

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 71883

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

JIMMY BEVEL, EUGENE CARLILE, ALVIS E. CALLICK, DAVE JUSTICE, FRANCIS R. BRUBAKER, TONY MOHAR, ELBERT LOWRY and W. D. LEDBETTER,

Complainants,

vs.

MARY J. STERKIN and ALBERT STERKIN and MELVIN N. LEEN and CLOEY V. LEEN, owners of a water system on the Oberlin Road, Siskiyou County, California, known as the Campbell Water System,

Defendants.

Case No. 8509
(Filed August 22, 1966)

Application of ALBERT STERKIN and MARY JANE STERKIN, his wife, to purchase, and application of MELVIN N. LEEN and CLOEY V. LEEN to sell, a water system on Oberlin Road, Siskiyou County, California.

Application No. 47864
(Reopened August 30, 1966)

Jane Skanderup, for complainants in Case No. 8509.

Harry A. Hammond, for defendants in Case No. 8509, and applicants in Application No. 47864.

W. B. Stradley, for the Commission staff.

SECOND INTERIM OPINION

Interim Decision No. 71445, dated October 18, 1966, required defendants Sterkin to make certain tests on their wells and pumps and to file in this proceeding a written report showing the results of those tests. The report has been received and, together with the evidence adduced at the hearing in Yreka on September 15 and 16, 1966, forms the basis for this second interim opinion.

System Deficiencies

As discussed in Decision No. 71445, defendants' water system has had deficiencies ever since its construction by one of defendants' predecessors. The most critical deficiencies are (1) lack of storage and (2) insufficient supply of water from defendants' wells.

Deficiencies in a water utility's supply and storage facilities are separate but related problems. A utility with a source of supply capable of delivering the peak instantaneous demand to the distribution system can maintain continuous service without any storage facilities. A utility with a source of supply capable of delivering only the peak-day average demand can maintain continuous service if it has a small amount of storage capacity which can be filled during off-peak hours to augment the deliveries to the system during periods of peak demand. Progressively smaller capacities of the source of supply require progressively larger capacities of storage facilities to provide continuous service. The optimum balance between source and storage capacities normally requires an engineering economic study.

At the time the tests were made on defendants' wells in compliance with Decision No. 71445, the total average productive capacity of the four wells was less than 2 gpm. General Order No. 103 indicates that a system such as defendants' with 20 to 30 metered customers should have about 100 to 200 gpm available. Even if the wells would sustain a production of about 20 gpm, the total capacities of the present pumps on those wells, it is apparent that some storage facilities would be needed. Although the 5,000-gallon storage tank required by the order which follows is not large enough to make the source comply with General

Order No. 103, it should materially improve service by stabilizing pressures and greatly reducing the incidence of complete lack of water, particularly at the higher elevations served by the system. The report submitted by defendants states that a suitable site for a storage tank is available approximately 1,500 feet east of the service area. Chart 1 of General Order No. 103 shows that a 3-inch connecting main would cause an excessive pressure drop. A 4-inch main is required by the order which follows.

With defendants' present sources of supply, a much greater storage capacity would be needed to guarantee year-round adequate service. The amount of storage could be much lower if the production of the present wells could be increased or additional wells developed. The order which follows requires defendants to obtain professional advice as to the most feasible means, if any, of developing more water within a reasonable distance from the present system. Importing of water from great distances is not economically feasible for as small a system as defendants'.

The addition of the storage tank as ordered herein, and the subsequent addition of either more storage or an improved or additional source of supply will increase defendants' investment upon which they are entitled to earn a reasonable return and will increase the depreciation expense which also must be covered by operating revenues. When the first step of the improvement program (the 5,000-gallon storage tank and connecting line) is completed, defendants are ordered to file in this proceeding a detailed summary of the actual cost thereof so that an interim water rate adjustment may then be authorized. Further rate adjustment will be appropriate if and when other system improvements are directed by this Commission and installed by defendants.

When data is available as to the possibility of an increased supply, additional public hearing herein may be appropriate. For the present, the proceeding will be kept open for evaluation of the information which the order herein requires defendants to file.

Findings and Conclusion

The Commission finds that:

1. With defendants' present wells, a storage tank is necessary, and even with an additional supply of water, a storage tank would be beneficial in providing adequate service.
2. Defendants' present well sources are not adequate to ensure year-round continuous service.

The Commission concludes that defendants should be required to take the actions set forth in the order which follows.

SECOND INTERIM ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. On or before March 31, 1967, defendants Sterkin shall install a water storage tank of at least 5,000 gallons capacity at a ground elevation at least 60 feet higher than the highest service connection, shall connect the tank to their water system with a main of not less than 4-inch nominal diameter, and shall file in this proceeding a detailed summary of the actual installed cost of the new facilities.
2. On or before April 28, 1967, defendants Sterkin shall obtain a report, file one copy thereof in this proceeding and send a second copy thereof to complainants, prepared by a qualified engineer, geologist or well driller, setting forth his

recommendations as to the most feasible plan for developing an increased or supplemental local supply of water.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 24th day of JANUARY, 1967.

[Signature]
President

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Commissioners

Commissioner WILLIAM SYMONS, JR. did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.