

October 17, 2005

Martin R. Cohen
Illinois Commerce Commission
527 E. Capitol Avenue
Springfield, IL 62701

Mr. Cohen:

I am writing you this letter in conjunction with my formal complaint with hopes that your recent appointment as Chairman of the ICC will put an end to the highway robbery that Illinois American Water has been getting away with. The ICC should be ashamed of themselves, if not disbanded, for approving Illinois American's current rate of \$7.38 / 1,000 gallons and flat sewer fee of \$45.52/month. My wife and I use an average of 9,000 gallons/month and our average water/sewer bill is \$130/month!!! We are seriously considering selling our house solely because of the water bills, but I'm not sure anyone would buy it knowing the water rate is so high.

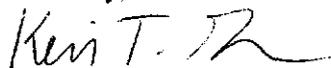
In our previous home 7 miles away, our average water bill was \$40/month and our average sewer bill was \$20/month. These figures represent "the norm" for this area for Lake Michigan water. I understand there are differences between a municipality and a private company like Illinois American. However, if Illinois American cannot provide water and sewer at a rate that is in the same ballpark as local municipalities, they should not be in the business of providing water at all.

Unlike cable television, which is also ridiculously over-priced, water is essential to daily life. At least with cable TV / satellite I have a choice of a few different providers. I can also choose not to receive cable TV at all. I do not have these options when it comes to receiving water in my home. I can only hope that the sole provider in the area provides good quality water at a reasonable rate. I thought the ICC existed to ensure this; I guess I was wrong.

I hope that this case is a rarity, but the Illinois Commerce Commission has failed its citizens miserably. No one in America should have to pay this much for something as basic as water and sewer. In the summer, Illinois American customers' water bills far exceed their car payments. My household's annual gross income is almost \$140,000 and we don't flush the toilets when we urinate because our water bills are so insanely expensive. We should not have to live like this.

I can only assume this is already on your radar because of the identical situation in Homer Glen, but I wanted to inform you this affects thousands of additional people in Lemont, Woodridge, and Bolingbrook. I will go door-to-door to get additional signatures from residents if it makes a difference; just let me know. Please do something to lower Illinois American's rates.

Sincerely,



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