

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

AQUA PENNSYLVANIA WASTEWATER, INC.

DOCKET NO. A-2021-3026132

AQUA STATEMENT NO. 2

**DIRECT TESTIMONY OF
MARK J. BUBEL, SR.**

**With Regard To
Description of the System
Environmental Compliance
Integration into Current Operations
Technical Fitness
Public Benefits of the Transaction**

July 2021

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1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

3 A. My name is Mark J. Bubel, Sr. My business address is 762 West Lancaster Avenue,
4 Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania 19010.

5
6 **Q. By whom are you employed and in what capacity?**

7 A. I am employed by Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc., (“Aqua PA”) as a Project Engineer III.

8
9 **Q. Please provide a brief description of your education and work experience.**

10 A. I received a Bachelor’s of Science Degree (B.S.) in Civil Engineering in 1980 from
11 Lehigh University and a Master’s Degree in Civil Engineering (M.C.E.) with a
12 concentration in Environmental Engineering in 1983 from Villanova University. I have
13 worked in various engineering roles and have over 40 years of experience in
14 environmental engineering related to municipal and industrial wastewater treatment and
15 operations. I have worked at Aqua America since 2003 in roles related to wastewater
16 treatment facilities including planning, design, start-up, and operational troubleshooting. I
17 am a Registered Professional Engineer in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, North
18 Carolina, and Florida. I am also a Licensed Water and Wastewater Operator in
19 Pennsylvania.

20
21 **Q. Have you previously testified before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission**
22 **(“PUC” or the “Commission”)?**

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1 A. Yes. I provided testimony in Aqua Pennsylvania Wastewater, Inc.’s (“Aqua” or the
2 “Company”) New Garden, Limerick, East Bradford, Cheltenham, East Norriton,
3 Delaware County Regional Water Quality Control Authority and Lower Makefield
4 Township Section 1329 Application proceedings at Docket Nos. A-2016-2580061, A-
5 2017-2605434, A-2018-3001582, A-2019-3008491, A-2019-3009052, A-2019-3015173,
6 and A-2021-3024267, respectively. I also provided testimony in Aqua PA and Aqua’s
7 most recent base rate case proceeding at Docket Nos. R-2018-3003558 and R-2018-
8 3003561

9

10 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?**

11 A. The purpose of my testimony is as follows: (1) to provide a general description of the
12 acquired system; (2) to explain how the acquired system will be integrated into Aqua’s
13 operations; (3) to describe Aqua’s technical fitness to run the system, and (4) to discuss
14 the benefits of the transaction.

15

16 **Q. Are you sponsoring any Exhibits with the Company’s filing?**

17 A. No.

18

19 **II. OVERVIEW OF AQUA AND THE EWT SYSTEM**

20 **Q. Please provide a general overview of Aqua.**

21 A. Aqua, a subsidiary of Aqua PA, is engaged in the business of collecting, treating,
22 transporting, and disposing of wastewater for the public. Aqua serves approximately
23 45,000 customers in Adams, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Clarion, Clearfield, Delaware,

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1 Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Montgomery, Pike, Schuylkill, Venango, and Wyoming
2 Counties. Aqua operates 39 wastewater treatment plants (“WWTP”) throughout the
3 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and 24 systems of Aqua’s Southeast Division are in
4 proximity to East Whiteland Township (“EWT” or the “Township”) allowing for
5 operational efficiencies. Aqua, and its parent company Aqua PA, have approximately
6 600 employees bringing extensive expertise in providing water and wastewater service to
7 citizens of Pennsylvania.

8
9 **Q. Please provide a description of the EWT Sanitary Wastewater Collection System**
10 **(the “System”).**

11 A. The Township is located in the northeast part of Chester County, Pennsylvania and the
12 majority of the Township is served by a public sewer system. The EWT System is a
13 collection and conveyance system owned by EWT that collects wastewater from within
14 EWT and conveys wastewater via 12 Township owned pump stations, associated force
15 mains and approximately 60 miles of gravity sewers and interceptor sewers to a
16 wastewater treatment plant (“WWTP”) owned by the Valley Forge Sewer Authority
17 (“VFSA”), National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (“NPDES”) Permit No.
18 PA0043974, via the Valley Creek Trunk Sewer. EWT also owns a WWTP, Malvern
19 Hunt WWTP, WQM Permit No. 1599418, which is in the process of being
20 decommissioned and converted into a pump station. Following the decommissioning of
21 the Malvern Hunt WWTP, which is expected to be finished in 2021, all wastewater flows
22 will be treated at the VFSA WWTP. EWT, in addition, collects/conveys flow to /from
23 its system from the Borough of Malvern, Tredyffrin Township, Charlestown Township,

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1 and Willistown Township, which then flows for treatment at the VFSA. EWT also has
2 several areas of its system that are on the border between EWT and East Goshen
3 Township. While EWT owns the facilities within its borders, flows from these customers
4 are sent to the East Goshen Municipal Authority (“EGMA”) WWTP, NPDES Permit No.
5 PA0050504.

6 Description of the System

7 The VFSA treatment plant began treatment of wastewater in about January 1978.
8 The plant receives flow from the contributing municipalities from two force mains. Flow
9 from the two force mains combines immediately prior to the raw influent structure. The
10 raw influent structure meters and diverts the flow into two primary clarifiers, which are
11 operated in parallel, for gravity settling to remove heavy inorganic and organic solids as
12 well as to reduce biochemical oxygen demand (BOD₅). Following the primary clarifiers,
13 further reduction of BOD₅ sufficient to also allow nitrification, occurs biologically in the
14 two activated sludge aeration tanks. Final settling is achieved following the aeration
15 tanks in four final clarifiers also operated in parallel. The final treatment step prior to
16 discharge to the Schuylkill River is ultraviolet light (UV) disinfection.

17 Wastewater solids produced during primary clarification are pumped through
18 cyclone de-gritters where grit is removed from the wastewater, sent to one of three
19 treatment plant gravity thickeners where it is combined with other plant solids (scum,
20 trucked wastewater and waste activated sludge).

21 In addition to its connected customers, VFSA also receives regulated and non-
22 regulated (residential) trucked waste at a designated receiving station for preliminary
23 treatment and equalization prior to combination with other plant solids in gravity

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1 thickeners. The gravity thickened solids produced in the sludge thickeners are pumped to
2 centrifuges for dewatering. The resulting cake solids produced by the centrifuge
3 dewatering process are alkaline stabilized by mixing dewatered sludge solids with
4 hydrated lime, resulting in a biosolids product registered with the Pennsylvania
5 Department of Agriculture as a fertilizer product. VFSA biosolids have been land
6 applied for over 10 years for beneficial agricultural reuse.

7 The VFSA WWTP is permitted at an annual average flow of 11.75 million
8 gallons per day (“MGD”) and has a maximum monthly average flow of 11.75 MGD.
9 The 2020 annual average flow was 6.8 MGD and the 3-month maximum average flow
10 was 7.42 MGD. The WWTP is permitted for a maximum organic loading of 26,700
11 pounds per day (lbs./day) according to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental
12 Protection (“DEP”) Water Quality Management Permit (“WQM”) provided as Exhibit
13 M2. The 2020 maximum month organic loading was 12,830 lbs./day.

14 The Malvern Hunt WWTP is an aerated lagoon treatment system, consisting of an
15 influent pump station, a headworks with a comminutor and influent bar screen, a
16 secondary treatment lagoon, storage/polishing lagoon, and effluent spray pumps. Sewage
17 flow to the treatment lagoon is continuous, going through aeration, solid – liquid
18 separation settling, and decanting processes. The treated water is discharged through an
19 8-inch diameter gravity main to the storage/polishing lagoon. The supernatant of the
20 storage/polishing lagoon is chlorinated prior to being pumped out for spray irrigation
21 disposal.

22 The WWTP spray irrigation is applied to three (3) zones located in woodlands
23 north of the Malvern Hunt development (18.5 acres total).

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1 The Malvern Hunt WWTP is permitted at an annual average flow of 0.105 MGD
2 and has a design hydraulic capacity of 0.128 MGD. The 2020 annual average flow was
3 0.049 MGD and the 3-month maximum average flow was 0.055 MGD. The WWTP is
4 permitted for a maximum organic loading of 222 lbs./day. The 2020 maximum month
5 organic loading was 176 lbs./day.

6 The EGMA WWTP is a sequencing batch reactor (“SBR”) activated sludge
7 treatment facility consisting of an influent grinder and screen, influent pumping station,
8 4-tank SBR system, post equalization tanks, effluent filtration, and ultraviolet (“UV”)
9 disinfection prior to stream discharge to Ridley Creek. Solids treatment consists of the
10 previously mentioned influent grinder and screen, aerobic sludge digestion, and a
11 dewatering centrifuge with polymer addition. Screenings and dewatered sludge are
12 hailed off site for disposal at a properly permitted solid waste landfill.

13 The EGMA WWTP is permitted at an annual average flow of 0.750 MGD and
14 permitted at an annual average flow for the Applebrook golf course irrigation pond of
15 0.135 MGD. The EGMA WWTP has a design hydraulic capacity of 0.750 MGD and the
16 lagoon has a design hydraulic capacity of 0.135 MGD for the subject golf course
17 irrigation. Treated effluent from the WWTP is sent to the irrigation pond when requested
18 by the golf course turf manager. The 2020 annual average flow was 0.461 MGD and the
19 3-month maximum average flow was 0.497 MGD. The EGMA WWTP is permitted for a
20 maximum organic loading of 2,098 lbs./day. The 2020 maximum month organic loading
21 was 1,123 lbs./day.

22 The EWT collection and transmission piping is summarized in the Engineering
23 Assessment included as Exhibit D to the Application.

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Q. Please provide the elevations¹ for the VFSA WWTP, the Malvern Hunt WWTP, the EGMA WWTP and the Requested Territory.

A. VFSA WWTP: elevation generally varies between EL 90 to EL 105.

Malvern Hunt WWTP: elevation generally varies between EL 356 to EL 362.

EGMA WWTP: elevation generally varies between EL 365 to EL 380.

Requested Territory: Area elevations vary generally from:

- EL 354 to EL 566 along the western boundary.
- EL 364 to EL 582 along the southern boundary.
- EL 388 to EL 666 along the northern boundary.
- EL 198 to EL 364 along the eastern boundary.

EWT Pump Stations: Pump Station elevations are approximately:

- P.S. 1 (Deer Run), EL 329.
- P.S. 2 (Mill Lane), EL 278.
- P.S. 3 (Wilburdale), EL 354.
- P.S. 4 (Lee Boulevard), EL 338.
- P.S. 5 (Meadowview), EL 305.
- P.S. 6 (Flat Road), EL 345.
- P.S. 7 (Lapp Road), EL 241.
- P.S. 8 (Westgate), EL 352.
- P.S. 11 (Hillbrook Circle), EL 335.

¹ Elevation is approximate, and to the nearest two (2) feet interval based on PAMAP Program – Topographic Contours (2 ft Interval) 2006-2008 – DCNR PAMAP Program, <https://www.pasda.psu.edu/uci/DataSummary.aspx?dataset=1245>

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- 1 • P.S. 12 (King Road), EL 544.
- 2 • P.S. 13 (Malvern Hunt), EL 360.
- 3 • P.S. 14 (Planebrook Road), EL 352.
- 4

5 **Q. Please state the approximate time of the installation of the component facilities of**
6 **the system.**

7 A. With regard to the approximate time of the original construction, the VFSA WWTP was
8 finished construction and placed in service in approximately January 1978 and provided
9 basic primary treatment. The plant was upgraded in 2016 with a fourth clarifier as well
10 as a third gravity thicker and a third centrifuge. A new influent fine screen was added in
11 January 2020. The Malvern Hunt WWTP was constructed in 2000 and provided basic
12 aerated wastewater lagoon treatment. The EGMA WWTP was constructed in 1985 as an
13 extended aeration treatment system and was upgraded and expanded to a sequencing
14 batch reactor system in 2010.

15 The majority of the EWT System was originally constructed between 1968 and
16 1978 with a second phase of expansion between 1978 and 1988 to accommodate
17 expected growth. The System was expanded in the ensuing decades as new developments
18 were added to the System along with additional pump stations. However, the average age
19 of the pipe in the EWT System is approximately 32 years old.

20

21 **Q. Is Aqua planning any capital projects over the next 10 years?**

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1 A. Yes. Aqua looked at upgrades to pump stations, force mains, and gravity collection
2 systems based on facility conditions observed, facility age, and safety. Aqua estimates
3 that it will invest approximately \$16.92 million over the next 10 years.

4 Aqua will execute capital projects as set forth in Schedule 7.12 to the Asset
5 Purchase Agreement. These projects include sewer extensions for the Bacton Hill Road
6 and Swedesford Road areas as well as the Planebrook Road areas.

7 Upgrades to pump stations include pump replacement, electrical and mechanical
8 replacement, emergency generator replacement, as well as facilities upgrade. Force main
9 replacement will occur based on pipe age. Gravity collection system pipe rehabilitation
10 and replacement will occur based on an assessment of pipe age and condition. Aqua will
11 work with EWT and the DEP to address the inflow and infiltration (“I&I”) and sanitary
12 sewer overflows (“SSOs”) within the system if they were to occur. There were no
13 reported SSO’s in 2019 or 2020 as reported in the respective Chapter 94 Reports for the
14 respective systems.

15

16 **Q. Do you foresee any other projects that would be required in the immediate future?**

17 A. Replacement and upgrade of facilities will continue beyond Aqua’s 10-year capital plan
18 based on facility age and expected facility life span.

19

20 **Q. Please state the actual number of EWT customers by class and gallons treated.**EWT

21 has 3,895 customers. EWT groups customers by Sewer District A through E, and large
22 volume commercial and industrial customers.

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Service Area	District A/B	District C	District D	District E ²	Large Volume	Total
EWT	3,053	28	279	522	13	3,895

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3

The number of gallons treated by VFSA, EGMA and Malvern Hunt from EWT for the period of January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 is 505,789,000 gallons. EWT bills on an EDU basis and does not track consumption by class, except for large volume users.

4

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7

Q. Are the acquired EWT customers currently Aqua PA water customers?

8

A. Yes. EWT wastewater customers are currently served by Aqua PA and private wells for water service.

9

10

III. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

12

Q. Does the Application include NPDES permits?

13

A. Yes, although not part of the EWT System acquisition, the NPDES discharge permits for the VFSA WWTP and the EGMA WWTP are included in the Application as Exhibit N1 and N2.

14

15

16

17

Q. Does the Application include Water Quality Management (“WQM”) Permits?

18

A. Yes. The WQM permit for the Malvern Hunt WWTP is included with the Application as Exhibit M1. Although not part of the EWT System acquisition, the WQM Permits for the

19

² 2020 Year end customers totaled 522. The Atwater development has since been fully built out with 545 customers.

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1 VFSA WWTP, issued in 2010, and the EGMA WWTP, issued in 2008, are included in
2 the Application as Exhibits M2 and M3.

3

4 **Q. Are Act 537 plans included in the Application?**

5 A. Yes. EWT's Act 537 plan documents are included with the Application as Exhibit P1
6 (1995 Plan), Exhibit P2 (Special Study 2011), Exhibit P3 (Special Study 2013), Exhibit P4
7 (Special Study 2015), Exhibit P5 (Special Study 2016), and Exhibit P6 (Planning Modules).
8 The VFSA and EGMA Act 537 Plans are included with the Application as Exhibit P7 and
9 Exhibit P8, respectively.

10

11 **Q. Are there any Notices of Violation ("NOV") issued to EWT by the DEP in the last
12 five years?**

13 A. No.

14

15 **Q. Were there any other NOV's issued to EWT by the DEP during the last five years?**

16 A. To Aqua's knowledge, EWT has no Notices of Violation within the last five years.

17

18 **Q. Have there been any Consent Assessments of Civil Penalty ("CACP") entered into
19 by the Township and the DEP?**

20 A. No. There are no current CACPs entered into by the Township and the DEP.

21

22 **Q. Please state if there are any current environmental compliance issues for the EWT
23 System.**

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1 A. EWT did not have any SSOs in 2020 per the Chapter 94 reports submitted by the
2 Township. EWT was released from its Corrective Action Plan (“CAP”) in 2015.

3

4 **Q. Are there any noncompliance issues pending with the United States Environmental**
5 **Protection Agency (“EPA”)?**

6 A. No.

7

8 **Q. Please state the estimated number of future connections for the system for the next 5**
9 **years.**

10 A. The below table provides projected equivalent dwelling units (“EDU”) for the next five
11 years (2021-2025):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Total (Rounded)
EWT	550.4	740.5	681	427.5	43	2,442

12

13 **Q. Is there present system capacity to meet the demands of current and future**
14 **customers?**

15 A. Yes. While the 2020 Chapter 94 Report for the Mill Lane Pump Station shows an existing
16 and projected hydraulic overload condition, we understand that a spreadsheet error was
17 made in Attachment F of the 2020 Chapter 94 Report which will be corrected and
18 submitted to DEP to show that an existing and projected hydraulic overload in fact does
19 not exist within the 2-year reporting window. The revised Chapter 94 Attachment F will
20 be provided upon revision.

21

1 **IV. INTEGRATION OF EWT SYSTEM, TECHNICAL FITNESS AND PUBLIC**
2 **BENEFIT**

3 **Q. Please state how many miles the EWT System is from Aqua’s existing service**
4 **territory.**

5 A. The EWT System’s distance from Aqua’s existing service territory is as follows:

6

Buyer's Plant	Location	Approximate Distance to EWT (miles)
Willistown Woods System	West Chester, PA	5
Deerfield Knoll System	West Chester, PA	5
Plumsock System	West Chester, PA	5
Bryn Mawr, PA Corporate HQ	Bryn Mawr, PA	11

7

8 **Q. Will the EWT System be physically interconnected with Aqua’s system or be**
9 **operated as a standalone system?**

10 A. The EWT System will be operated as a standalone system within Aqua’s footprint.

11

12 **Q. Please describe how Aqua will integrate the operation of the EWT System into its**
13 **current operations.**

14 A. The operation of the EWT System will be managed from Aqua’s Southeastern Division
15 headquarters in Bryn Mawr, PA. Management, customer service, regulatory compliance,
16 engineering, financial, and ancillary services will be provided seamlessly from our
17 Southeastern Division office. Aqua plans to hire 3 additional operators to address the

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1 day-to-day operations of the EWT system; however, these operators may be used in other
2 Aqua systems in the area.

3

4 **Q. Will other Aqua PA employees assist in the operation of the system, if needed?**

5 A. Yes. Aqua has 27 wastewater operators, many holding dual water and wastewater
6 certifications, which may be called upon to assist in the operations of the system. These
7 operators are also supported by Aqua PA employees, which will benefit customers
8 through engineering and field service functions.

9

10 **Q. Please explain the support services that Aqua Services will provide to the EWT**
11 **System.**

12 A. Aqua Services, Inc. (“Aqua Services”), the Service Company for Essential, provides
13 expertise in a variety of areas to the subsidiaries of Essential. Aqua Services will provide
14 support to the operation of the system through its employees’ expertise in accounting and
15 financial, administrative, communications, corporate secretarial, customer service and
16 billing, engineering, fleet services, human resources, information systems, operations,
17 regulatory compliance, rates and regulatory, risk management, water quality, legal, and
18 purchasing, contracts and sales of real estate.

19

20 **Q. Does Aqua plan any physical, operational, and managerial changes after closing?**

21 A. As mentioned above, there are planned capital improvements and Aqua plans to hire 3
22 operators. The EWT System will be operated from Aqua’s Southeastern Division office.
23 There will be no other physical, operational, and managerial changes after closing.

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Q. Is the EWT System similar to other systems owned and operated by Aqua?

A. Yes. The EWT System, as stated above, is a wastewater collection system only. Aqua owns four (4) other collection only systems located within southeastern Pennsylvania.

Q. Do you believe that Aqua is technically fit to own and operate the system?

A. Yes.

Q. Please describe the Company's technical fitness and how the Company can provide quality and reliable service to EWT wastewater customers.

A. Aqua PA and Aqua are Class A utilities that already have certificates to operate throughout the Commonwealth and have acquired many systems in the last three decades. Aqua will provide quality and reliable service to the EWT wastewater customers given the Company's operational expertise as well as engineering support local to the EWT System. Aqua has expertise in troubleshooting mechanical equipment as well as wastewater treatment processes. Aqua also has expertise in operating wastewater collection and conveyance systems. Aqua strives to ensure the collection, conveyance and pumping systems which the Company owns provide continuous safe and reliable service. Aqua has worked with the Commission and statutory advocates to acquire and improve troubled wastewater systems (e.g., Washington Park Wastewater, Docket No. A230550F2000). In addition, Aqua was appointed receiver for the North Heidelberg Sewer Company system in Berks County by the Commission effective March 5, 2018. Aqua took over daily wastewater operations of the facility serving approximately 274

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1 customers on March 5, 2018. Aqua has provided operations service and improvements to
2 the system to ensure quality and reliable service.

3

4 **Q. Does Aqua have emergency preparedness measures in place?**

5 A. Yes. Aqua currently has emergency preparedness measures in place in order to ensure
6 security and continued service in emergency circumstances all of which have been
7 reviewed by the Commission.

8

9 **Q. Please explain Aqua's safety programs.**

10 A. Aqua and Aqua PA maintain safety programs that entail basic safety training in all the
11 major categories which operators and management personnel are required to complete
12 including but not limited to:

- 13 • Confined Space Training
- 14 • Back and Lifting Safety
- 15 • Work Zone Traffic Control
- 16 • Excavation Safety Awareness
- 17 • Fall Protection Training
- 18 • Hazard Communication
- 19 • Personal Protective Equipment
- 20 • Emergency Egress, Exits and Fire Safety
- 21 • Electrical Safety Training
- 22 • Control of Hazardous Energy | Lockout Tagout
- 23 • Respiratory Protection
- 24 • Hearing Conservation

25

26 Aqua's safety program and procedures provide public benefits in that the EWT customers
27 will have a leader in the wastewater industry providing service.

28

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1 **Q. Can Aqua provide adequate wastewater collection, treatment, or disposal capacity**
2 **to meet present and future customer demands?**

3 A. Yes. Aqua can provide adequate wastewater service for present and future customers.
4 Aqua will continue to make improvements to the system to ensure any future customer
5 demands are met.

6
7 **Q. Please summarize why you believe it is in the public benefit for Aqua to own and**
8 **operate the system.**

9 A. My explanation of Aqua's current operations, the EWT System's similarity to other
10 systems operated by Aqua, the EWT System's proximity to Aqua's service territory, the
11 additional support that will be provided by Aqua as an experienced wastewater utility,
12 and my explanation of Aqua's technical fitness, all support that it is in the public benefit
13 for Aqua to own and operate the EWT System.

14
15 **V. CONCLUSION**

16 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

17 A. Yes, it does. However, I reserve the right to supplement my testimony as additional
18 issues and facts arise during the course of this proceeding.

VERIFICATION

I, Mark J. Bubel, Sr., Project Engineer III, for Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc., hereby state that the facts set forth in my Direct Testimony, Aqua Statement No. 2, at PaPUC Docket No. A-2021-3026132, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information and belief and that I expect to be able to prove the same at a hearing held in this matter. I understand that the statements herein are made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa. C.S. § 4904 (relating to unsworn falsification to authorities).

Date: March 30, 2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark J. Bubel, Sr.', written over a horizontal line.

Mark J. Bubel, Sr.
Project Engineer III
Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc.