



PublicService Commission <psc@utah.gov>

Pine Valley Water

1 message

Pennee Kirchhausen <penneek@gmail.com>
To: psc@utah.gov

Sun, Oct 11, 2026 at 7:52 AM

To: Utah Public Service Commission
Re: Docket No. 25-2179-01 — Pine Valley Irrigation Company Rate Increase
Written Public 12123456789939×18 Comment for October 7, 2026 Hearing
Dear Commissioners,

I am a Pine Valley property owner asking the Commission to reject or substantially reduce the proposed permanent rate and fee increases unless Pine Valley first provides complete, transparent documentation establishing that these extraordinary increases are actually necessary.

The proposed increases are enormous:

Base monthly charge: \$20.75 → \$49.50 — a 139% increase
First-time service connection: \$900 → \$5,000 — a 456% increase
Highest water-use tier: \$3 → \$24 per 1,000 gallons — a 700% increase
Standby fee: \$17.75 → \$22.50 — a 27% increase
Ownership-change fee: \$25 → \$50 — a 100% increase
Unwarranted service call: \$50 → \$100 — a 100% increase
New \$150 shut-off fee, \$150 lien fee, and \$1,000 theft-of-service charge.
These are not modest adjustments. They represent a substantial new financial burden on a very small community.

The missing tariff and missing reserve transparency are particularly concerning

Pine Valley's own March 2026 filing states that its effective tariff could not be located, that the Division of Public Utilities did not possess a copy, and that the relevant prior PSC dockets did not contain the tariff. Pine Valley is therefore asking the Commission to approve a new Tariff No. 3 when the prior effective tariff is apparently not available in the public record.

That should be resolved before a permanent rate structure is approved.

Even more importantly, Pine Valley has historically been required to maintain a Capital Reserve Account. The prior tariff required deposits into that restricted account and annual accounting of deposits and withdrawals. Yet customers have not been given a clear, readily accessible accounting showing the current balance, cumulative deposits, withdrawals, expenditures, and remaining restricted funds.

This is especially important because Pine Valley itself notified the Commission in 2025 that it intended to access its Capital Reserve Account to help fund a new culinary well and infrastructure improvements.

Before asking homeowners to pay dramatically higher rates to build capital reserves, the Commission should first establish what capital reserves already exist and how those funds have been used.

I respectfully ask the Commission to require Pine Valley Irrigation Company to provide, at minimum:

The complete current balance of its Capital Reserve Account.
Annual reserve-account statements and reconciliations since the last rate case.
A complete accounting of deposits into and withdrawals from the reserve.
Identification and documentation of every capital expenditure paid from the reserve.
The amount of reserve funds remaining available for the projects cited as justification for this rate increase.
The prior effective tariff, or a clear explanation of why it cannot be produced.
A project-by-project explanation of the costs being recovered through the proposed new rates and fees.
The timing could not be worse for Pine Valley homeowners

Pine Valley property owners are already dealing with an extraordinary loss from the 2025 Forsyth Fire.

The fire destroyed homes, burned thousands of acres of forest, damaged the Pine Valley Recreation Area, and permanently altered the landscape surrounding our properties. Much of the mature forest and natural terrain that made Pine Valley valuable and enjoyable cannot realistically be replaced within the lifetime of current residents.

The consequences will continue for years through diminished recreational access and enjoyment, altered views, erosion, runoff, flooding and other post-fire risks.

Our property values have already been negatively affected by these changes. Homeowners are therefore being asked to absorb a major additional financial burden at the same time that the underlying value and enjoyment of our properties have already been diminished through no fault of our own.

A \$49.50 monthly base charge and \$5,000 connection fee may look different on a utility spreadsheet than they do to an individual homeowner trying to maintain or eventually sell a property in a community already recovering from a catastrophic wildfire.

Please require proof before making these increases permanent

I recognize that Pine Valley has not received a general rate increase since 2010 and that infrastructure requires investment. I am not asking the Commission to ignore legitimate costs.

I am asking for something much simpler: transparency and proof.

The Commission should not approve permanent rates of this magnitude until customers can see what happened to the capital reserves that were previously established, what remains today, what has already been collected through the interim rates, and exactly what additional revenue is required.

The Commission's April interim-rate order itself recognized that the Division's review at that stage was preliminary and that a more comprehensive review would occur during the general rate case.

That comprehensive review is now the opportunity to demand the documentation customers need.

Please do not make Pine Valley homeowners pay substantially more until Pine Valley Irrigation Company has demonstrated, with transparent and verifiable financial records, that these increases are necessary, reasonable, and not duplicative of existing reserve funds or revenue already being collected.

Pine Valley residents have already lost enough.

10/14/26, 12:30 PM

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Respectfully,

Holger and Pamela Kirchhausen
Pine Valley, Utah Property Owner
58 South Bristol Cone Road