

January 4, 2019

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PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

VIA HAND-DELIVERY

Ms. Gwen Pinson, Executive Director
Kentucky Public Service Commission
211 Sower Boulevard
Frankfort, KY 40602

Re: *In the Matter of the Application of Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc. for
Authorization to Deviate from the Daily Inspection Requirements
Applicable to Residential Grinder Stations / PSC Case No. 2018-00353*

Dear Ms. Pinson:

Please find enclosed and accept for filing with the Commission an original and ten (10) copies of the Response of Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc., to the Commission Staff's First Request for Information propounded December 21, 2018, in the above-styled matter.

Please return a file-stamped copy of this filing to me. I appreciate your assistance with this submission, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



|| M. Evan Buckley

**COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

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**PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION**

In the Matter of:

APPLICATION OF KNOTT COUNTY WATER AND)
SEWER, INC. PURSUANT TO 807 KAR 5:071, §7(4))
FOR DEVIATION FROM DAILY INSPECTION)
REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO RESIDENTIAL)
GRINDER STATIONS)

Case No. 2018-00353

**KNOTT COUNTY WATER AND SEWER, INC.'S RESPONSE TO
COMMISSION STAFF'S FIRST REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Filed: January 4, 2019

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
Case No. 2018-00353
Commission Staff's First Request for Information

1. State how often Knott County currently inspects its residential grinder stations.

Response:

Knott County currently inspects its residential grinding stations approximately annually or more often as circumstances require (*i.e.*, when repairing or replacing related parts or systems). As part of this proceeding, Knott County requests that the annual inspection of each of its residential grinder stations be accepted as sufficient under applicable regulation, particularly because the grinder stations placed in service by Knott County are high-quality, safe, and reliable in both design and practice.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
Case No. 2018-00353
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2. Describe the most common problem(s) at a grinding pump station when the grinding pump fails.

Response:

Pump failure at one of Knott County's residential grinding stations is most commonly attributed to the buildup of grease which has been deposited into the system by the customer. Grease builds up around the impeller and prohibits the motor from turning. Customers are reminded to refrain from introducing inappropriate items to their systems; after the first service call, Knott County requests by letter that the customer does not empty grease into his/her system and charges for service calls to help deter this practice in the future.

When a grinding pump fails because of grease buildup, it typically trips the breaker. Additionally, audio and visual alarms activate upon pump failure, which alerts the customer and allows Knott County to address issues without significant delay or inconvenience. Because the grinder stations utilized by Knott County are specifically designed (with sufficient capacity and additional features) to avoid sewer backup into customer residences, the failure of a grinding pump generally causes minor issues (if any) for Knott County customers.

After clearing the grease from the pump, Knott County personnel are usually able to put the pump back into service. There are some common items, such as the stator, on/off switch, alarm switch, control assembly, etc. that fail because of overloads caused by grease or other obstructions. Knott County keeps these items in stock and its personnel are able to change these out as needed.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
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3. Provide Knott County's response policy and procedures for a failure of a grinding pump station.

Response:

Upon learning of an issue with a grinding pump station (often from a customer alerted by the pump's alarm systems), Knott County dispatches an employee to visually inspect the station and determine an initial diagnosis. Knott County personnel are equipped with a pump to clear out the basin and have access to a truck-mounted holding tank for storage as necessary. A pump that has failed is inspected for grease and other debris, and all connections are tested to attempt to troubleshoot the issue. If a pump cannot be adequately repaired onsite, it will be replaced with one of the 2-3 pumps stocked by Knott County. Repair is then attempted of the faulty pump; if it cannot be repaired, a new pump is ordered to ensure sufficient stock on-hand to promote efficient service for Knott County's customers.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
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4. Provide the number of service calls Knott County has received about the grinder pump stations since they were installed seven years ago.

Response:

Knott County's records reflect 53 work orders for its residential grinder stations.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
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5. Provide the number of service calls that were emergency calls.

Response:

Although Knott County treats each call as important, customer calls concerning residential grinder stations are generally not considered emergencies. The grinder stations utilized by Knott County are specifically designed to avoid sewer backup into customer residences and are equipped with audio and visual alarms that have worked well in notifying customers (and Knott County) that an issue should be investigated. Knott County must (and does) timely address these issues with its residential grinder stations, but it has not experienced emergencies related to the stations.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
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6. Provide the number of customer complaints Knott County has received about the grinder pump stations since they were installed seven years ago. For each complaint, state the resolution.

Response:

Knott County has not received any customer complaints regarding its grinder pump stations.

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7. Refer to paragraph 7 of the application. Knott County states in its application that the grinder pump stations have been equipped with visual and audio alarms to notify homeowners, neighbors, and passers-by of a problem. State whether the audio and visual alarms are an effective warning system in an area of low customer density such as Knott County's territory.

Response:

Though the customer density of Knott County's territory does present certain challenges, the audio and visual alarms equipped at each residential grinding station have proven effective at alerting Knott County to issues requiring its attention, most often through the customer on whose property the grinding station is located. Knott County has no recorded instances where the audio and visual alarms are believed to have gone unnoticed for any significant period of time.

Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc.
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8. Provide the current system's inspection procedures that Knott County has in place to detect a poorly functioning or nonfunctioning grinding pump station.

Response:

KCWSD personnel will run the pump in hand to check and see if the pump is operating properly. He will be watching the level of the tank to see if the pump empties the tank in a suitable amount of time. He will also listen to see if the pump has any noticeable sound abnormalities and he will observe if there are any noticeable vibrations. If the pump seems to be operating properly, he will check the pump's amperage while operating. The slide valve will also be observed to make sure that the seal is present and that no leakage is detected around the valve. He will test the alarms by manually adjusting the floats level to make the alarms active to make sure they are working. He will note any issues he may see such as corrosion, grease build-up, etc. and will issue work orders to make repairs if he feels like these need immediate attention. Work orders shall include details of any noticeable problems and measures that are necessary to correct the problems. Pictures will also be included to document any issues with the station.

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VERIFICATION OF JARED SALMONS


COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY)
COUNTY OF Knott)

Jared Salmons, General Manager of Knott County Water and Sewer, Inc., being duly sworn, states that he has supervised the preparation of the response to Commission Staff's First Request for Information propounded in the above-referenced proceeding and that the matters and things set forth in that response are true and accurate to the best of his knowledge, information and belief, formed after reasonable inquiry.



JARED SALMONS

The foregoing Verification was signed, acknowledged and sworn to before me this 27
day of December, 2018, by Jared Salmons.



NOTARY PUBLIC
Commission Expiration: 5/02/20