

WRATES continues to be actively involved in several water issues and we are making progress. I hope with all the below listed developments, we as citizens, as ratepayers, as taxpayers, are realizing we can speak up, be heard, and make a difference. There will be another Public Participation Hearing on **Oct. 8, 2018** and we need a large presence. Save the date and plan to attend.

1. **Another WRATES Victory.** Over a year and a half after the overbilling issues were brought to the CPUCs attention, the CPUC is finally going to formally investigate SJWC's billing practices. Read the Mercury News article...

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/09/14/state-launches-investigation-into-san-jose-water-over-billing-claims/>

CPUC filed the Order Instituting Investigation (OII) I.18-09-003 on 9/13/18. These proceedings typically take a year to resolve. The OII suggests **SJWC should refund \$4 million** due to non-prorated service charges collected from 1987-2017 **and an additional \$5 million** for double billing when SJWC converted from billing in advance to billing in arrears. This OII will also consider penalties and fines in the amount of \$500 to \$50,000 per offense, per day.

WRATES will be following this investigation and may need more information from some of you who have provided information in the past. We will keep you posted.

To view OII documents, visit <https://sjwfacts.weebly.com/overcharges.html>

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2. **WRATES members have been working diligently to have our voices heard in the current GRC in which SJWC is seeking to increase our rates by 17.8% over the next 3 years.** Bill S. and Pat K. have dedicated many hours, days, weeks & months preparing and participating on SJWC's current GRC. WRATES and the City of San Jose are parties to the GRC proceeding A.18-01-004. Thank you for all your hard work.

CPUC Law Judge Bemederfer will submit his proposed decision by Oct. 9th on what the ratepayers will actually have to pay in 2019, 2020, & 2021. His proposed decision will go to the PUC Commissioners for their final decision by November 8th. We may need to do a letter writing campaign to the CPUC in October to counteract the barrage of comments from lobbyist, attorneys, special interest groups, and agencies who have a financial stake in increasing our rates.

To view GRC documents, visit <https://sjwfacts.weebly.com/grc.html>

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3. **SJWC/CTWS Merger** - CPUC has opened an OII regarding the proposed merger.

ATTEND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HEARING ON OCT. 8, 2018

Time and place TBD. I will send an update and post on WRATES website once details are known.

WRATES believes that the CPUC should rule that SJWC should file an application with the Commission to determine if the merger is in the public interest. It is the responsibility of the

CPUC to prevent opportunistic deals from Maine-Connecticut, Texas, and elsewhere coming into Silicon Valley to soak off hundreds of millions of dollars by manipulating availability and cost of a life-sustaining, scarce resource.

To view Merger OII documents, visit <https://sjwfacts.weebly.com/merger.html>

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**4. Water Fix tunnels** - WRATES is working with the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) with interpreting the new laws and regulations from the state that will affect us over the next decade. These laws involve water demand management and conservation. We are working to ensure that their decisions are reasonable and result in approaches that are fair to residential customers in a new era of uncertain water needs.

To learn more about the Water Fix and California Water, visit MARVIN'S NOTEBOOK <https://mavensnotebook.com/> This is a wonderful resource for California Water News.

**5. CA State Audit** - The CPUC is currently being audited by the California State Auditor regarding water rates. WRATES, along with members from our Coalition partners in Lancaster, Antelope Valley, provided documentation and presentation for 'A Case for CPUC Reform' in February 2018. Senator Scott Wilk, R-Antelope Valley and Assemblyman Tom Lackey, R-Palmdale took our information to Sacramento. Their request for an Audit of CPUC's water rate-setting processes was unanimously approved and the audit began in May 2018.

To view Audit Documents, visit <https://sjwfacts.weebly.com/audit.html>

Rita Benton

WRATES, Water Rate Advocates for Transparency, Equity, and Sustainability

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Margaret Meade