

John Lawrence (Complainant) V Farmdale Water District (Defendant)

Case NO. 2023-00148

Appendix: Request 1

State whether the alleged loose fitting that was subsequently repaired is on the Farmdale District side of the meter or the customer's side of the meter.

We purchased the property in May 2014. The original lot was 5 acres. We purchased 3.5 acres and some time later 1.5 acres were sold to Gary and Kathy Goins. Some time after the purchase of the 1.5 acre lot Mr Goins had Farmdale Water District move the water meter from his new property to its current location on our side of the property line. Mr. Goins did inform me that he had put in a request to have the meter moved, however we were not notified by the Farmdale Water District that it was going to be moved nor when it was going to be moved. We left for work and when we came home the meter had been moved, tied back in and backfilled.

In December 2021 we noticed standing water in the area. After multiple visits and tests by the Farmdale Water District we were repeatedly told there was no leak and the standing water was ground water and the result of an underground spring.

On June 30 2022 when the leak was located and subsequently repaired by our construction crew water was spraying from behind the nut that connects to the water meter (See Figure 1 and Figure 2). The pipe did not have a hole, or break nor additional leaks. Once the leak was discovered the water was turned off immediately at the meter. While uncovering the line and determining what was needed to repair the line a two man crew from Farmdale Water arrived to see what we had found. They were present while we removed the nut from the meter. The crew offered to give us material to make the repair. There were no other fittings visible in the area excavated. The pipe was then cut and a short piece of pipe and compression fitting, supplied by the contractor was used to repair the line. The line was turned on and visibly tested for leaks.

Actual pictures or videos of the leak were not taken at the time we discovered the issue. At this point in the process we had no reason to believe that there would be a charge from the District. However, on June 30 2022 The Farmdale Water District employees on site indicated there would **not** be a charge.

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COMMISSION

Figure 1

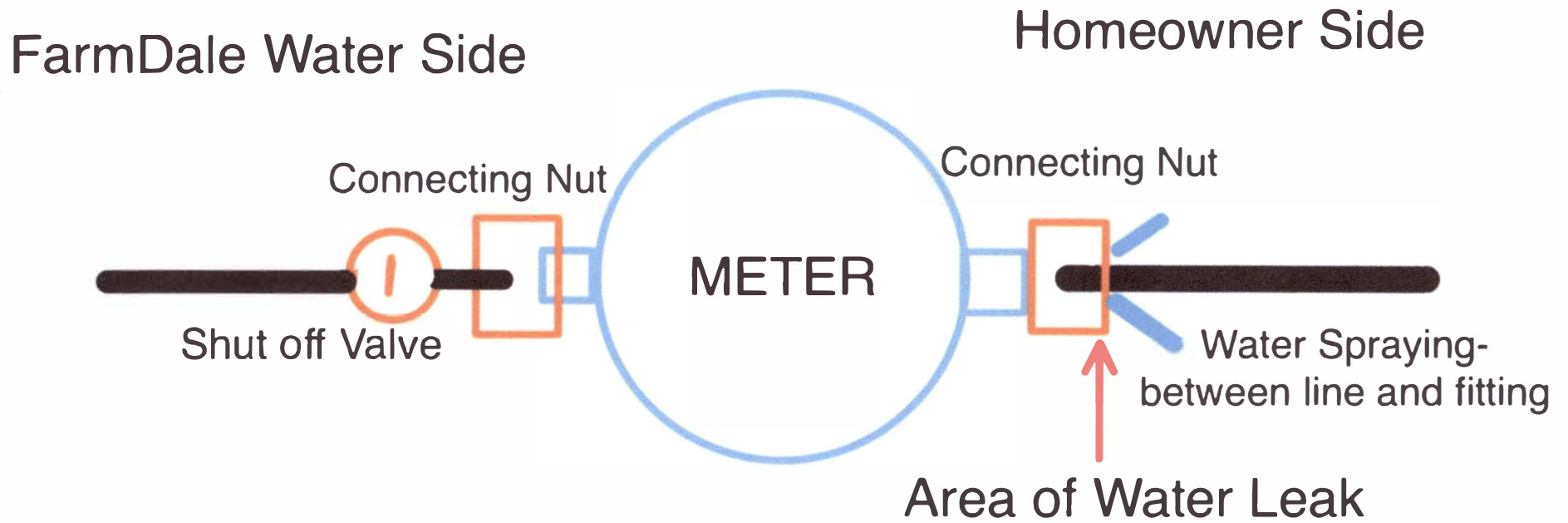


Figure 2



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Appendix: Request 2.

State whether the December 2021 tests were conducted at Mr Lawrence's request or whether Farmdale District commenced the December 2021 tests on it's own.

The tests conducted in December 2021 were requested by me, John Lawrence, as I had noticed water pooling to the north of and around the water meter, which concerned me. A chlorine test was immediately done by Farmdale Water District. The test was done on water in the meter vault, and showed no chlorine present. Farmdale Water District's employee stated there was no chlorine in the test indicating it was ground water, and not a waterline leak. We were in a wet weather period and it did seem logical.

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Appendix: Request 3: *File the corresponding bills at issue that relate to Mr Lawrence's complaint.*

It is very difficult for us to put a price tag with backup documentation on the issues caused from the excess water. The majority of the work associated with this issue was self performed. At the time we were working under the assumption that the Farmdale Water District was correct and that the excess water was not a leak but the result of excessive ground water. Therefore the expenses associated were not documented, logged or billed.

During this entire process we have not sought compensation from the Farmdale Water District for any of the issues that we feel arose from the excessive water. We took the professional word of the Farmdale Water District backed up by the testing they performed, and a very low water usage amount as an indication that this was a wet weather spring and not the responsibility of the district but the responsibility of the homeowner. However, we do feel that there were issues in which the water problem either caused or made worse, which we still view as water under the bridge.

The biggest financial impact was in regards to the excessive water saturating the septic lateral field. We did install monitoring wells, a second tank and an overflow alarm system. At the time we felt the best thing to do was to fix the problem and not waste time and money in testing water saturation levels etc.... The first step in fixing the septic issue was in getting rid of or moving the excessive ground water from the area by installing a french drain system which would allow the area to start to dry. I did contact a contractor in June to get an opinion, a proposal, and a fresh perspective in regards to the excessive water issue. We met on site he looked over the scope of the project asked a few questions and he later called me with a proposal. To the best of my recollection the proposal was over \$7,000.00 for the french drain alone. The proposed price was too high and we made the decision to self perform the work.

The biggest non-financial impact was in regards to the loss of that portion of the property for the entire spring and summer months. The water problem resulted in a lot of mud, a lot of bugs including mosquitoes and snakes. In that area of the yard we did have a swimming pool which my family enjoyed. Due to the mosquitoes eating us up and finding a snake in the pool we did not use the pool very much that year. In regards to the pool issue the excessive water caused the area to the west side of the pool to erode and settle resulting in us taking the pool down. Our family has enjoyed cooking and eating outside and due to the insect problem we were unable to do that very often during 2022. We also enjoy working in the yard with landscaping and gardening which again, due to the insect and reptile issues we were unable to do for the majority of 2022. We could not even mow that portion of the yard until August of 2022. See *Figures 3A-3D* which were taken in May of 2022 showing the condition of our yard due to the excessive water. These pictures were taken while we were trying to install some gravel in an attempt to get the water to drain from this area. I do not know how to price or bill these items.

Overall, our biggest issue is that Farmdale Water District did not take our concern seriously nor did they read the water meter for several of the months in which this problem persisted. It was obvious that we had a concern; we requested testing 3 times during this period. The presence of chlorine is one indication that groundwater has been treated or that it is "city" water, however it is not a proven method to determine a waterline leak. The best way to determine a leak on the homeowner side of the meter is to actually read the water meter. Unless that meter

is defective it not only will provide data indicating the leak but tell you exactly how much water is leaking. The water meter that is used by Farmdale Water district is amazing the meter itself stores data and records water usage amounts every hour, and even transmits that data to a device without the meter lid having to be removed. IF there had been an increase in metered water which would have been evidenced by a higher water bill THEN it would have been apparent that the increase in water usage plus the excessive water running thru our property would have been an actual water leak, AND it would have been repaired immediately.

Our initial concern was in December 2021 - increase in ground water with the monthly water use of 4,600 gallons (January 2022 billing was for water used in December 2021). This was the highest water usage that we were billed until the leak was found and fixed in June. From January to May the water usage actually drops to as low as 2,600 gallons while the amount of ground water increased. See *Figure 3E* for a spreadsheet showing the water usage we were billed for. It is very obvious to me that the Farmdale Water District was negligent in reading the meter for several months.

Figure 3A



Figure 3B



Figure 3C



Figure 3D



Water Usage Per Month

Billed Month	Water Used (Month)	Usage Amount in Gallons	Notes
January	December 2021	4,600	
February	January 2022	4,000	
March	February 2022	4,000	
April	March 2022	2,900	
May	April 2022	2,600	
June	May 2022	2,700	
July	June 2022	1,498,200	Line repaired June 30
August	July 2022	9,900	
September	August 2022	6,100	

Figure 3E

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Appendix: Request 4

State whether or not Farmdale District performed any other type of tests other than the chlorine tests and if so, provide the results of those tests.

The only tests that I am aware of Farmdale Water District performing are the chlorine tests that were requested by Mr. Lawrence. There were three chlorine tests performed and listed below.

December 2021 - chlorine test requested by Mr Lawrence- All test results were negative for chlorine. Water inside the meter vault was tested as well as standing water around the meter.

April 2022 - chlorine test requested by Mr Lawrence - All test result were negative for chlorine. Water inside the meter vault was tested. Water North of the meter vault was tested from water on top of the ground. Water from South of the meter vault was tested from water on top of the ground. A second sample was taken from approximately 10 feet south of the water meter this was running water on top of the ground.

June 30, 2022 - chlorine test requested by Mr Lawrence- All water samples pulled from around the meter and vault were negative for chlorine. The water sample pulled from hose bib front east side of the house was positive for chlorine. While the crew was on site to complete the 811 ticket I again requested a final chlorine test. Running water coming from inside the meter vault was tested (result was negative). Water from the North of the vault was tested from running water on top of the ground (result was negative). Water from the south of the meter vault was tested from water running on top of the ground (result was negative). Mr Lawrence then made a further test request. I asked the District Employee if he would test the water at the house for presence of chlorine. He agreed and pulled a sample from the hose bib attached to the front east side of the home. That test was positive. He then pulled a second test to double check and it did show chlorine a second time.

I am not aware of any other tests performed by Farmdale Water District. If there were additional tests conducted I was not informed of them nor made aware of the results.

However, as a homeowner I did conduct several pressure tests to check for a drop in pressure at the house, which I thought may indicate a waterline leak. The tests that I conducted were performed using a pressure meter that was attached to the hose bib on the front east portion of the home. See figure 4 for a picture of the gauge reading in May 2022.

Test method: a liquid filled pressure gauge was attached to the hose bib with the hose valve fully turned on. The gauge was tested for visible leaks. Pressure results were recorded and will be submitted as figure 5,6 and 7. I performed these tests on April 22-23, May, 20-21 June 18-20 and again on August 15 after the line had been repaired.

Test Results: As stated above the handwritten pressure readings are listed in figure 5, 6 and 7. I did not notice a gradual drop in pressure.

I also attempted to conduct a pressure test on the water system by using the water meter itself. Prior to the use of the new meters it was easier for a homeowner to tell if there was a water leak. This method was accomplished by turning all of the water off in the home and then watching the red triangle on the water meter. If the triangle was spinning then there was a leak somewhere. The leak could then be narrowed down by closing valves in the home until the red triangle stopped spinning. I attempted using this method however the new meters are digital and do not have the red spinning triangle and I was unable to reach a conclusion. However

later at the water district meeting I was told that the new meters record the water usage every hour. I was able to get a printout from August and July of 2022 showing a water usage breakdown per hour. I requested the meter data for the three months prior and was told the district did not have that information.

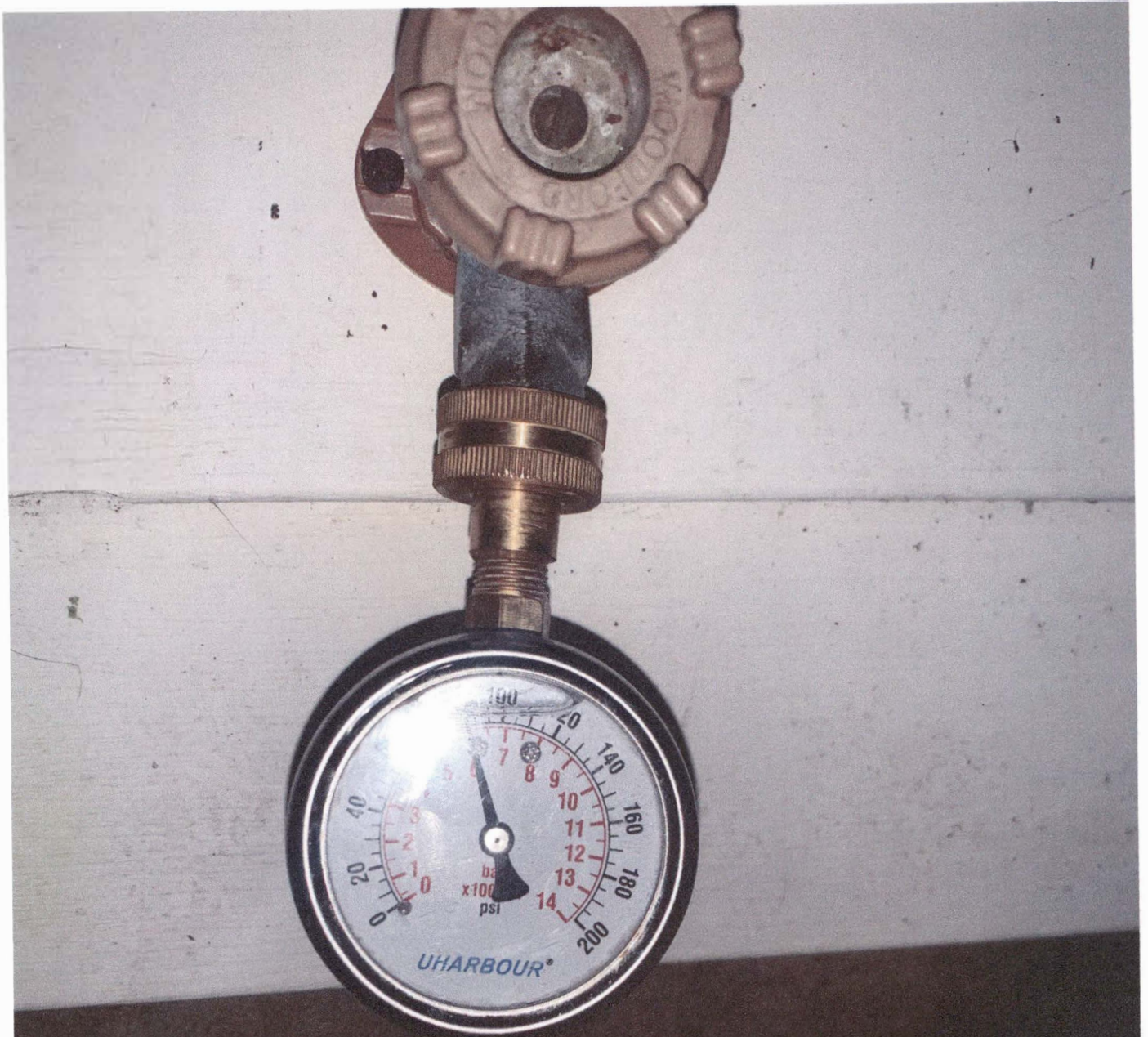


Figure 4

4/22/2022

Forms:

- 1) Hippa (Standard)
- 2) Foot Exam
- 3) LLD Exam
- 4) Medicare - Diabetic Shoe Forms
- 5) Shoe Fitting Form
- 6) Custom Diabetic Form
- 7) Diabetic Shoe (Custom)
- 8) Custom Insole Form
- 9)

Foot Exam Form:

- 1) Range of motion
- 2) Sensory
- 3) Circulation
- 4) Worn Shoe/Insole
- 5) Gait Analysis

Figure 5
4/22/2022

Time	Pressure Reading
9 PM	85
midnight	~ 93
10 AM	88
2 PM	90
6 PM	85-90
9.30 P	90

- Billing Dr. C
- This Patient Position
- Important
 - Demographics
 - Primary Insu
 - Other Insu
 - Secondary
 - Tertiary
 - Auto
 - Wa
 - T
 - Eligibility
 - Check

- Authorization
- Flags
- Se
- ge

ICD-9 =

CPT Code

NDC Code

Ⓢ Herpes

5/20/22

Dr. Chrono

Forms - Brass Tacks

- 1) Need Fitting form
- 1) Physical Evaluation + Sensory Exam
- 2) measurements
- 3) Shoe choices

Freedom Inge)

RT Foot -
LT Foot

Figure 6
5/20-5/21 2022

Meters - Pressure Reading @ Hours

Time

Pressure

9 pm	85-90
midnight	90-95
2 AM	95 - Actually Above 95 At 1:00
7:30	80
3:00 PM	= 80
9 PM	= 85
midnight	85-90

5/21/22

20 pm trip

180 Adjusted

TRIP CALL

Tally 699.4 miles
 - 40
 659.4

Begin 109,270.6
 End 109,930
 -180

Dates	Begin	Trip	End	Adjusted
15-19	109,270.6	659.4 -180.0	109,930	479
22-26	108,612	540 -180	109,152	360

360 x .50 = \$180
 479.4 x .50 = \$239.70

June 18 2020

~~Diagnosis~~

<u>Time</u>	<u>Pressure</u>
7:45 PM	87-90
9:30 PM	85-90
12	85-90
7 AM	82-85
2 PM	85
10 PM	90
Midnight	90

Figure 7
6/18-6/20. 2024

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Appendix: Request 5

Provide a statement detailing the specific reasons why Mr. Lawrence believes his meter was not tested by Farmdale Water District.

We did not receive any notification that the district was going to test the meter. We also did not receive any communication from the district regarding any findings or conclusions as a result of a water meter test.