

Decision No. 42102

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application
of M. F. PHILLIPS and ARA PHILLIPS
for a certificate of Public
Convenience and Necessity to
Operate a Water Public Utility.

Application No. 29484

ORIGINAL

N. F. Bradley, for applicants.

O P I N I O N

In this proceeding, M. F. Phillips and Ara Phillips, his wife, ask the Commission for a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing them to supply water for domestic, commercial, and irrigation purposes in Tract No. 114, which is a portion of Block C, of Earlimart Fruit and Alfalfa Colony No. 3 and is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the unincorporated town of Earlimart in Tulare County. A schedule of flat rates and meter rates was proposed in the application.

A public hearing in this matter was held before Examiner Ross at Earlimart.

The service area consists of a subdivision totaling 32 lots formerly owned by applicants. The original property is more particularly described as follows:

A portion of Block C of Earlimart Fruit and Alfalfa Colony No. 3 situate in the Northeast quarter of Section Thirty-three (33) in Township Twenty-three (23) South, Range Twenty-five (25) East, M.D.B. & M., comprising approximately nine acres.

Twenty consumers receive water service from the applicants, said service being rendered to 15 residences, one restaurant and one service station. The service station has been served at a flat rate of \$100 per year, but no charges have yet been made for service to any other consumers.

The source of water is a drilled well, 200 feet deep, cased with ten-inch O. D. pipe, and a test recently conducted indicates that it will deliver an adequate supply to meet present demands. Water from this well is delivered into a 2,000-gallon elevated storage tank on a 20-foot tower by means of a deep-well turbine pump driven by a ten-horsepower electric motor and is then distributed by gravity through 1,200 feet of two-inch mains. Applicants estimate that an additional 540 feet of pipe line will be required to complete the distribution system.

Accurate costs records relating to capital installations were not kept by the applicants, but from testimony presented at the hearing by Mr. Phillips, it appears that the historical cost of fixed capital installed to date is approximately \$3,550.

There are two water systems in the vicinity of the proposed service area. One, the Wilson Water System, is a public utility but is too distant to give service; and as to the other, the Earlimart Water District, a mutual company, the Commission's engineer testified that he had been informed by their manager that the District does not desire or feel able to extend service to this new development.

The basic flat rates proposed in this application provide for a charge of \$3 per month for a single family dwelling, including the irrigation of 750 square feet of garden and \$2 per month for each additional family residing in two- or three-family dwellings located on the same lot and served through a single service. The application was amended at the hearing to include a flat rate of \$1 per month each for trailers and tents. The proposed meter rates provide for a monthly minimum charge of \$1.40 for a 5/8-inch meter with an allowance of 700 cubic feet. Use in excess of the minimum is reduced through two blocks to \$0.10 per 100 cubic feet for all use over 4,000 cubic feet.

Ed F. Catey, one of the Commission's engineers, presented the results of an investigation of the system made in connection with this application. He testified that the service now being rendered was inadequate due to the lack of sufficient water pressure from the elevated tank, stating that the maximum static pressure presently available is less than nine pounds per square inch, whereas 40 or 60 pounds per square inch is normally considered desirable in such a system. He therefore recommended the installation of an automatically controlled "pressure system" to be used in conjunction with the present pump and elevated tank in order to provide adequate service. This installation was estimated to cost approximately \$650, but Mr. Phillips indicated that he would prefer to abandon the old pump and tank and install a new deep-well pump and pressure tank, even though the expenditure at this time would be greater.

Mr. Catey also suggested that if the use of the present elevated tank be continued, proper protection from birds and insects should be provided and recommended that the two 2-inch mains on State Street should be cross-connected to eliminate the present two dead ends. He also pointed out that, although the present two-inch mains will probably be adequate for a while, eventually the main extending from the tank lot to State Street will have to be replaced with a larger pipe or augmented by an additional main in order to serve adequately the entire tract.

Mr. Phillips testified that he was willing and financially able to make necessary additions and improvements to the system, but it is apparent from the testimony that the applicants cannot render adequate water service with the existing facilities. Therefore, in order to render minimum reasonably adequate service, they should either install an additional pump and pressure tank at a cost of approximately \$650, as recommended by the Commission's engineer, or replace the present deep-well pump with one capable of giving higher pressures and pumping directly into a pressure tank, as suggested by the applicants. The recommendation for larger mains and connecting dead-ends also should ultimately be followed.

In view of the stated willingness of the applicants to make any necessary improvements, this Commission will not deny the application outright, but will reconsider the issuance of a certificate upon the filing of a supplemental application.

therefor. Such application should show that applicant has installed the additional pump and pressure tank previously described or substitute plant to accomplish the same purpose. If these facilities were presently installed, the Commission would now be favorable to the granting of a certificate.

O R D E R

Good cause appearing,

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that the application as above entitled be and it is hereby denied without prejudice until such time as a supplemental application is filed as indicated in the preceding Opinion.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 5th day of October, 1948.

R. E. Anderson
Wesley Powell
Harold F. Felt
Samuel P. Jones

Commissioners