

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION DIVISION OF WATER AND AUDITS

Advice Letter Cover Sheet

Utility Name: [Searles Domestic Water Company](#)

Dated Mailed to Service List: [12/20/2024](#)

District: [N/A](#)

CPUC Utility #: [WTC-368](#)

Protest Deadline (20th Day): [1/9/2025](#)

Advice Letter #: [76](#)

Review Deadline (30th Day): [1/19/2025](#)

Tier: 1 2 3 Compliance

Requested Effective Date: [ASAP](#)

Authorization: [D. 92-03-093](#)

Rate Impact: [\\$23,434](#)
[6.5%](#)

Description: [2023 CPI-U \(3.4%\)](#)

The protest or response deadline for this advice letter is 20 days from the date that this advice letter was mailed to the service list. Please see the "Response or Protest" section in the advice letter for more information.

Utility Contact: [Audrey Schuyler](#)

Utility Contact: [Christian L. Aldinger](#)

Phone: [760-372-5326](#)

Phone: [714-536-4418](#)

Email: schuylea@svminerals.com

Email: chris@paocpas.com

DWA Contact: [Tariff Unit](#)

Phone: [415-703-1133](#)

Email: Water.Division@cpuc.ca.gov

DWA USE ONLY

<u>DATE</u>	<u>STAFF</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

APPROVED

WITHDRAWN

REJECTED

Signature: _____ Comments: _____

Date: _____

Searles Domestic Water Company

P.O. Box 577
Trona, CA 93592
Telephone: 760-372-5326
Email: schuylea@svminerals.com

December 20, 2024

Advice Letter No.: 76

TO THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Searles Domestic Water Company (WTC-368) hereby transmits for filing one original and one copy of this advice letter (AL) and the following tariff sheets which are enclosed:

<u>NEW SHEET #</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>CANCELLING SHEET #</u>
475-W	Schedule No. 1, General Metered Service	468-W
476-W	Schedule No. 4, Private Fire Protection Service	469-W
477-W	Schedule No. 7M, Public School Metered Service	470-W
478-W	Schedule No. 9-MLZ, Surplus Water Hauling Schedule	471-W
479-W	Table of Contents	474-W

REQUEST

By AL 76, Searles Domestic Water Company requests permission to increase its revenues (based on increase to the present monthly quantity rate and service charge) by 3.4%, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for 2023. This projected revenue increase of \$23,434 will not result in a rate of return which exceeds the authorized rate of return. Workpapers justifying this increase are enclosed.

BACKGROUND

The present rates became effective on December 15, 2023 by AL #74. (2022 CPI increase)

The last general rate case became effective on May 1, 2013, pursuant to Resolution W-4888, which authorized a general rate increase of \$172,925, or 42.22% for test year 2011, \$55,650 or 9.55%, \$55,400 or 8.68% for escalation years 2012 and 2013 respectively and a rate of return of 10.08%.

AL 76 is filed pursuant to Ordering Paragraphs No. 1 of Decision 92-03-093 and Resolution W-4493, which authorize Class C and D water and sewer utilities to file a request for a CPI increase once a year by AL. The increase is to be passed on to the utility's customers in their quantity rate and service charge.

Searles Domestic Water Company

P.O. Box 577

Trona, CA 93592

Telephone: 760-372-5326

Email: schuylea@svminerals.com

TIER DESIGNATION AND REQUESTED EFFECTIVE DATE

This AL and the enclosed tariff sheets are submitted pursuant to General Order (GO.) 96-B. This advice letter is designated as a Tier 1 filing and the enclosed tariff sheets will become effective upon filing.¹

NOTICE

This AL does not require notice;² however, the utility shall inform its customers, by bill insert in the first bill that includes the increase, of the amount of the increase expressed in dollar and percentage terms.³

A copy of this AL has been serviced to all parties listed on the service list⁴ on the last page of this AL. This filing will not cause withdrawal of service nor conflict with any other schedule or rule.

RESPONSE OR PROTEST⁵

Anyone may respond to or protest this AL. A response supports the filing and may contain information that proves useful to the Commission in evaluating the AL. A protest objects to the AL in whole or in part and must set forth the specific grounds on which it is based. These grounds are:

1. The utility did not properly serve or give notice of the AL;
2. The relief requested in the AL would violate statute or Commission order, or is not authorized by statute or Commission order on which the utility relies;
3. The analysis, calculations, or data in the AL contain material error or omission;
4. The relief requested in the AL is pending before the Commission in a formal proceeding; or
5. The relief requested in the AL requires consideration in a formal hearing, or is otherwise inappropriate for the AL process; or
6. The relief requested in the AL is unjust, unreasonable, or discriminatory, provided that such a protest may not be made where it would require relitigating a prior order of the Commission.

A protest may not rely on policy objections to an AL where the relief requested in the AL follows rules or directions established by statute or Commission order applicable to the utility.

A protest shall provide citations or proofs where available to allow staff to properly consider the protest. DWA must receive a response or protest via email (or postal mail) within 20 days of the date this AL is filed. The addresses for submitting a response or protest are:

¹ GO. 96-B, Water Industry Rule 7.3.1

² GO. 96-B, General Rule 4.2

³ GO. 96-B, Water Industry Rule 3.2

⁴ GO. 96-B, Water Industry Rule 4.1

⁵ GO. 96-B, General Rule 7.4.1

Searles Domestic Water Company

P.O. Box 577
Trona, CA 93592
Telephone: 760-372-5326
Email: schuylea@svminerals.com

RESPONSE OR PROTEST (continued)⁵

Email Address:
Water.Division@cpuc.ca.gov

Mailing Address:
California Public Utilities Commission
Water Division, 3rd Floor
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

On the same day the response or protest is submitted to DWA, the respondent or protestant shall send a copy of the protest to Lawrence Morales at:

Email Address:
schuylea@svminerals.com

Mailing Address:
[Searles Domestic Water Company](#)
[P.O. Box 577](#)
[Trona, CA 93592](#)

Cities and counties that need Board of Supervisors or Board of Commissioners approval to protest should inform DWA, within the 20 day protest period, so that a late filed protest can be entertained. The informing document should include an estimate of the date the proposed protest might be voted on.

REPLIES

The utility shall reply to each protest and may reply to any response. Any reply must be received by DWA within five business days after the end of the protest period, and shall be served on the same day on each person who filed the protest or response to the AL.⁶

This filing is made under the provisions of General Order No. 96-B.

This filing will not cause withdrawal of service or conflict with any other schedule or rule.

Searles Domestic Water Company

By: _____
Audrey Schuyler
Manager

DocuSigned by:
Audrey Schuyler
32BB026D74C141D...

⁶ GO. 96-B, General Rule 7.4.3

Searles Domestic Water Company

P.O. Box 577
Trona, CA 93592
Telephone: 760-372-5326
Email: schuylea@svminerals.com

SERVICE LIST

Indian Wells Valley Water District
Attn: Don Zdeba
P.O. Box 1329
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
iwwvd@iwwvd.com
760-384-5555

Tim Itnyre
Chief of Staff to Supervisor Paul Cook
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, 5th Floor
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0110
tim.itnyre@sbccounty.gov

Corporal Chris Hancock
San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office
Trona Substation
chancock@sbcasd.org

I hereby certify that the above service list has been served a copy of AL 76 on 12/23/2024.

Executed in Trona, California on 12/23/2024,

Searles Domestic Water Company

By: Audrey Schuyler
Audrey Schuyler
Manager

DocuSigned by:

Audrey Schuyler

32BB026D74C141D...

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.
 Canceling Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.

475-W
 468-W

Schedule No. 1
GENERAL METERED SERVICE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to metered water service for domestic household purposes for commercial or retail establishments and small industrial enterprises.

TERRITORY

Within Argus, Trona, Pioneer Point (Point of Rocks), Borosolvay and South Trona, unincorporated communities and territory along the westerly shore of Searles Lake, San Bernardino County.

RATES

Quantity Rates:

		Per Meter Per Month
First	800 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	\$ 2.78 (I)
Next	3,200 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	5.66 (I)
Over	4,000 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	9.32 (I)

Monthly Service Charges:

		Per Meter/Mo.
For	5/8x3/4-inch meter	\$ 35.52 (I)
For	3/4-inch meter	35.52
For	1-inch meter	88.80
For	1-1/2-inch meter	177.59
For	2-inch meter	284.15
For	3-inch meter	532.79
For	4-inch meter	887.97 (I)

The Service Charge is a readiness-to-serve charge which is applicable to all metered service and to which is to be added the charge for water used computed at the Quantity Rates.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

- Multi-family apartment complexes may be independently metered or served from one meter. If they are served from one meter, the monthly or bimonthly consumption shall be divided by the number of active units to calculate the commodity charge. Then that result will be multiplied by the number of active units to arrive at the appropriate service charge for the meter. Service under this condition is subject to approval by the utility.

(continued)

(To be inserted by utility)

Issued By

(To be inserted by Cal P.U.C.)

Advice Letter No.	<u>76</u>	<u>Dennis Cruise</u>	Date Filed	_____
		Name		
Decision No.	<u>D.92-03-093</u>	<u>President</u>	Effective	_____
		Title	Resolution No.	_____

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Canceling Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 476-W
Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 469-W

Schedule No. 4
PRIVATE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to metered water furnished to privately-owned fire protection systems.

TERRITORY

Within Argus, Trona, Pioneer Point (Point of Rocks), Borosolvay and South Trona, unincorporated communities and territory along the westerly shore of Searles Lake, San Bernardino County.

RATES

	Per Connection
	Per Month
	<u>Charge</u>
For each inch of diameter of service connection	\$ 13.86 (I)

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Service hereunder is for private fire protection systems to which no connections for other than fire protection purposes are allowed. The fire protection service connection shall be installed by the utility, according to specifications of the San Bernardino County Fire Department and the cost paid by the applicant. Such payment shall not be subject to refund. The utility may install a meter or the standard detector type meter approved by the Board of Fire Underwriters for protection against theft, leakage or wast of water. The cost of the facilities will be paid by the applicant and not subject to refund.
2. The minimum diameter for fire protection service shall be four inches, and the maximum diameter shall be not more than the diameter of the main to which the service is connected.
3. The utility will supply only such water at such pressure as may be available from time to time as a result of normal operation of the system.
4. If a distribution main of adequate size to serve a private fire protection system in addition to all other normal service does not exist in the street or alley adjacent to the premises to be served, then a service main from the nearest existing main of adequate capacity shall be installed by the utility and the cost paid by the applicant. Such cost shall not be subject to refund.

(To be inserted by utility)

Issued By

(To be inserted by Cal P.U.C.)

Advice Letter No. 76

Dennis Cruise
Name

Date Filed _____

Decision No. D.92-03-093

President
Title

Effective _____

Resolution No. _____

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 477-W
 Canceling Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 470-W

Schedule No. 7M
PUBLIC SCHOOL METERED SERVICE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to metered water service furnished to and within the buildings and grounds of public schools.

TERRITORY

Within Argus, Trona, Pioneer Point (Point of Rocks), Borosolvay and South Trona, unincorporated communities and territory along the westerly shore of Searles Lake, San Bernardino County.

RATES

Quantity Rates:

		Per Meter Per Month
First	3,000 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	\$ 2.65 (I)
Next	22,000 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	3.96 (I)
Over	25,000 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	6.10 (I)

Monthly Service Charges:

		Per Meter/Mo.
For	5/8x3/4-inch meter	\$ 35.52 (I)
For	3/4-inch meter	35.52
For	1-inch meter	88.80
For	1-1/2-inch meter	177.59
For	2-inch meter	284.15
For	3-inch meter	532.79
For	4-inch meter	887.97 (I)

The Service Charge is a readiness-to-serve charge which is applicable to all metered service and to which is to be added the charge for water used computed at the Quantity Rates.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Water served under this schedule will be furnished only for use in school buildings and on school grounds.
2. The utility reserves the right to limit the quantity of water delivered to the Trona Schools to 100,000 cubic feet per meter per month.

(continued)

(To be inserted by utility)

Issued By

(To be inserted by Cal P.U.C.)

Advice Letter No. <u>76</u>	<u>Dennis Cruise</u> Name	Date Filed _____	
Decision No. <u>D.92-03-093</u>	<u>President</u> Title	Effective _____	
		Resolution No. _____	

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 478-W
 Canceling Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 471-W

Schedule No. 9-MLZ
SURPLUS WATER HAULING SCHEDULE

APPLICABILITY

Applicable to all water hauling customers for domestic household purposes and for commercial establishments from the standpipe at Pioneer Point Pump Station.

TERRITORY

Within Argus, Trona, Pioneer Point (Point of Rocks), Borosolvay and South Trona, unincorporated communities and territory along the westerly shore of Searles Lake, San Bernardino County.

RATES

Quantity Rates:

		Per Meter Per Month
First	800 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	\$ 2.78 (I)
Next	3,200 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	5.66 (I)
Over	4,000 cu. ft., per 100 cu. ft.	9.32 (I)

Monthly Service Charges:

	Per Meter/Mo.
For each customer	\$ 35.52 (I)

The Service Charge is a readiness-to-serve charge which is applicable to all metered service and to which is to be added the charge for water used computed at the Quantity Rates.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Each customer will be required to make a \$40.00 deposit to obtain an access key. This deposit will be refunded upon return of the key.
2. Each customer using this facility will record the beginning and ending read on the standpipe log sheet. Customers will be billed for water used. Any discrepancies in total water metered and not accounted for will be prorated and billed to each customer.

(continued)

(To be inserted by utility)

Issued By

(To be inserted by Cal P.U.C.)

Advice Letter No. <u>76</u>	<u>Dennis Cruise</u> Name	Date Filed _____	
Decision No. <u>D.92-03-093</u>	<u>President</u> Title	Effective _____	
		Resolution No. _____	

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Canceling Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 479-W
Revised Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No. 474-W

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The following listed tariff sheets contain all effective rates and rules affecting the charges and service of the utility, together with other pertinent information.

<u>Subject Matter of Sheet</u>	<u>Cal. P.U.C. Sheet No.</u>
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Preliminary Statement	407-W - 409-W, 81-W
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Schedule No. 4, Private Fire Protection Service	476-W, 457-W (C)
Schedule No. 7M, Public School Metered Service	477-W, 458-W (C)
Schedule No. 9-MLZ, Surplus Water Hauling Schedule	478-W, 459-W (C)
Schedule No. LC, Late Payment Charge	375-W
Schedule No. UF, Surcharge to Fund PUC Reimbursement Fee	473-W
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No. 2 Description of Service	98-W
No. 3 Application for Service	24-W
No. 4 Contracts	25-W
No. 5 Special Information Required on Forms	430-W - 432-W
No. 6 Establishment and Re-establishment of Credit	27-W
No. 7 Deposits	299-W, 423-W
No. 8 Notices	433-W - 435-W
No. 9 Rendering and Payment of Bills	30(A)-W, 30(B)-W
No. 10 Disputed Bills	436-W, 437-W
No. 11 Discontinuance and Restoration of Service	438-W - 447-W
No. 12 Information Available to Public	33-W
No. 13 Temporary Service	34-W
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No. 15 Main Extensions	247-W - 259-W, 237-W
No. 16 Service Connections, Meters, & Customer Facilities	260-W, 266-W
No. 17 Measurement of Service	181-W
No. 18 Service to Separate Premises & Multiple Units, & Resale of Water	207-W, 208-W

(continued)

(To be inserted by utility)

Issued By

(To be inserted by Cal P.U.C.)

Advice Letter No. 76

Dennis Cruise
Name

Date Filed _____

Decision No. D.92-03-093

President
Title

Effective _____

Resolution No. _____

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 ATTACHMENT TO ADVICE LETTER 76
 SUMMARY OF EARNINGS
 2023

CATEGORY	A	B	C = (A x 7%)	F = (D + E)
	ADOPTED W-4888	(PER ANN RPT) ACTUAL 2023	CPI INCREASE @ 3.4%	AFTER INCREASED REVENUES
Operating Revenues:				
Metered	667,515	592,705	22,696	615,401
Private Fire	2,340	2,724	80	2,804
School	19,345	-	658	658
Other Water Revenue	4,350	34,305	-	34,305
Total Operating Revenue	693,550	629,734	23,434	653,168
Operating Expenses:				
Purchased Water	100,833	68,437	-	68,437
Power	-	-	-	-
Other Volume Related Expenses	-	-	-	-
Employee Labor	106,460	138,002	-	138,002
Materials	23,203	62,292	-	62,292
Contract Work	6,164	6,758	-	6,758
Transportation Expense	20,978	32,953	-	32,953
Other Plant Maintenance	-	-	-	-
Office Salaries	30,000	46,298	-	46,298
Management Salaries	45,000	59,918	-	59,918
Employee Pensions & Benefits	40,651	45,160	-	45,160
Uncollectible Accounts Expense	936	4,254	-	4,254
Office Services & Rentals	2,696	-	-	-
Office Supplies & Expense	14,401	19,208	-	19,208
Professional Services	1,503	8,093	-	8,093
Insurance	5,337	2,550	-	2,550
Regulatory Commission Expense	6,052	8,001	-	8,001
General Expenses	10,664	10,898	-	10,898
Expenses Capitalized	-	-	-	-
Total Operating Expenses	414,878	512,822	-	512,822
Other Deductions:				
Depreciation	56,844	93,604	-	93,604
Taxes Other Than Income	30,009	33,575	-	33,575
Bad Debts	-	-	-	-
Interest expense	-	124	-	124
Total Operating Expenses & Other Deductions	501,731	640,125	-	640,125
Net Income Before Taxes	191,819	(10,391)	-	13,043
State Income Tax	-	-	-	1,153
Federal Inome Tax	68,403	-	-	4,043
Net Revenue	123,416	(10,391)	-	7,847
Rate Base	1,224,310			988,067
Rate of Return (on Rate Base)	10.08%			0.79%
Rate of Margin (N/A)				<i>test passed</i>

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 CPI INCREASE IN RATES
 ATTACHMENT TO ADVICE LETTER 76
 2023

AL 72-W 3.40%

DESCRIPTION	CURRENT RATES	INCREASE OF 3.4%	PROPOSED RATES
Schedule No. 1, Metered Service:			
Quantity Rate			
First 800 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	\$ 2.69	\$ 0.09	\$ 2.78
Next 3,200 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	5.47	0.19	5.66
Over 4,000 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	9.01	0.31	9.32
Monthly Service Charge:			
5/8 "X 3/4" Meter	34.35	1.17	35.52
3/4 " Meter	34.35	1.17	35.52
1 " Meter	85.88	2.92	88.80
1 1/2 " Meter	171.75	5.84	177.59
2 " Meter	274.81	9.34	284.15
3 " Meter	515.27	17.52	532.79
4 " Meter	858.77	29.20	887.97
Schedule No. 4, Private Fire Protection:			
For each inch of diameter of service connection	13.40	0.46	13.86
Schedule No. 7M, Public School Metered Service			
Quantity Rate			
First 3,000 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	\$ 2.56	\$ 0.09	\$ 2.65
Next 22,000 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	3.83	0.13	3.96
Over 25,000 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	5.90	0.20	6.10
Monthly Service Charge:			
5/8 "X 3/4" Meter	34.35	1.17	35.52
3/4 " Meter	34.35	1.17	35.52
1 " Meter	85.88	2.92	88.80
1 1/2 " Meter	171.75	5.84	177.59
2 " Meter	274.81	9.34	284.15
3 " Meter	515.27	17.52	532.79
4 " Meter	858.77	29.20	887.97
Schedule No. 9-MLZ, Surplus Water Hauling Schedule			
Quantity Rate			
First 800 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	\$ 2.69	\$ 0.09	\$ 2.78
Next 3,200 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	5.47	0.19	5.66
Over 4,000 cu. ft, per 100 cu. ft	9.01	0.31	9.32
Monthly Service Charge:			
For each customer	34.35	1.17	35.52

SEARLES DOMESTIC WATER COMPANY
 ATTACHMENT TO ADVICE LETTER 76
 ESTIMATE OF RATE BASE
 2023

DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	RATE BASE BEG	RATE BASE END	AVG RATE BASE
Utility Plant	PUC rpt, Sch A	2,851,367	2,890,456	2,870,912
Accumulated Depreciation	PUC rpt, Sch A	(2,027,760)	(2,121,364)	(2,074,562)
Net Utility Plant		823,607	769,092	796,350
Materials & Supplies	PUC rpt, Sch A	130,162	167,801	148,982
Working Cash	(1)	42,735	42,735	42,735
Advances for Construction	PUC rpt, Sch A	-	-	-
Net Contributions in Aid of Construction	PUC rpt, Sch A	-	-	-
Deferred Income Taxes/ITC	PUC rpt, Sch A34	-	-	-
RATE BASE		996,504	979,628	988,067

(1) 2023 Operating expense / 12