
PA Public Utility	
Commission,	
v.	
Pennsylvania American	
Water Company - Water	
And	
PA Public Utility	
Commission,	
v.	
Pennsylvania American	
Water Company - Wastewater	
Telephonic Public Input	
Hearing	

Docket Nos.:
R-2025-3057983
R-2025-3058051

Pages 1009 - 1237

Judge's Chambers
Piatt Place
301 5th Avenue
Suite 220
Pittsburgh, PA

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Docket Nos. R-2025-3057983, R-2025-3058051

Hearing Date: January 21, 2026

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>FOR IDENTIFICATION</u>	<u>IN EVIDENCE</u>
Yanni-1	1209	1209

Table and Testimony

Yanni 1

January 16, 2026

Dear PUC Council,

Thank you to the judges for the opportunity to speak today. I would also like to thank you for conducting this investigation and taking the time to hear the public's point of view. I am here today as a concerned citizen. Water is the most essential resource in the world, critical to life, the environment and our everyday transactions. Access to clean water is a high priority, as we know contaminated drinking water leads to adverse health effects such as disease, cancer and even death. I do believe that the PAWC has a responsibility to mitigate these risks by updating our water system and infrastructure to reduce PFA's and other potential hazards. I cannot argue that these updates are not needed, nor can I deny the reality that these projects require money to make it happen. In that sense I am not opposed to a reasonable rate increase. However, to propose an increase from 14%-50% is a drastic amount that does need further investigation. Especially when rates were just increased by 11% less than two years ago ("PUC Approves", 2024).

In the last 5 years, US water and sewer bills have increased by 24%, with the highest cost being the in the northeast region of the country (Bluefield Research, 2025). Elizabeth Triscari stated at Thursday's hearing that the EPA defines the water affordability threshold as 2%-2.5% of median income and that proposed rate increases will only result in 1%-1.37% of income being spent on water. According to the EPA's *Water Affordability Needs Assessment* (2024) the threshold for affordability is 3%-4.5%. While this higher number may sound like good news, unfortunately it does not mean we are well below threshold. According to the Duke *Water Affordability Dashboard* (2022), much of the Scranton district is already above the 1.37% that Ms. Triscari quoted. It is reported that 52% of homes spend more than 2% of their income on water. 27% spend more than 4% and 12.9% spend more than 7% of their income on water. If you reference Table 1 below, you will see that those paying the most are that of low-income families. Per the dashboard, some areas are already exceeding the 4.5%. These numbers reflect current data, without the rate increase. What will happen if this new rate proposal goes into effect? Will our elderly and low-income families have to choose between food or water for the month? Or water and their prescriptions?

Lastly, I can't help but mention the recent economic development projects that I also believe have to do with these rate increases and the need of infrastructure to support them. More than 97% of water used by data centers comes from municipal drinking water systems. A Google data center in Oregon has increased its water use by 52% within 3 years of opening, taking up over a quarter of the city's water supply (Bluefield Research, 2025). I don't think it is a coincidence that rate increases are going up so drastically as data centers

start to saturate the community. According to *The 36th Annual Virginia Water and Waste Water Report* from the Virginia Association of Counties, Loudon County (also known as data center alley) has seen yearly increases in water rates since 2014, from 3-5% per year. The most recent increase of 7% every year for the next 3 years is said to be due to increase supply and demand, increased operating cost, building and maintaining new business infrastructure and increase use of reclaimed water (Stantec, 2024).

I am not opposed to economic development and growth but the lack of transparency and involvement that the community has received from developers has been unsettling. Many data centers are protected by non-disclosure agreements which then allow them to not disclose their water or energy use (Gorey, 2025). I feel that they should be going about this in a considerate, responsible and sustainable way while not creating more burden on residents. Increased rate hikes to rush development is not in the best interest of the people. So, I just ask that you consider that as part of the bigger plan here. Because, if rates are already increasing before the data centers are in place, what is going to happen when they are in business? What is the projection then for water rates? We are already approaching the max of our affordability threshold, and I fear as a consumer that the scale is not going to tip in our favor. Thank You.

Jennifer Yanni.

Table 1.

[Hide Income-Based Charts](#) ⓘ

Income Dedicated to Water Services for Pennsylvania American Water Co- Scranton District at an annual cost of \$1,050
146 of the utilities in the map are shown.

Select to see a table based on census income brackets
(a utility must be selected)

This table shows the percent of households in the service area in each income range and the percent of income those households are spending on water services. The percent income is based on the middle of the income range.

Income Range	Percent of Households in Income Range	Cumulative Percent of Households in Income Range	Percent of Income to Water Services
Less than \$25,000	25.6%	25.6%	More than 4.2%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	24.3%	49.8%	2.8% (range: 2.1 to 4.2%)
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.6%	68.4%	1.7% (range: 1.4 to 2.1%)
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.4%	80.8%	1.2% (range: 1.1 to 1.4%)
\$100,000 to \$124,999	8.1%	88.9%	0.9% (range: 0.8 to 1.1%)
\$125,000 to \$149,999	4.6%	93.5%	0.8% (range: 0.7 to 0.8%)
More than \$150,000	6.5%	100.0%	Less than 0.7%

(From the Water Affordability Dashboard, Nicholas Institute for Energy, Environment & Sustainability, 2022).

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