

**ORIGINAL**

Decision No. 70200

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Application  
of JULIO J. ROVAI and LOUIS J.  
ROVAI, doing business as RIO DELL  
WATER SYSTEM under Section 454 of  
the Public Utilities Code for  
authority to increase their water  
rates.

Application No. 47820  
(Filed August 18, 1965)

INTERIM OPINION AND ORDER

The public utility known as Rio Dell Water System is a partnership of Julio J. and Louis J. Rovai. The utility serves about 930 customers in and near the incorporated town of Rio Dell, Humboldt County.

Applicants' existing rates for water service became effective on May 1, 1964. Applicants now seek authority to increase these rates by approximately 25 percent.

The Commission's staff made a field investigation of applicants' operations during September and October 1965 and prepared a written report thereon, dated December 6, 1965, which report is hereby received in this proceeding as Exhibit No. 1.

In late December 1964 severe winter storms with heavy rainfall caused catastrophic floods in many areas of Humboldt County, including the area served by applicants. Rio Dell became isolated as the result of washed out bridges and applicants were unable to supply adequate amounts of water to their customers. Their pumps were inundated by the flood and covered with logs and other debris left in its wake. Their primary supply main, from the north, was washed away with the highway bridge to which it was attached. The only water supply remaining was that from springs, later augmented

by temporary pumping from a stream and still later augmented by a temporary tie-in with the supply of the Pacific Lumber Company in Scotia, to the south, which company supplied applicants with free water through April 1965. (In the months May through August, applicants reciprocated with an accommodation service to Scotia so that the lumber company could make repairs to its own system.) It was not until September 1965 that the water situation in Rio Dell approached near-normal conditions.

According to the staff report, applicant's plant losses, occasioned by the flood, totalled \$29,628 of non-contributed plant items and \$8,420 of contributed plant including plant contributed by the Eel River Sawmill Company, all of these items having been destroyed or abandoned. The rebuilding of the system required plant additions which, up to August 31, 1965, required expenditures totalling approximately \$43,000 financed through loans from Crocker Citizens National Bank and from the Small Business Administration.

The extraordinary circumstances resulting from the flood have occasioned extraordinary plant and expense expenditures. The final reckoning, including a determination of a proper rate base and a reasonable rate of return thereon, has yet to be reached. It is apparent, however, that applicants are in need of and entitled to some relief in the form of increased revenues, even if only on a temporary basis.

In view of the showings before the Commission at the present time the Commission finds that it is fair and reasonable to authorize rates which will produce an increase of approximately \$6,600 (on an annual basis) as an emergency relief measure pending public hearing and the receipt of further evidence in this matter. The increased

rates hereinafter authorized are fully justified by the record thus far made in this proceeding and present rates, insofar as they differ therefrom are for the future unjust and unreasonable.

IT IS ORDERED as follows:

1. Applicants Julio J. and Louis J. Rovai are authorized to file with the Commission, after the effective date of this order and in conformity with the provisions of General Order No. 96-A, the revised schedules of rates set forth in Appendix A attached to this order and on not less than one day's notice to the public and to this Commission to make said revised schedules of rates effective for water service rendered on and after January 15, 1966.

2. Public hearing shall be held, for the receipt of further evidence in this matter, before Examiner Emerson in Rio Dell, California, at such time and place as may hereafter be set.

The effective date of this order shall be the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 11th day of JANUARY, 1966.

Frederick B. Hallock  
President

George T. Hoover  
Commissioners

William W. Bennett  
Commissioners

APPENDIX A  
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Schedule No. 1

GENERAL METERED SERVICE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to all metered water service.

TERRITORY

Rio Dell and vicinity, Humboldt County.

RATES

		<u>Per Meter</u> <u>Per Month</u>	
Quantity Rates:			
First	500 cu.ft. or less .....	\$ 3.50	(I)
Next	500 cu.ft., per 100 cu.ft. ...	.56	
Next	1,000 cu.ft., per 100 cu.ft. ...	.45	
Over	2,000 cu.ft., per 100 cu.ft. ...	.33	
Minimum Charge:			
For	5/8 x 3/4-inch meter .....	\$ 3.50	(I)
For	3/4-inch meter .....	5.00	
For	1-inch meter .....	7.75	
For	1 1/2-inch meter .....	13.50	
For	2-inch meter .....	20.00	
For	3-inch meter .....	35.00	

The Minimum Charge will entitle the customer to the quantity of water which that minimum charge will purchase at the Quantity Rates.

Schedule No. 4

(N)

PRIVATE FIRE HYDRANT SERVICE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to all fire hydrant service furnished to privately owned fire hydrants.

TERRITORY

Rio Dell and vicinity, Humboldt County.

RATE

Per Month

For each hydrant ..... \$3.50

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. For water delivered for other than fire protection purposes, charges shall be made at the quantity rates under Schedule No. 1, General Metered Service.
2. Installation or relocation of any hydrant shall be at the expense of the party requesting same.
3. Privately owned fire hydrants shall be attached to the utility's distribution mains upon receipt of proper authorization from the utility.
4. Service hereunder is for private fire hydrants to which no other connections are allowed, are installed according to specifications of the owner, and are maintained to the satisfaction of the utility. The utility may install the standard detector type meter approved by the Board of Fire Underwriters for protection against theft, leakage or waste of water, and the cost will be paid by the applicant. Such payment shall not be subject to refund.
5. The utility will supply only such water at such pressure as may be available from time to time as a result of its normal operation of the system.

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