 45:14 47:9	collecting 36:24
blow-offs 22:24	47:18 58:1,20	36:13,14 37:1,21	47:23 48:7,10,22	collection 18:3 70:3
23:9,19	57:18 58:1,20	38:7,10,12,16,18	48:25 49:8 50:12	
board 3:23	60:5 61:20 63:19	38:23 39:4,5,24	50:15,21,25 53:7	
boat 25:12	63:19,21 67:18	40:1,2,6,8,13	53:16,19,23 54:3	
bottle 65:22	68:20 71:20	43:13,15 45:10,21	54:12,19 55:24,25	
bottom 16:9	calling 52:1	45:22 46:4,6 55:3	57:16,24 58:21	
bought 68:22	calls 31:24 41:23	55:6,7 56:10 60:5	59:9 60:2 62:5,8	
Box 1:19 2:15	45:25,25 49:23	60:20,25 61:8,15	66:17 71:8,14,19	
	53:10 54:9 56:11	61:22 62:1 67:2	72:2,12,23,25	
		72:7 75:3,12,17	73:2,9,23 74:8,10	

collections 69:11	52:14 53:1,6	comparison 39:5	conducted 45:2	copies 4:6
colloquies 72:14	54:12,13,15,19,20	58:22 61:16	confer 72:22	copy 71:10
color 32:14	54:23 55:2,5,9,14	compassionate	confirm 44:1	corporate 6:23
Columbia 1:10,20	55:17,23 56:2,16	63:11	connected 18:8	38:19 40:15 43:9
2:10,15 13:23	56:17 59:11,17,20	competitors 43:25	connection 15:3	43:15,16,22 60:23
40:12 47:1 55:8	60:2,3,10,17,22	complain 56:16,18	connections 15:1	corporation 6:20
65:14 75:12	61:7,18 62:4 64:4	63:13	consider 68:4 72:18	correct 12:8 33:14
combined 7:3 62:2	66:18 68:11,13	complaint 47:11,11	consist 5:16 14:10	34:2,5,13 50:13
come 8:4 35:2 37:7	70:19,22,23 71:2	48:15 50:8 51:3,6	18:7	50:14
53:10 54:6,11	71:5,15,17,21	53:1 56:22 57:14	consistent 9:6	corrective 52:16
56:5,13	72:15	62:20 63:12,16	32:12,13	correctly 12:7
comes 25:8 31:22	commissioners 2:2	66:7 68:24 70:23	constituents 68:8	cost 17:11
34:23 47:11 62:18	8:21,22	73:20 74:2,3	constitutes 7:13,15	council 30:21
70:9	Commission's 10:1	complaints 20:21	construction 17:6	councilmen 31:11
coming 16:14 33:22	44:21 72:8 73:6	23:2,8 24:4,16	17:20,21 38:3	counsel 75:10
37:2 49:4 59:3,25	commitment 39:22	25:2,6 32:7,11	67:9,10	count 11:9
66:20 72:5	44:23 64:5,22	45:17,19 46:3,14	consultation 72:18	counties 7:1,4 9:14
comment 66:1	committed 44:18	46:21 47:2 48:1,6	consumer 48:1	10:4,12
68:12	64:10 65:3 66:12	48:11,14,20 49:4	50:13	country 68:15
comments 45:13	common 43:15	49:11,19 50:3,6	consumption 43:8	County 17:1 19:12
commission 1:1 3:7	communicate	51:15,24 52:7,15	contact 35:23 41:8	20:5 24:7 35:16
4:25 5:14,17,20	42:24	56:9,14 57:7	41:11 42:11 53:2	36:1 75:12
6:3,10 7:24 8:8,17	communication	59:22 60:13,16,25	contacted 50:7,10	couple 26:18 28:4
10:20 11:9 12:2	62:17	61:20 62:2 64:2	contacting 41:9	34:12 57:3
13:15 32:18 33:11	community 68:17	66:2,3,25	contacts 41:14	course 18:4 19:16
37:13 39:14 45:1	companies 3:14	complete 17:17,23	containing 39:24	35:5,6,10,21
50:4,8 51:14 62:9	9:25 10:2 11:15	75:8	context 56:6	58:13
63:20 65:19 72:3	26:2,7,21,24	completely 20:3,5	continually 44:2,24	Court 1:15,19 75:2
72:13 75:18	36:21,21 39:23	27:19 28:14 52:24	continue 27:15	courteous 63:11
Commissioner 2:3	61:10,22 62:2	compliance 11:5	45:9 58:14 65:23	courtesy 40:19
2:3,4,4,5,5,6	69:17,18	27:5 68:2	66:14	cover 20:17,18
12:23,24,25 13:1	company 3:23 4:1	comply 57:4	continuous 11:11	22:21 33:17
21:13,14,16,20	5:3,7,8 6:5 7:16	components 20:25	continuously 53:14	covered 50:18
22:3 24:1 25:1,21	10:19,21 36:6,12	21:1	contractors 23:3	credentials 69:23
25:22,23,25 26:5	37:18 39:17 40:1	COMPUSCRIPTS	contribution 67:10	credit 44:5
26:15,18 27:10,24	41:1 45:23 56:16	1:18	contributions 38:3	creek 35:2
28:5,7,16 29:7	58:7,7,8,10,25	computer 49:14	control 20:10,14,19	curious 60:6,22
30:6,9,10,12,13	59:13,18 60:7	computerized	20:22 31:4 33:8	61:21
30:14,18 32:2,3,5	61:3,3,13,13	40:18	33:10 62:21	current 27:19
32:6 33:1,6 34:9	64:12 65:10 70:6	conceptual 17:18	controls 14:15	37:24 39:19 42:2
34:11,12 35:3,18	71:12	concern 61:21 63:8	controversy 35:4	currently 11:1
36:9,9 45:15,16	company's 41:3	72:6,7,8	convenience 42:18	15:21 17:7 38:11
45:19 46:12,20	43:23	concerns 34:1	44:5 47:22	39:23 40:5
47:8,23 49:13	compare 46:13	conclusion 7:18	conventional 16:3	customer 6:13,15
50:25 51:2,13,22	61:1,23 67:1	concurrence 73:23	17:4	7:13,14 9:7 15:8
51:24 52:5,12,12	compared 67:4	conduct 27:6	conversation 26:8	21:22,23 22:11,17

<p>23:14 29:19 32:8 32:22 33:12 39:10 39:15,20,21,22 40:4,8,10,11,13 40:14,16,18,19,21 41:2,3,5,5,13,16 41:17,23,23,25 42:6,10,19,21,21 43:4,5,17 44:9,17 44:19,19,23 45:4 46:9,10,11 47:15 50:24 52:8,18,21 52:23 53:3 55:8 55:18 56:21 57:15 58:8 59:21 62:14 62:16 64:2 65:13 66:7,8 67:25 68:4 68:24 73:11 customers 7:2,4,11 7:17 8:25 9:12,17 10:3,13 11:1,23 16:11 22:17 33:21 36:25 40:13 41:8 41:13 43:1 44:3,4 44:8,13 45:10 50:5,7 56:5,13 58:19,22 64:13 65:19,22 66:13 68:3,3 70:15 customer's 41:24 42:1,17 47:22 cuts 62:18 CWS 20:14 22:9 60:14,14,15 73:16 73:19 cylindrical 21:1</p>	<p>57:6,12,13,22 58:17 59:7 61:17 date 27:17 31:9 75:5 DAVID 2:4 day 16:8 21:21 33:21 41:6,9 42:12,15 47:14,17 47:19 54:17 55:10 68:19 75:12 days 41:9 42:17 47:21 52:24 deal 63:5 dealt 51:25 52:2,8 53:2 debit 44:6 debris 16:14 debt 13:6 decade 40:7 December 70:24 decline 47:25 49:1 decrease 48:20 decreased 48:13 53:9 decreasing 49:17 dedicated 40:9 deficiencies 22:20 delinquency 10:16 delinquent 10:14 26:22 27:4,21 36:16 37:6 demand 19:22 demonstrate 11:8 65:18 72:6 demonstrated 9:22 44:23 demonstrates 13:24 department 48:1 50:13 depending 28:25 depends 28:19 depicted 7:12 20:11 depicts 14:23 15:24 18:14 deploy 65:1</p>	<p>design 17:18 designed 15:17 44:20 detailed 38:25 determine 29:23 47:4 developed 10:7 developers 67:8 development 68:17 de-chlorination 20:7 DHEC 9:10,16 10:8 11:9 13:2 17:24 26:21,24 27:5,7,14,21 28:1 37:5,6,10 DHEC's 10:19 difference 62:17 different 7:11 27:7 27:8,16,16 31:1 32:14 43:2 52:17 61:3,4,12,12 68:7 68:23 differential 67:23 difficulties 10:17 diffusers 24:22 31:22 dig 34:7 digester 31:21 digesters 31:8 digging 37:10 diligence 69:19 direct 13:19 38:2 44:5 directly 25:20 director 5:25 6:8 6:12 37:16 39:15 discharge 16:1 19:7 25:6,8,14 34:14 34:24 discharged 16:23 discharges 19:11 discharging 19:14 34:17 disconnect 59:6 61:19</p>	<p>discuss 5:22 6:4,10 6:14 7:25 21:25 discussed 28:8 73:3 discusses 41:2 discussion 29:8 disinfected 16:20 disinfection 15:25 20:6 dismissal 71:9,11 74:1 disposal 30:20 65:16 disposed 51:10,16 disseminate 44:12 dissolved 24:12 distinction 64:2 distressed 9:19 distributed 4:7,8 distribution 15:1 70:3 dividends 38:7 document 72:16,17 doing 31:1 44:8 54:21,22 56:20 59:22 62:24 63:10 65:24 dollars 10:23 12:13 17:13 domestic 17:9 door 42:22 Dorchester 24:7 35:16,25 36:1 downstream 25:10 25:20 34:15 drafts 44:5 drainage 34:23,24 34:25 draw 37:22 drilling 12:19 drinking 10:14,25 27:4 36:16,17,22 37:3 drops 24:23 due 22:18 23:2 69:19</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">E</p> <hr/> <p>E 2:4 earlier 19:15 26:20 49:9,13 easily 49:14 economic 6:10 37:20 38:5 39:2 67:6 Edwards 2:14 4:17 4:17 effluent 16:13,20 16:22 25:4,17 34:15,18,20 eight 7:9 9:10 10:4 10:12 14:6 15:11 15:12 40:9,12 65:13 either 4:7 32:14 42:19 51:17 electric 23:4 electrical 14:14,24 18:24 electronic 44:7 elevated 15:16,19 elevation 19:1 eliminate 24:15 eliminated 20:20 elimination 20:18 ELIZABETH 2:5 emergencies 42:9 47:13 emergency 44:16 47:15 empathize 63:4 emphasis 26:9 employ 38:11 65:1 employed 8:18 13:23 37:18 employee 38:15 39:3 employees 13:21 38:17 40:5,8,8,12 40:25 64:11 encounter 23:11 ended 27:13</p>
--	---	---	--	---

engineering 17:19	excess 13:3	20:5,10 21:9	finished 17:8	foot 14:11 34:14
ensure 11:11	exclusively 40:9	22:17 23:1,17	firm 3:8	foray 64:9
ensured 10:24	excuse 12:24 41:13	24:7 28:20 30:15	first 6:21,23 63:20	force 18:8,8
entire 29:6 64:12	46:5	35:15,19,20	five 3:8,10,23 5:16	foregoing 75:4,7
entities 14:8 42:24	executive 3:22 5:1	fact 22:5 27:12	7:2 15:11 28:11	forget 68:11
entity 9:19	59:19	58:17 65:6,17,18	28:13 29:5 37:18	form 43:20
environment 19:7	exhibit 14:16	fail 71:13	39:6,23 60:13,24	formed 9:24 36:12
68:5	existing 9:6,23	fairly 33:18	61:22 72:21	former 36:13
environmental	11:15	family 39:25 46:17	fix 63:22 67:22	forth 54:11
10:15,25 11:5	expanded 10:3	far 25:15 32:12,23	flag 43:7 46:21	forthcoming 58:16
36:18,23	32:17	47:10,24,24 48:1	Fleming 2:5 25:22	forum 50:5,5
environmentally	expanding 67:14	48:8,8,10,12 49:2	25:23,25 26:5,15	forward 45:2 74:12
10:5	expansion 20:1	49:4 50:16 53:9	26:18 27:10,24	four 38:1 70:1
equalization 20:17	expansions 9:7	53:10 58:22	28:5,7,16 29:7	four-step 30:1
equates 17:13	expect 62:25 66:11	farther 25:10,20	30:6 36:9 45:15	free 6:18 14:11
43:12	expectations 44:25	fast 32:10	45:16,19 46:12,20	frequently 56:17
equipment 14:14	65:20,23	features 14:19	47:8 64:4 66:18	Friarsgate 19:10
14:19,25 18:21	expected 33:2	February 1:11	Fleming's 47:24	19:22 30:15 31:7
20:7,7,16,19,22	expenditures 34:3	feed 14:14 15:10	floating 20:16	33:9 48:5 68:12
21:6,8 24:10,14	expenses 34:3	feedback 44:10	Florence 6:25 9:2	frustration 58:9
33:8,10,16 38:24	expensive 33:19	feel 6:17 70:11	Florida 67:5	62:16 63:4
equivalents 39:25	expertise 65:3	fees 10:15,25 27:4,5	flow 15:5,13 20:17	fuel 38:24
46:18	69:25	27:14,19 36:16,17	69:3	full 47:3
especially 27:20	expires 75:18	36:18,23,25 37:3	flowing 18:11 19:1	Full-Service 1:19
48:4 64:6	explained 58:23	37:6 38:20	35:1	function 40:9
established 3:19	explanation 42:22	feet 25:10	flows 16:15,18	functional 41:1
15:22	expressed 34:1	field 51:9	flush 23:7,10,19	43:17
et 2:8 41:22 42:16	expressing 63:3	fifth 7:15	flushing 22:18,23	further 4:9 36:3
46:11	extended 11:15	file 34:7 41:24 50:6	23:15 44:15 69:2	43:20 45:3 74:2
evaluating 43:24	exterior 18:14	50:8 71:10	focal 63:23	74:10 75:9
evaluation 45:3	e-mails 31:12,25	filed 51:3 71:9	focus 9:7 40:8 63:1	future 66:22
events 75:10		filtering 17:5	follow 12:7 22:12	
eventually 63:20	F	finally 6:12 16:24	28:8 29:22,25	G
everybody 66:13	face 65:7	19:5	30:3,5 50:9 52:23	G 2:3
68:6 70:14	facilities 5:23 8:1	financial 10:5,17	66:19	gallon 17:14
evidentiary 33:20	9:24 10:24 11:19	11:6 64:17	followed 16:21	gallons 15:5,11,14
33:24	12:2,17,18 13:17	financially 9:18	17:3,21 40:1	16:8
evolved 23:2	14:6 15:16 16:6	find 18:22 25:25	52:19	gas 23:4,4
ex 1:7 3:18 73:4	18:2 19:3,19 20:1	26:19,22 29:17	following 20:1	general 54:1
75:4,7	20:9,11,14 22:19	51:15	23:15,21 24:20	generally 47:10
exact 13:5	22:22,23 27:8,16	fine 17:5 24:22	30:12 42:15 47:19	generated 50:4
exactly 29:23 30:4	29:12 41:11 67:3	31:21 54:14,22	follows-up 34:12	52:19
32:19 57:17	67:10,13,16 70:10	71:15 74:8	follow-through	generates 42:3
example 19:21 20:2	facility 6:5 14:17	fines 13:2,3,3 26:21	51:19,22 52:10	generating 43:6
20:12 44:3	14:20 17:8 19:10	26:24,25 27:1,3	follow-up 31:10	generator 18:16
exceed 44:25	19:22,24,25 20:2	28:1,3	34:13 47:23 51:2	generics 59:23

<p>getting 40:24 52:6 57:18,20 59:1 66:1,2 68:12,23 give 6:19 7:19 33:3 39:20 45:7 53:25 62:9,23 72:21 given 9:22 38:3 57:2 58:11,17 gives 45:12 Glad 3:5 4:18 go 6:18 7:22 29:14 29:17 46:21 49:10 49:19 51:8 53:14 56:6 57:13 59:5 63:19 65:1,23 66:5,10 68:21 69:12,13,23 70:5 70:6,15 71:16,21 Godfrey 70:24 71:12 73:20,25 74:3 goes 34:25 36:8 51:8 64:22 69:7 69:11 going 3:21 22:11 28:11 31:17 32:21 33:3 35:14,25 36:7 53:16,17,20 53:21,23 54:4 55:17,20 59:2,12 59:15,24 63:9,10 63:12,13,21,22 64:7 69:3,3 70:12 70:16,20,21 71:23 73:1 golf 35:5,6,10,21 good 4:22,23 8:8,9 21:15,19 24:1 25:23,24 30:10,11 31:14,19,23 32:5 37:12 39:13 49:14 64:25 65:12 67:13 70:5,14,15,16 71:2,14 goods 38:23 gotten 21:24 62:15</p>	<p>71:10 government 9:19 governmental 11:10 Grant 24:7,16 25:4 35:4,8,11 gravity 18:11 19:2 gravity-type 18:7 gray 20:25 great 7:7 34:16,20 49:11 greater 10:16 Greenville 9:13 ground 28:23 69:1 group 44:12 grown 11:17 30:22 grows 68:17 growth 7:8 9:4,7 11:18 19:18 68:12 70:9 growth-induced 19:21 guess 26:12 29:10 32:22 48:22 67:12 guide 41:2 73:11</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">H</p> <hr/> <p>Haas 5:25 12:1,21 13:14 21:15 22:2 22:5,16 24:8 25:3 25:24 26:12,17 27:1,12 28:2,6,13 28:17 29:10 30:8 30:11,17 31:3 32:5,21 33:5,14 34:5,22 35:11,20 36:5,17 48:2 65:9 70:1 73:16 half 7:9 17:17 Hamilton 2:3 32:2 32:3,6 33:1,6 34:9 49:13 51:14 52:14 Hammonds 2:14 4:15,16 13:11 72:21,25 73:2,10 73:17 74:4,9</p>	<p>hand 75:11 handle 15:4 35:9 handled 42:6,7 59:21 71:3 handling 15:5 70:3 happen 51:6 69:8 happens 68:22,23 happy 21:11 33:5 45:11 Harbor 34:18 hard 56:8,19,19,23 56:25 58:16 62:13 head 50:13 headquarters 6:23 13:22 60:23 health 38:15 hear 58:23 59:7 heard 31:13,14,15 32:17 33:11 50:3 53:19 58:8 hearing 13:8,8 31:3 32:12 33:20,22,22 33:24 57:11 59:7 59:24 63:3 73:13 73:18 74:12 hearings 21:21,21 22:4 24:2 30:15 32:16 33:13 49:10 49:20 50:4,9,16 50:22 54:17,17 55:10,11 56:5,14 58:6 held 6:20 help 32:10 63:22 helpful 32:18 33:4 helps 24:14 hereunto 75:11 hesitate 4:5 hey 31:13 35:23 he'll 42:21 73:17 high 43:8 higher 19:1 highest 17:9 70:2 Hills 20:4 hilly-type 18:12 history 5:24 7:24</p>	<p>29:1 42:1 hit 23:5,12,22 Hoefler 2:9,9 3:3,4 3:6,7,8 4:11,19,20 4:25 21:19 22:7 32:9 33:6 36:6 55:24 56:1,4 57:22 58:4 59:4 70:20,21 71:8,17 72:5,12 73:11,15 73:24,25 hold 26:15,17 49:10,19 50:21 51:5 72:13 holders 44:25 holding 16:16 18:23 holdings 60:7 hole 37:11 home 42:21 homes 35:7,9,22,24 honestly 24:19 hooked 35:17 hooking 35:14 hope 45:7 73:2 hopefully 19:12 24:14 66:12 Horry 7:1 host 12:20 28:20 hours 41:8 house 15:11 37:7 housed 14:12 houses 12:19 30:23 35:6 Howard 2:4 12:23 12:25 13:1 23:25 24:1 25:1,21 30:13 34:11,12 35:3,18 36:9 54:12,13,15 HR 43:19 human 58:18,19 65:7 hydroaromatic 12:20 14:18</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <hr/> <p>identify 30:2 Illinois 3:10 6:22 55:1 64:8 immediate 29:15 immediately 6:1 29:21 30:3 41:25 42:11 47:16 50:11 impact 6:11 37:20 39:2 importance 37:4 important 36:19 38:5 41:4 45:8 49:9 52:8 62:21 62:23 63:7 64:15 65:5 improve 15:18 20:3 44:3,24 improvement 26:6 26:10 44:9 54:7 improvements 10:24 31:9 34:4 53:15 66:23 inch 15:9,12 incident 47:5 49:22 53:24 62:20 Incidentally 17:16 38:1 incidents 61:6,14 62:14 include 14:5 15:2 41:20 44:5 included 20:15 38:19 72:19 includes 17:3 18:15 including 5:23 20:6 38:15,24 40:10 42:13 71:11 income 38:8,19 incoming 48:11 Incorporated 3:14 3:15,16 8:12 10:22 36:12 increase 7:9 37:2 47:25 48:20 49:2</p>
--	--	---	---	---

increased 28:24 48:13 53:9	interesting 65:20 68:10	items 12:9 38:25	L 2:5	local 9:19 40:15 43:14,19 46:25 55:19 68:5
increasing 45:4 49:18	interior 14:24	<hr/> J <hr/>	lack 48:16,16 62:19	locally 59:21
incurred 38:1	interject 22:8	January 49:6 54:2	lady 59:14	locate 41:22
indicate 47:6	internal 20:8	Jim 3:21 4:21,25	lagoon 15:23 24:4 25:2	located 3:10 6:21 6:23 13:23 14:10 18:12 19:11 20:4 25:17 40:11 41:11 54:23,25 65:14 68:16
indicated 4:25 13:2 23:14 61:2	internet 44:6	job 23:20 24:14 65:24	large 12:9 27:20 44:12 75:3,17	locates 47:21
industry 44:1	interrupt 4:5	John 2:4,9 3:7 22:20 59:24	larger 18:12	location 13:25 48:4 48:5 75:5
influx 35:7,9	interruption 41:6	Joseph 21:17 70:24	largest 7:15 8:25 9:14 11:21 40:1 45:23 46:7	locations 42:16
information 42:2 43:18 50:16 57:2 58:18 61:9 66:21	introduce 3:21 4:20 21:12 39:9	judgments 10:17	LAW 2:9,14,14	log 41:16
infrastructure 26:6 26:10 64:5 66:19 66:23	introduced 8:22	July 75:18	leak 23:12	logged 51:7,11 52:22 57:12 61:17
initial 16:14	introducing 3:25	jurisdictional 3:11 3:24	leaks 46:10	logical 9:20
inlet 25:8	invariable 56:15 68:15	<hr/> K <hr/>	leave 42:21	long 24:12 64:21
inputting 58:18	invest 66:14	keep 64:17	length 22:12	look 18:16,17,19 20:24 45:2 47:4 49:16 61:11 69:19 70:1
inquiries 41:17 42:13 43:4 44:20 61:16,19 62:14	invested 10:23	keeping 67:15	Lessie 2:14 4:16	looked 47:7 53:25 54:2 69:17
inquiry 41:19 52:19	investing 38:6 67:2	keeps 69:3	let's 34:16 62:17	looking 18:20 44:2 52:7,13 74:12
install 14:21 19:23	investment 19:3 37:23,24 38:2 39:2 64:19,21 67:11 70:16	kept 67:11	level 17:9 41:1	lost 56:7 62:15 63:17
installation 17:7 20:16	investments 38:16	Kimberly 1:15 75:2 75:16	Lexington 19:11 33:23	lot 24:4 29:7 30:22 32:11 35:4 56:10 56:11 58:5 63:22 64:16 67:9,16,19 68:7,17,22 69:8 69:15,18,20
Installations 21:6	involved 13:21 29:20	kind 25:2,18 30:12 30:23 33:1 35:21 51:17,18 52:13 62:9,10,13,24,25 63:5,7 67:23 68:23 71:2	LIB 2:5	low 49:22 53:24 61:6,14,15 67:12
installed 16:2 17:15 20:20 21:8 22:23 22:25 23:9 24:18 24:19 31:13 33:8 33:10,13,17	involves 15:25	kinds 64:2	life 67:6	lower 67:11
installing 17:1 23:3 23:17	Irmo 30:16 31:11	Kings 24:7,16 25:4 35:3,8,11	lift 18:9,15,22,25 18:25	lowest 68:16
insurance 38:15	Irmo/Chapin 70:24	know 21:25 22:14 23:20 28:3,8 30:21,22,24,25 32:13,21 34:20 35:1,21 41:4 45:8 48:12,15 51:19,25 52:2 53:4 57:8,8 59:2 61:23,25 62:3 65:9,13,20 66:4,11 68:20 69:20,20 70:19 71:22 73:4 74:5,7	light 57:2	Lubertozzi 6:7 21:12 36:7 37:12 37:14 39:12
intake 60:5,5,8 61:20	isolate 23:18	knowledge 51:19	liked 64:19	<hr/> M <hr/>
intend 44:14	isolated 47:5	<hr/> L <hr/>	line 19:9 21:17 23:12,21 29:19,20 29:22 36:22 41:22 42:15 47:20 51:5 62:18 63:15	main 5:17 29:18
intent 29:11	issuance 43:10		lines 18:5 19:9 21:3 23:3,4,5,7 28:10 28:14 44:15 58:6	
intention 64:24	issue 29:15 41:18 42:11,18 43:8 47:6,15 51:10 52:2,19 61:6		link 73:18,19,21	
interaction 43:14	issued 38:7 43:11		list 73:6	
interconnected 18:3 19:6	issues 19:20 20:13 22:15,23 23:2 24:20 42:7,10,24 45:23 46:3,8,9 47:14,18,24 49:1 49:2,12,12,17,18 49:24,24,25 50:1 53:10,13,15,21 54:6,9 57:18 60:16,21		listed 27:3	
interested 24:3 75:10	item 36:22		listen 66:10 71:25	
			little 6:19 13:16 25:8 30:13 32:22 40:23,24 59:6 62:11	
			lives 19:20 38:5	
			LLC 10:10 36:14	

mains 18:5,7,7,8,8 28:18 69:1,10,10 69:13	72:4	months 49:1 53:11	73:13,18	okay 4:19 26:15
maintain 70:9	message 65:5 71:25	moratorium 9:15	nights 33:23	28:17 51:3,7,23
maintenance 23:20 67:14	messages 44:12	9:16	non-compliant	53:6,19 60:17,22
major 16:24	meter 15:2,9,12	Moseley 2:6 21:13	67:21	62:4 71:5
majority 49:11 50:6	42:13,15 47:19,20	21:14,16,20 22:3	normally 18:12	old 20:10 69:10
making 3:24 4:1	Meters 43:10	30:14 54:19,20,23	Northbrook 3:10	older 15:22 29:2
23:6 34:4 53:15	method 15:24	55:2,5,9,14,17,23	6:8 54:25 65:8,16	once 28:11 42:18
59:13 72:5	36:24	56:2 59:11,17,20	Notary 75:3,17	51:6 53:1 58:21
managed 39:18	methods 44:4	68:11 70:19,22,23	note 14:1 38:5	72:3 74:10
management 40:18	mic 40:23	71:2,5,15,17,21	notes 60:12	ones 23:24 24:23
43:18 45:1 56:8	midwest 6:22,24	move 26:7 28:11	notice 68:14	57:16,18,19,24,25
manager 40:11,16	mid-Atlantic 8:15	Myrtle 9:2	notices 63:18	58:2
55:8	MIGNON 2:5		notified 42:19	ongoing 47:6
managers 50:24	mile 25:9	N	number 6:3 7:16	open 52:6
manner 10:5	million 12:5,10,14	name 3:7 4:25	8:25 11:22 22:24	operate 6:5 8:1
map 7:5 11:19	12:15 17:12,13	31:10 37:13 39:14	23:1 28:20 40:9	9:23 11:20 12:2
March 75:12	37:25,25 38:2,14	Nanette 2:14 4:17	41:10 45:17 46:14	14:1,2,5
marina 25:12 34:24	38:21,23 39:4,7	national 7:14	46:20 47:2 48:6	operated 9:11,14
marked 9:5	64:13	nationwide 7:10	48:10 52:7,24	10:8,12 13:17
market 43:24	millions 10:23	61:24 62:2	61:19 63:18	operating 3:9,11
master 15:2	12:12	naturally 54:7,11		5:15,18,23 7:3
materials 7:12 9:3	mind 31:22	nature 62:16 67:3	O	11:22 13:18 37:20
11:18 73:4,7	minimal 28:5,24	near 68:12	obtain 14:9	38:8,9,22 39:3,6
matter 17:5 44:13	minimum 29:5	Nearby 35:20	occasions 5:20 8:17	39:16,23 41:3
73:1	minute 15:6,11,14	nearly 10:13 11:1	occurred 6:25	42:7 46:16 61:4,4
matters 42:6 52:16	minutes 44:13	necessarily 52:7	odor 20:13,19,21	61:12
mature 38:4	72:21	necessary 29:4	20:22 24:4 30:20	operation 17:25
ma'am 26:4 40:22	miscellaneous	need 54:6 56:4	31:4 33:8,10 34:1	36:24 44:18
47:9 54:20	41:19,20 46:1	needs 29:24 30:2	48:16 49:12 56:20	operational 19:20
mean 28:16 55:22	50:1	47:7 72:19	58:3 68:20	20:13
68:6	mislead 14:18	negative 56:19	odors 21:5 24:15	operations 5:22 6:2
meet 15:17 44:20	misunderstood	neither 75:9	odor-absorbing	8:13,14 13:20,22
65:19	52:11	Net 38:8	20:18	20:3 42:4 43:19
meeting 3:2	MITCHELL 2:3	Nevada 67:5	offered 44:4	43:23
members 3:7 4:1	mixed 16:16	never 28:3 50:7,10	office 1:19 2:12,13	operator 41:15
4:24 8:7 13:14	money 12:5 64:16	53:19 57:13,15	2:15 4:12,13 6:8	42:11,20,20 47:16
37:13 39:14 62:8	64:16,24,25 67:20	new 20:11 33:17	8:23 13:9 41:8,12	52:20,20
mention 60:11	67:22,24 68:8	35:6,7,9 44:2,11	41:23 42:19 43:17	opportunities
mentioned 12:4,10	69:9,15,22 70:5,8	news 31:14,14	48:7,11 49:16	43:25 64:3
13:19 19:15 25:11	70:13,16	newspaper 74:5,6	50:7	opportunity 3:18
26:20 37:11,16	month 45:24 46:4	nice 59:20	officer 3:22 5:1	5:13 8:19 13:15
48:2 49:25 68:11	48:18 49:6,7,7	night 21:21 22:4	59:19	22:12 45:9 64:19
	53:25 54:2 56:10	24:2 30:15 33:13	offices 46:25	66:14
	60:13	33:22 49:10 54:17	official 75:12	oranges 56:25
	monthly 43:11	55:10 56:5,13	officially 51:3	order 3:2 27:6 32:9
	46:24 47:2 48:18	58:6 59:7,24 63:3	Oh 48:9,14 52:4	42:3 43:7 52:22

<p>55:16 66:7 73:19 orders 71:24 ordor 32:13 original 19:25 ORS 45:1 50:7 51:17 63:20 72:8 outcome 52:9 outfall 19:8,9 outside 6:24 overall 26:5 49:3 59:23 61:5 oversee 8:14,24 overseeing 5:21 17:21 oversight 8:12 39:20 overview 5:18 39:21 owed 10:13 27:5 36:25 Owens 6:12 22:11 32:21 39:9,13,14 40:25 45:18,22 46:15,23 47:13 48:2,9,14,24 49:5 49:21 50:14,20,23 51:11,21,23 52:4 52:11,18 53:4,13 53:17,22,24 54:5 54:14,18,22,25 55:4,7,12,16,21 59:15,19 60:3,9 60:15,19 61:2,10 61:25 62:7 owned 10:10 13:17 owner 64:18 ownership 26:7 64:6 oxygen 24:12 O'NEAL 2:3</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">P</p> <p>page 75:5 pages 73:13,15 paid 13:6 27:14 paper 35:5</p>	<p>parameters 27:17 Pardon 55:4 parent 3:23 5:7 10:19 part 21:1 23:16 27:12 32:23 43:23 43:25 49:19 50:22 69:19 parte 1:7 3:18 73:4 75:4,7 participants 68:6 participation 74:11 particular 14:16 16:7 17:18 18:16 20:24 21:9 23:1 23:14,16,24 24:2 25:3 35:15 44:14 48:4,20 58:1 particularly 12:10 particulate 17:5 parts 5:17 9:12 party 75:10 pass 36:21 passout 33:2 patching 67:14 Patty 6:12 39:14 62:14 63:25 65:8 pay 65:22 71:23 paying 27:21 payment 10:24 27:19 44:4,6 50:2 payments 38:18 44:6 payroll 38:13 39:2 pending 64:6 75:10 people 29:16 30:24 32:16 38:12 50:17 52:1 58:25 63:3 64:20 65:1,12,13 65:21 66:11 67:11 69:15,22 70:4 72:7 percent 7:9,13 28:18,25 29:4 40:4,6 46:17 49:23 56:12</p>	<p>percentage 49:16 51:25 52:2 53:9 53:23 60:24 62:1 62:3 percentage-wise 61:22 period 47:3 48:19 periodically 40:20 permits 17:20 person 25:5 41:4 63:20 65:11 personalized 40:20 personnel 40:14 42:4,8 43:16 44:17 philosophies 41:3 phone 41:25 58:3 58:25 photograph 15:18 photographs 19:24 pick 58:2 picture 16:4,9 18:16,18 19:12 33:17 45:7 pictures 16:7 25:19 pinpoint 30:4 pipe 15:10 19:13 pipes 28:23 31:22 pipng 20:9 21:3 28:21 31:6 pitch 59:23 place 17:25 28:21 51:8,9 57:4 66:22 placement 24:22 places 29:11 plan 26:6,10 36:2 54:10 66:22 planning 28:9 plans 17:19 24:6 66:22 plant 13:17 16:5,14 16:24 17:1,12 20:3,4,8,14,21 24:11,17 25:7 31:8,20 33:16 37:23,24 39:2</p>	<p>48:3 53:17 64:13 67:25 68:14,16,19 plants 6:4 15:22 16:1,2,11 68:9 please 4:5 6:16,17 7:22 14:1 68:7 73:9 pleased 3:17 13:15 39:8 44:7 pleasure 8:16 37:14 plus 17:4 Pocola 16:25 17:7 19:15 point 4:3,7 7:21 11:25 34:15,19 56:4 57:3 59:8 63:24 67:15 pointed 49:13 64:12 policies 6:14 policy 28:17 29:3 29:14 42:9,9 43:5 politicians 68:5 population 11:17 portable 14:3 posed 58:5 position 54:16,16 positive 44:10 possession 73:12 possibly 15:14 Post 1:19 2:15 posted 73:5 post-911 14:18 potential 9:10 29:14 power 1:15 4:3,7 18:15 38:24 75:2 75:16 powered 18:24 practices 6:14 44:1 preferred 62:14 prejudice 71:9,11 presence 9:1,22 present 2:2 4:13 5:4 54:16,16 55:21,23</p>	<p>presentation 1:7 3:2,19,25 5:3,16 6:17 7:18,21 13:8 36:7,20 72:5 75:5 75:7,8 presentations 4:2,4 75:6 presently 8:23 president 5:21 8:11 pressure 15:13,18 48:16 62:19 pretty 28:19 31:19 31:23 previous 22:20 previously 39:18 50:8 primarily 6:22 9:8 9:13 primary 15:23 printed 41:10 prior 15:25 33:19 43:6,10 private 7:15 11:9 11:21 privately 6:20 probably 18:20 23:19 62:23 problem 11:10 21:22 23:11 29:8 29:14,17,18,23 30:4 32:24 57:23 58:3 63:1,9,14,21 66:8,8,9 68:20 69:14 problems 27:11 28:21 29:1,2,13 69:15 procedure 43:15 procedures 44:20 proceedings 6:9 10:19 process 3:19 16:12 16:13 17:5 20:10 30:2 39:21 44:10 58:11 60:6,8 processes 15:25</p>
---	---	---	--	--

30:25 44:2,24 proficient 40:17 program 4:3 44:11 44:11 project 17:16 projects 12:20 properly 23:10 properties 61:1,24 property 38:19 46:10 63:16 protect 14:13 65:11 protected 14:11,11 proud 70:12 prove 56:19,19 provide 3:12 13:7 15:11 17:2,8 34:7 35:12,13 38:14 39:24 40:12 46:24 49:15 52:20 73:13 73:17,18 74:2 provided 43:22 47:1 50:17,23 55:13,15 73:20,21 provider 11:9 providers 14:4 19:6 provides 16:5 37:23 50:5 providing 5:10,17 15:13 44:18 PSC 9:9 public 1:1 5:10 14:2 21:24 72:7 75:3,17 publication 72:15 publish 73:12 pull 41:24 pump 18:10,25,25 21:3,4,4 pumped 25:4,9,19 25:19 pumping 14:13,24 18:9 purchase 38:24 42:25 purpose 41:6 63:25 purposes 22:10	36:20 pursuant 73:3 put 18:21 48:3 51:5 64:25 65:7,16 73:7 putting 25:12 64:17 66:4 70:5 P.A 2:9 p.m 1:11 <hr/> Q quality 21:22 22:14 22:18 27:6,8,16 44:18 47:14,15,24 49:1,2 51:7 53:9 53:13 55:18 57:18 61:21 67:22 quarter 25:9 question 6:17 21:18 22:13 24:3 26:16 34:14 47:24 48:22 56:17 57:1,11,14 58:17 59:1,5,12 70:19 questionable 43:7 questioning 30:13 questions 4:5,6 7:20,21 8:2 12:1 12:22 13:9,11 21:10,11 26:19 36:4 39:8,11 45:11,14 56:24 58:5,10,13 59:5 59:10 62:5 66:15 66:17 70:18 72:2 72:10 quick 44:19 quickly 47:11 quite 22:19 <hr/> R radius 14:11,11 raises 46:21 RANDY 2:3 range 14:20 rate 34:4,7 37:2	39:18 50:6 51:19 53:24 rated 70:2 rates 43:10 49:22 56:6 67:12 reach 21:6 44:11 reached 19:19 38:4 reacted 32:16 read 43:11 50:15 50:18,20 55:9,12 55:13 71:24 realize 49:8 really 15:7 30:7 33:4 37:10 59:8 63:6 67:23 68:13 reason 34:13 60:14 reasons 65:4 rebuilding 12:19 rebuttal 58:12 73:16 recall 22:16,19 23:13,23 24:8,15 25:3 31:24 49:7 67:18 receding 19:8 receipt 17:20 receive 14:7 18:1 41:2 43:1 49:11 received 42:2,12 44:8,10 47:17 receiving 45:2 recognize 4:12 51:4 recognized 34:4 record 26:24 27:25 44:22 50:17 58:2 63:16 64:23 72:24 73:8 75:8 recorded 75:6 red 46:21 reduced 48:6 refer 5:2 27:1 36:15 reference 72:14 74:1,6,7 referenced 72:17 73:4,10,18,19,20	73:22 74:3,5 referring 33:7 60:15,16 refine 44:2 refining 43:21 reflects 9:3 reg 57:7,8 regard 6:15 37:11 41:3 regarding 5:14 7:24 9:10 10:8 42:9 45:23,25 46:3,7 47:13 48:15 49:23,25 regardless 40:25 41:17 regional 5:20,25 8:11 40:11 50:24 regs 57:5,5 regular 6:9 34:25 regulations 44:22 67:15 regulators 65:7 68:5 regulatory 2:12,13 4:13,14 6:8 11:5 11:12 13:10 17:20 17:23 27:5 37:17 38:20 43:18 49:16 rehabbed 67:16 reinvested 38:8 relate 60:24 related 75:9 relates 61:20 relating 60:21 relations 6:13 39:15 66:8,9 relatively 14:17 remaining 16:21 21:2 remarks 7:19 remember 24:19 25:11 30:19 31:24 32:6 48:5 removal 16:21 30:19	remove 16:13 21:5 removed 16:20 removes 17:5 renew 8:20 renovated 20:3,5 renovation 19:18 repair 29:24,25 51:8 repairing 30:5 repairs 23:6,7,13 23:21 replace 68:9 replaced 54:10 67:17 replacement 20:8 42:13 47:20 replacing 12:19 67:25 report 48:18 51:3 reported 1:15 57:15,17 61:8 Reporter 1:15 75:1 75:2 reporting 1:19 43:21 reports 43:6 46:24 46:24 48:18 represent 3:8 7:8 representative 41:24 42:3,7,10 representatives 40:10,16 41:16 representing 4:13 request 41:19,20 41:20,21 42:14,15 47:19 requests 46:1,1,2 50:1 required 19:17,22 20:12 40:21 42:23 requirement 57:6 requirements 11:5 15:17 44:21 requires 42:10 43:20 69:24 72:16 requiring 36:1
---	---	---	--	---

<p>residential 40:4 residual 16:22 resolution 52:21 62:25 resolve 29:15 42:11 43:7 resolved 42:14,16 47:17,18 52:24 53:5 71:6 resource 65:15 resources 11:6 43:16 65:2 respond 36:8 62:22 response 11:17 40:19 44:7,19 47:10 53:20 62:24 responsibility 8:12 13:20 41:7 63:6 responsible 6:1 10:5 27:7 39:19 rest 5:2 46:13 result 20:13 resulted 10:17 retirement 38:16 revenues 39:5 reverse 69:6 review 41:25 43:5 43:20 reviewed 49:5 reviewing 43:24 Richland 75:12 right 24:17 25:11 26:2,20 30:16 32:10 35:2 48:9 56:3 57:11 65:14 68:18 70:1 River 19:11 20:4 25:5,7,20 34:16 34:17,19 ROBERT 2:6 rod 69:13 roils 69:6 role 39:19 63:24 rolling 48:19 room 72:20 roots 69:12</p>	<p>roughly 46:4 routed 42:4 routine 29:3 42:5 routines 23:16 rule 72:16 rules 44:21 run 4:4 46:23 48:17 running 64:24 67:15 runs 35:21</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">S</p> <hr/> <p>s 26:2 37:20 safe 27:4 sale 69:18 Saluda 19:11 samples 21:23 satisfaction 45:5 satisfied 51:16 53:3 satisfy 13:6 37:5 saw 25:18 saying 5:12 25:16 34:3 52:4 58:22 61:7 scenario 10:7 schedule 38:12 44:14 scheduled 42:17 47:21 screen 16:13 scripts 50:24 scrubber 21:2,5 scrubbers 20:19,22 se 24:16 27:3 seal 75:12 secluded 30:23 second 8:25 46:7 64:8,9 72:13 secondary 16:5 section 29:20 68:16 security 14:19 see 8:3 14:16,22 16:7 17:13,22 18:17,18 19:13 20:25 21:2 24:1 27:13,22 29:11,23</p>	<p>31:6,12 32:24 33:16 46:20 47:2 48:19 49:10 52:4 54:9 64:20 67:22 seeing 30:24 seemingly 54:3 seen 7:17 47:25 48:6 49:1,2 68:1 68:14 sees 67:25 selling 35:5 seminars 40:21 sense 25:17 59:5 sent 31:11 separated 16:19 separation 48:8 seriously 32:8 41:7 serve 7:3,10 8:11 9:1 10:3,4 11:1,7 11:15 45:10 64:14 served 5:4 7:1 9:12 30:21 service 1:1 2:8 3:13 3:15 5:7,9,11 6:13 6:15 11:12 14:7 16:10 18:5 21:22 21:23 22:11 27:18 29:19 32:23 39:10 39:20,22,25 40:1 40:8,10,11,13,14 40:15,16,19,21 41:2,4,13,14,16 41:18,21,24 42:3 42:3,6,8,10,14,24 43:5,17 44:3,10 44:17,19,23 45:4 45:22 46:1,3,4,7,9 46:23 47:16 49:23 49:24 50:24 51:7 52:21,22 55:8,18 55:19 56:10 60:16 60:16,21 61:6,14 61:21 62:1 63:13 63:15 64:20 65:13 67:21,21 72:8 73:11</p>	<p>services 3:12,14 5:8 10:22 22:9 36:11 38:24 39:16 40:2 42:25 43:2,18 46:6 60:20 service-oriented 60:25 serving 8:21 10:12 set 19:24 58:11 60:4 settlement 69:4 settling 16:18 seven 40:10 41:9 sewage 68:18 sewer 3:12 7:2,4,11 9:11,15 10:3,10 11:1,19 15:20 16:10 18:1,4 19:5 28:10,14,18 29:17 36:14 45:23 46:11 49:24 69:1,10 share 66:21 shareholder 70:17 short 24:13 shortly 13:7 show 63:3 showed 33:12,21 showing 11:19 19:24 shown 7:6 10:6 11:2 14:13 19:2,3 20:22 38:21 shows 15:3 17:6 19:9 37:24 38:11 38:12 48:18 shut 23:5 side 46:9,10,11 69:11 significant 9:5 28:6 similar 10:7 31:5 46:18 61:11 simply 37:3 sincere 70:11 sincerely 11:24 69:16 single 22:5 39:25</p>	<p>46:17 sir 8:6 12:4 13:12 21:14,15 22:5 32:4 36:4 39:11 site 41:12 42:21 73:6 situation 47:5 situations 33:25 six 15:12 16:1 48:25 53:11 size 14:17,20 15:10 sizes 16:8 sludge 16:4 24:25 30:19 sludge-type 16:12 17:4 small 14:12,17 smell 47:25 49:3 56:20 solid 44:22 solids 16:19 somebody 25:11 37:5 59:21 63:13 67:20 69:3,5 somewhat 31:5 sorry 40:25 52:11 sort 47:6 sound 11:6 Sounds 30:6 source 58:9 sources 15:1 South 1:1,10,20 2:10,15 3:12,14 5:8,11,19,21,23 6:1,11,24 7:5,12 7:25 8:13,13,24 9:1,4 10:9,9,14,22 11:2,20,22 12:3,5 12:6 13:18,20,22 14:1 17:10,24 22:1,9 36:11,13 36:14 37:1,21 38:6,9,12,16,18 38:23 39:4,5,24 40:2,5,7,13 43:13 43:15 45:10,20</p>
---	---	---	---	---

46:6 55:2,5,7 60:4 60:20,25 61:8,14 61:22 62:1 67:2 72:7 75:3,12,17 southeastern 8:15 Southland 3:16 5:9 40:3 Spartanburg 9:13 speak 7:22 specialized 69:24 specific 19:20 57:14 58:8 59:23 specifically 32:23 40:16 specify 12:15 spend 67:20,22,24 69:22 70:8,13,16 spending 68:8 69:9 69:15 spent 12:5,5 38:22 64:15 stable 10:5 staff 2:12,13 4:1,13 4:14 9:9 13:10 40:15 42:23 43:5 43:9,15,19,22 44:18 47:1,16 49:16 52:21 55:8 55:19 72:18 stage 38:4 stamped 71:10 stand 12:21 57:23 standard 15:8,21 standards 11:13 30:7 standpoint 37:5 61:23 start 68:23 started 64:8 67:2 starts 19:1 state 1:1 5:24 9:22 10:14 11:16,20 14:3 26:2,11 27:25 36:25 37:7 38:9,23 43:12 44:25 61:14 64:5	64:7,9,9,11,15,17 64:22,25 65:3 66:9,12,23 68:6 69:17 70:2 75:3 75:17 stated 8:10 49:9 75:5 statement 71:12 statements 59:14 59:16 states 7:11 8:15,24 26:8 46:14 67:1 69:18 station 18:15,21,22 18:25 stations 18:9,9,12 statistics 47:12 48:12 statutes 73:3 stay 51:4 stem 46:9 stenographically 75:6 step 37:5 64:18 70:6 steps 17:3 34:1 Steve 6:7 21:12 36:7 37:13 64:12 65:8 stipulation 71:8,10 74:1 stop 6:18 storage 14:19 15:16 storm 34:24 Street 2:10 strive 44:24 stuff 25:2 30:22 subdivision 23:5 subdivisions 18:13 submittal 17:19 subsequent 26:14 subsidiaries 3:9,11 5:15,18 6:11,14 7:3,10 13:18 37:21 38:8,9,22 39:3,6,17	substantiate 25:16 Suburban 9:11,15 9:16,21,25 11:6 success 31:19,23 successfully 52:9 sudden 62:19 69:5 69:6 suggestions 45:3 summaries 50:20 50:23 55:13,14 summary 32:11,15 39:1 52:15 57:7 62:10 Sumter 17:1 supervise 13:21 supplied 14:4,25 15:16 supply 14:3,9 16:9 support 65:14 69:23 supported 43:16 sure 3:2 13:5 21:17 21:19 22:21 32:21 35:20 46:21 47:13 53:3 72:23 surely 34:22 surface 35:1 surrounding 35:19 system 5:22 6:24 7:24 15:23,24 16:4 17:2,3,4,10 19:16 21:2 23:6 23:10,18 24:25 28:23 29:1,6 30:19 31:5 35:9 41:17,21 46:2,15 46:16,17,18,19 48:24 49:3 56:8 60:4,13 61:3,3,5 69:21 systematic 10:16 systems 6:21 9:2,4 9:6,11,14,18,20 9:21,25 10:8,11 10:21 11:10,15 12:6 13:21,25	14:2,5,9,25 15:1 15:15,20,22 18:1 18:4,4 19:5 21:5 27:18,18 29:3 33:9 36:14,15,23 38:4 39:24 40:7 52:17 54:8,9 57:4 60:24 67:4,5 69:20 system-wise 60:13 <hr/> T <hr/> T 1:15 75:2,16 table 27:13 tag 42:22 take 3:18 9:20 11:10 17:16 19:16 29:21 30:3 41:7 47:21 taken 8:23 10:18 14:20 23:15 26:23 26:25 27:10 34:2 52:16 64:16 75:5 takes 12:21 talented 70:4 talk 12:21 13:16 26:1 32:22 37:19 39:9 talked 21:16 69:2 talking 25:6 57:24 57:25 tank 14:18 16:18 tanks 12:20 15:19 16:16 tap 9:15 41:20 46:2 taps 42:15 taste 47:25 48:8,16 49:3,12 tax 38:18,19 taxes 38:19 39:2 technology 65:15 Tega 3:15 5:8 40:3 telephone 41:10 televised 29:22 tell 32:9 47:9 48:25 49:3 53:8,11	56:14 57:17,20 60:10 63:9 66:10 69:16 71:7,19 telling 32:15,19 53:21 54:4 ten 65:21 tending 26:7 term 64:21 terms 60:4,6,7,11 60:23 61:8,8,10 61:19,21 62:24 64:23 65:2,15 66:13 68:2,10 69:9,22,22,23 70:2,7 tertiary 17:2 19:16 test 47:20 testify 55:20,21 testifying 50:18 55:18 57:25 testimony 32:7 55:23 56:1 58:12 73:16 testing 20:10 27:6 27:15,23 tests 43:9 thank 3:6 4:15 8:5 13:12,12,13 25:21 34:10 36:4,5 39:11,12 45:6,14 47:8 53:6 54:14 54:22 60:1 62:4,6 62:7 72:10,11 74:8,9,12 thereof 75:10 thing 4:12 22:8 28:7 35:15 36:8 46:2 47:20 48:17 50:2 51:7 62:15 62:21,23 63:7,17 64:4 65:17 69:2 69:24 73:25 74:4 things 20:15 22:21 24:24 28:22 32:14 66:6,9,25 69:8 think 4:6 21:7 22:8
--	---	---	--	---

23:13 25:10 27:2 28:10 30:19 31:18 31:22 32:10,18 33:3,14,15,23 34:2,6,25 35:15 36:16,20 40:23 49:12 50:3 51:13 52:6,9 53:13 56:7 56:9,12 57:3 58:15 59:25 61:5 61:11,13,15 63:17 65:4 72:3 74:1 third-party 14:4 thought 62:15 thousand 15:14 25:9 three 30:1 42:17 47:21 three-quarter 15:9 throw 31:10 thumb 15:10 tick 70:14 tide 34:15,18,20 tie 35:24 time 3:1 4:4 6:16 7:1,20 8:3,19,21 10:2,11 11:24 19:18,18 24:9,20 26:14 28:9 29:13 31:12,12 37:7 40:19 44:19 45:6 47:3,10 48:19 49:15,15 50:21 53:8 58:12 63:8 63:11 66:16 69:4 69:8,11 72:1 75:5 75:6,8 times 56:11 63:22 title 59:17 today 3:17 4:14,19 5:13,16 8:20 11:21,25 13:16 17:10 26:3 32:3 37:15 39:21 45:6 65:4 66:21 70:12 72:9	told 32:7 56:9 top 19:13,25 31:6,8 total 7:14 38:13,17 39:1 totaled 38:20 39:6 touched 36:10,17 track 26:24 45:16 47:10 48:8,14,17 49:14 53:8 62:13 64:23 tracking 62:16 tract 27:24 trained 40:14,17 training 43:21 transaction 37:4,10 transcribed 75:7 transcript 75:6 transcripts 50:15 55:10,12 73:14 transition 64:6 translation 56:7 transport 18:6 transportation 18:3 treat 15:20 treated 16:22,22 19:7 treatment 14:6,7 15:23 16:5,8,11 16:14 17:1,2,9,10 17:12,14 18:2,2 19:6,10,16,23 20:4,14,21 24:11 24:17 31:8,20 36:2 42:25 43:2 68:14,15,19 tree 69:12 tried 59:4 trouble 72:20 truck 62:18 true 30:8 54:8 75:7 truly 37:10 try 28:11 58:11,12 63:9 65:14 71:25 trying 30:7 51:14 65:7,18 66:5,10	68:7 70:11 Tuesday 1:11 turn 7:23 42:14 46:1 turned 41:21 TV 29:22 30:4 two 9:8 15:21 20:25 20:25 33:6,8,9,23 56:23 type 6:4 15:21,24 16:5,6 17:12 23:8 23:12,20 24:25 28:20,21,25 29:3 31:19 33:16 46:2 47:15,20 48:17 49:17,18 50:2 52:1,18 typed 75:7 types 12:2 13:25 16:1,11 24:24 28:22 47:18 49:25 typical 14:23 15:3 15:8 18:15,22 typically 14:10 15:2 19:8 42:16	18:10 19:15,21 20:12 28:10 30:7 upgraded 12:6 31:1 31:21 upgrades 6:5 10:23 12:11,16,18 19:17 20:6,15 23:16 24:5,6,9,13,21,21 uphill 18:10 upstate 9:12 upstream 25:13 upwards 31:17 urging 10:20 use 44:1 56:24 59:24 useful 19:19 user 68:4 USSC 22:22 27:17 usually 31:14 utilities 3:9,9,12,14 3:16,23,24 5:2,6,8 5:9,10,14,18 7:14 8:12 9:11,17,21 10:9,11,13,18,21 11:7,7 22:9 26:23 27:2,18 36:11,13 37:17,20 38:6,21 39:16 40:2,2,3 46:6 60:18,19 67:19 70:7,7 utility 3:13 5:7 6:21 7:16 9:24 10:2 11:22 13:25 23:11 26:1,7 36:15,23 utilize 15:21,23 16:3 utilized 16:13 17:9 utilizes 16:17	variables 28:20 varies 46:15 variety 38:15 various 6:4 9:12 11:19 13:2,25 46:25 61:4 vary 46:18 vehicles 38:25 vendors 43:3 versus 52:5 67:1 vice 5:21 8:11 virtually 20:20 virtue 6:3 9:6 voice 44:11
W				
want 22:14,15 35:24 49:8 53:7 56:6,24 58:15 64:1,24,25 65:1,6 65:12,18,19 66:19 70:13,15,17 71:17 71:22 wanted 21:25 24:3 25:25 26:19,19,22 28:8 36:8 59:8 60:3 64:1,18 66:18 wants 70:17 warehouse 14:23 wasn't 25:17 63:23 wastewater 5:10 7:16 11:21 14:5,6 15:21 16:15,15,17 16:18,25 17:10 18:2,6,10,24,25 19:7,10 20:4,14 20:21 35:8,12 42:25 43:2 70:3 watch 7:6 water 2:8 3:12,13 3:15 5:7,9,10 7:1 7:4,11,15 9:11 10:3,9,14,25 11:1 11:19,21 14:2,3,9 14:25 15:3,8,9,12				
U				
UI 5:3 6:19 7:10 8:18 9:20,24 13:17,23 underground 18:5 understand 26:1,6 36:19 58:21 59:9 59:25 understanding 35:22 underway 17:7 33:12 unforced 63:5 uniform 60:6,8 United 3:13 5:7 9:24 10:2 26:8 40:2 46:5 70:7 untreated 18:6,23 update 42:1 upgrade 9:23 16:25				
V				
vacuum 21:4 valuable 45:6 64:20 65:10 valve 41:22 valves 22:25 valving 23:17				

15:15 16:16 19:13 22:18,25 23:15,21 24:12 26:3 27:4,6 27:8,16,18 35:1,1 35:8,13 36:14,16 36:17,22 37:3 40:1 42:25 43:1 45:22,23 46:4 48:16 49:24 56:10 62:19 65:22 69:6 70:3 Watergate 33:9,15 33:21 waters 19:8 way 39:4 57:1 58:20 69:3,4,7 ways 44:2 web 41:12 73:6 week 41:9 wells 12:19 14:3,10 14:12 well-known 6:2 went 25:15 53:11 53:12 weren't 27:3 West 13:23 wet 18:19,23 we'll 8:4 13:7 28:24 65:2 70:13 73:18 74:11 we're 27:18 43:23 44:1 49:18 53:14 54:5,25 56:19 63:10,10,18 65:4 65:7,17 66:4,5,10 66:15 68:6,7,8 69:14 70:8,9,12 70:16 we've 10:23,24 15:12 24:8,9,10 28:2,22,24 31:4,7 31:18,20,23 44:3 44:8 48:3 64:7,8 64:10,12 65:8,12 67:13 68:3 70:4 70:12,15 73:2	white 21:3 willing 9:19 13:7 66:21 70:6,8,9 willingness 11:8 45:4 Willoughby 2:9 3:8 witness 6:9 57:10 57:23 72:15 75:11 witnesses 59:13 73:10 wonder 32:9 wondered 26:10 wondering 61:23 word 56:2 59:24 words 33:11 work 17:7,22 31:16 41:6 44:14 52:15 65:6,18 70:13 worked 67:8 working 29:9 32:1 35:16 40:6 51:18 67:11 worried 25:13 worse 59:1 wouldn't 28:2 35:17,18 65:25 Wright 2:4 12:24 30:9,10,12,18 51:1,2,13,22,24 52:5,12 53:1,6 56:16 68:13 writing 32:19 wrong 33:15 34:13 71:13 wrote 60:14 www.compuscri... 1:21	years 8:17 13:24 16:3 28:4,12,13 29:5 30:21 37:19 38:1,6 39:17 64:10,23 65:10,21 67:2,5,7,12 York 20:5 Younginer 31:11 32:1 y'all 3:5 4:18 31:1 37:9 59:12 72:4 72:10,21 73:3 y'all's 48:7	46:4 56:9 60:13 62:20 63:2,2 1022 2:10 11 7:13 15:3 111 14:2 11263 2:15 12 15:18 12,000 43:1 12-month 48:19 13 15:24 139 39:24 14 16:5 15 17:6 39:17 16 18:14 43:2 177 11 19:2 175 3:20 73:21 18 19:9 19 19:23 1965 6:21 1972 6:25 9:1 1974 9:9 1985 9:25 1987 5:4 1996 5:5	3 3 7:12 3:30 1:11 30 40:6 67:12 300,000 7:11 16:8 64:14 32 8:17 33 38:5 34,000 7:4 39:25 64:13 35 64:10,23 67:2,5 67:7 36 14:5
	Z	zone 14:11		4 4 7:17 44 13:21 450 64:11
	\$	\$1 17:11 \$1.5 38:20 \$1.9 38:14 \$10 17:14 \$100,000 14:21 18:20 19:4 \$12 39:7 \$12.6 38:22 \$16 39:4 \$25,000 21:7 \$360,000 38:17 \$450,000 10:13 13:2,4 27:3 \$50,000 21:8 \$67 37:25 64:13 \$70,000 14:21 \$8 12:5,10,15 \$9 37:25 38:2		5 5 9:3 5:27 1:11 50 31:18 50,000 31:17 500 35:24 52 38:11 40:5,7 64:11
	1	1 7:6 75:5 1st 75:12 1,000 15:5,14 16:11 34:14 1-888-988-0086 1:21 10 14:23 28:18,25 100 14:10 45:24	2 2,200 7:1 10:3 20 7:4 20:11 28:18 29:4 2001 10:7 2002 10:21 37:24 2005 38:18 2006 1:11 75:12 2015 75:18 21 20:23 22 16:6 37:22 75:18 23 38:11 24 38:21 41:8 25 38:25 67:7,12 250,000 16:9 267,000 43:12 27 13:24 65:10 28 1:11 14:4,5 29202 1:20 2:10 29211 2:15	6 6 10:6 650 16:10
	Y		7 7 11:3 7,200 10:12 7,300 11:1 70 49:23 56:12 7172 1:19 73,000 70:25 75,000 31:17	
			8 8 11:18 13:24 803-988-0086 1:20 83 14:3	

<hr/> <p>9</p> <hr/>				
<p>9 14:13 90 46:7 60:18 97 40:4</p>				