

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 49814

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Richard H. Duncan, et al.,
 Complainants,
 vs.
 Donaghy Water Company, et al.,
 Defendants.

Case No. 5498

Lounibos & Lounibos, by LeRoy J. Lounibos,
 for complainants.
Susie Donaghy, in propria persona.
John D. Reader and John E. Johnson, of the
 Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Statement of the Case

Twenty-nine individuals using water supplied by Donaghy Water Company, near Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, representing 19 services on the system, on October 7, 1953 filed a complaint which alleges, in substance, that the water is unfit for household use, contains sediment and is furnished at inadequate pressures and in limited amounts. An order is sought correcting those conditions.

The answer admits occasional sedimentation and alleges that certain improvements have been made which should have corrected the faults described in the complaint.

Public Hearing

The case was submitted at a public hearing held January 21, 1954 at Glen Ellen before Examiner Gregory.

Description of System

Susan M. Donaghy, since the death of her husband about two years ago, has supplied water for domestic and other uses to some

80 consumers in the Donaghy Tract located one mile southeast of Glen Ellen.

Water is presently obtained from a 12-inch well 245 feet deep. This water is pumped into the distribution system through a 5,800-gallon pressure tank. A 12-inch well 620 feet deep can be used to pump water either directly into the distribution system through a 350-gallon pressure tank or into a 60,000-gallon concrete reservoir. The 5,800-gallon pressure tank is useful in maintaining pressure when either well is operating. The distribution system consists of about 3,000 feet of 4-inch, 3,000 feet of 2-inch and 1,800 feet of 1-inch mains. No filtration or purification facilities are presently installed. Sediment settles in the storage tank which requires periodic cleaning. The 620-foot well, though used occasionally to supplement the supply from the 245-foot well, has not proved satisfactory under existing methods of operation. Its use was discontinued in October 1953. The 245-foot well, as now operated, does not produce enough water to supply the system during periods of peak demand.

Consumers' complaints with regard to dirty water, shortages and low pressures during the summer of 1953 were fully substantiated on the record. The system in its present state, although possessed of adequate quantities of potable water, is not laid out or operated so as to make most effective use of the available supply. Excessive rates of pumping on both wells, the present piping arrangements between sources of supply and the distribution mains and local peculiarities in currently used water bearing strata have combined to produce some, if not all, of the conditions complained of by residents of the tract. Also, reluctance of the present operator to keep adequate records, controversial practices with respect to reading meters and her lack of knowledge of water system operations in

general have in one way or another led to occasional misunderstandings between the operator and her customers.

Conclusions

We find from the record, including a study by staff engineers of the Commission's hydraulic section,^{1/} that existing facilities and methods of operation of Susan M. Donaghy, doing business as Donaghy Water Company, are inadequate and insufficient for proper service to consumers and that the recommendations made by the Commission's engineers in Chapter 3 of their report (Exhibit 2), which are hereby found to be reasonable, if carried out will result in improved operating conditions and service.

These recommendations, in general, call for connection of the 245-foot well to the 60,000-gallon storage tank, as shown in a chart accompanying the text of the recommendations (Chart 3-A of Exhibit 2), which will require installation of about 400 feet of 3-inch diameter pipe; equipping the 620-foot well with a 2 hp motor and pump and pumping both wells at rates considerably less than their tested capacities; provision for water level indicating devices in both wells to help prevent excessive "drawdown" and consequent breaking of suction; draining and cleaning of both the 5,800-gallon and the 60,000-gallon tanks occasionally during periods of low water use to remove sediment. The improvements specified above are estimated to cost approximately \$1,500. The order herein will direct Mrs. Donaghy to carry out the foregoing recommendations and also to install and maintain adequate records and accounting procedures.

The pipeline and pump changes recommended by the staff would all be required for the operation of filters should they become

^{1/} Exhibit 2, especially Chapter 3, Conclusions and Recommendations.

necessary. The testimony in this proceeding indicates, however, that filters would be expensive to install and operate. It also appears that it is now up to the owner to operate this system in the manner outlined if she wishes to avoid the necessity of installing filters.

O R D E R

Public hearing having been held herein, the matter having been submitted for decision, the Commission now being fully advised and basing its order upon the findings and conclusions contained in the foregoing opinion,

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That Susan M. Donaghy, doing business as Donaghy Water Company, shall, within ninety days from the effective date of this order:

- a. Connect the 245-foot well to the 60,000-gallon storage tank by installing approximately 400 feet of not less than 3-inch diameter pipe as indicated on the diagram, Chart 3-A, in Exhibit No. 2 herein.
- b. Equip the 620-foot well with a motor and pump of approximately 2 hp capacity.
- c. Equip both the 245-foot well and the 620-foot well with suitable water level indicating devices which will indicate at all times the level of the water in said wells.

2. That Susan M. Donaghy shall thereafter operate said water system in accordance with the recommendations and procedures set forth in detail in Paragraph 2 of Chapter 3 of Exhibit 2 herein.

3. That Susan M. Donaghy shall file with the Commission monthly written reports, commencing not later than May 1, 1954, indicating in detail the progress of the installations referred to in subparagraphs 1a, 1b and 1c, above, including a statement of the costs of the various items installed.

4. That said Susan M. Donaghy, within thirty days after the effective date of this order and only after conferring with representatives of the Commission's Division of Utilities Finance and Accounts, shall install and thereafter maintain such bookkeeping, billing and accounting records and procedures as may be appropriate for operation and regulation of a water utility such as the one involved herein.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 23rd day of March, 1954.

R. E. Anderson
 President

Justin F. Cresswell

Frederick H. Patten

W. E. Atchill

Deane Duquains
 Commissioners