

**IN THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
AT NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

IN RE:

**REQUEST OF THE CONSUMER)
ADVOCATE DIVISION IN THE)
OFFICE OF THE TENNESSEE)
ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR)
INFORMATION FROM LIMESTONE)
WATER UTILITY OPERATING CO.)**

DOCKET NO. 26-000 59

**CONSUMER ADVOCATE'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM LIMESTONE
WATER UTILITY OPERATING COMPANY PERTAINING TO COMMERCIAL
CUSTOMER DISCONNECTIONS**

The Consumer Advocate Division of the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General ("Consumer Advocate"), by and through counsel, pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-118, respectfully petitions the Tennessee Public Utility Commission ("TPUC" or the "Commission") to grant the Consumer Advocate's request to obtain information from Limestone Water Utility Operating Company ("Limestone," or the "Company"). Specifically, the Consumer Advocate requests that the Company provide information pertaining to customer notice of proposed disconnections of wastewater service. After the Consumer Advocate Division was contacted by a customer who received a pre-recorded message of disconnection, the Consumer Advocate is concerned that other similarly situated commercial customers could be receiving similar pre-recorded calls.

1. The Consumer Advocate is authorized by Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-118 to represent the interests of Tennessee consumers of public utilities services by initiating and intervening as a party in any matter or proceeding before the TPUC in accordance with the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 4-5-101, *et seq.*, and TPUC rules.

2. Under Tenn. Code Ann. § 65-4-101(b), if the Consumer Advocate “concludes that it is without sufficient information to initiate a proceeding, it may petition the commission, after notice to the affected utility, to obtain information from the utility.”

3. Limestone Water Utility Company, LLC is a public utility regulated by the Commission. It provides water service to approximately 580 water connections being served by two water systems and eight wastewater service to approximately 2,013 sewer connections in five (5) Tennessee counties.¹ The Company “part of a group of affiliated companies that directly or indirectly own and operate water or wastewater systems in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. . . . One of Limestone’s affiliates, CSWR, LLC (‘CSWR’), provides financial, technical, and managerial expertise and services to each of the group’s utility operating affiliates,” including Limestone.² Its principal place of business is located at 1630 Des Peres Road, Suite 140, St. Louis, Missouri, 63131.³

4. On or about May 15, 2026, Mr. Jay Patel with Stone Brook Inn notified the Consumer Advocate about a pre-recorded call stating that his wastewater service would be disconnected when Limestone representatives are in the area at an unspecified time in the future. Mr. Patel is a Limestone commercial customer who has a dispute regarding the assignment of Equivalent Residential Units (“ERU”) to his family’s business, Stone Brook Inn.⁴

¹ *Petition of Joint Application of Limestone Water Utility Operating Company, LLC, and the City of Grand Junction, for Approval of the Acquisition of and to Operate the Saulsbury Distribution Water System, and to Transfer or Issue a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity*, p. 4, Part II, ¶ 2, TPUC Docket No. 25-00036 (April 23, 2026).

² *Id.* at 5-6, Part II, ¶ 2.

³ *Id.* at 4, Part II, ¶ 2.

⁴ *Jay Patael via Email Public Comment*, TPUC Docket No. 24-00044 (April 28, 2026).

5. Limestone's obfuscation of its process of assigning ERUs resulted in confusion for its commercial customers like Mr. Patel. In addition, Limestone had no written formal process for a customer to raise a complaint about its assigned ERUs. To address these failings, the Commission, in its recent oral decision, specifically recognized that:

[T]he record shows that consumers have difficulty understanding how the methodology is applied to calculate their individual bills.

To address this concern, I propose the following:

- (1) The Company shall file a comprehensive ERU Appendix to its tariff that explains in detail how ERUs are calculated, identifies all reference sources, and defines all customer classifications in simple, easy-to-understand terms, so that each classification clearly describes the basis for its assignment;
- (2) The Company shall notify each customer, through a bill insert or other direct communication, of the classification assigned to the customer. Alternatively, the Company may prominently display the assigned classification on each customer's monthly billing materials.
- (3) The Company shall include in its tariff a formal process allowing customers to challenge their ERU assignment. This process shall include:
 - (a) the form and content of information required from the customer;
 - (b) a description of the process the Company will use to review and resolve assignment challenges;
 - (c) a requirement that the Company resolve challenges within 45 days of receiving a complete request;
 - (d) language stating that any changes to assigned ERUs will be applied prospectively; and
 - (e) beginning July 1, 2027, the filing of an Annual ERU Transparency Report covering the prior 12-month period ending May 31st, identifying all commercial ERU challenges, listing each customer's ERU assignment before and after review, explaining the data and methodology applied, and documenting any credits or refunds issued.⁵

6. After speaking with Mr. Patel and review of the rate case record regarding customer complaints about rate increases, the Consumer Advocate sent a letter to the Company inquiring

⁵ *Chairman David F. Jones' Motion Regarding Limestone's Phase 2 Rates*, TPUC Docket No. 24-00044 (June 2, 2026) (motion passed).

about the pre-recorded calls.⁶ The Consumer Advocate explained its concerns that similarly situated commercial customers could also be receiving this threat of a disconnection of service at an unspecified time.⁷ Therefore, the Consumer Advocate requested the information regarding Limestone's authorization to disconnect or have a local water utility disconnect a customer's water service, documentation supporting such authority, and identification of commercial customers who have received notice of termination.

7. On May 19, 2026, the Company sent a letter to the Consumer Advocate responding to request for information by explaining its multi-channel approach to notifying customers of past due balances.⁸ However, Limestone provided none of the information requested by the Consumer Advocate. Not only did Limestone refuse to provide details on disconnection notices of any of its commercial customers, it refused to provide details for Mr. Patel who contacted the Consumer Advocate. All such information is in the hands of Limestone; therefore, the Consumer Advocate cannot review and analyze the data unless Limestone provides such information.

8. The Consumer Advocate agrees with Limestone's need to notify customers of past due balances before service is disconnected. However, Limestone must comply with TPUC's rules, its tariff, and with state law regarding its notice of termination prior to termination of service. Without data and documentation from Limestone, the Consumer Advocate cannot review and evaluate Mr. Patel's complaint about Limestone's conduct in its threat to disconnect his

⁶ The Consumer Advocate filed this letter in TPUC Docket No. 24-00044 since the complainant was disputing the ERU assignment by Limestone within this docket. *Letter to Melvin J. Malone, Butler Snow LLP from Karen H. Stachowski, Consumer Advocate*, TPUC Docket No. 24-00044 (May 20, 2026). A copy of the letter to the Company is attached to this Petition as Exhibit "Request Ltr CA-1. It should be noted that the corrected TPUC Rule citation is 1220-04-12.14(2)(a)-(b).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Limestone Water Response to Consumer Advocate's May 19, 2026 Letter Regarding Disconnections*, TPUC Docket No. 24-00044 (May 22, 2026).

wastewater service or determine if the problem is more systemic in Limestone's processes and procedures.

9. Since Limestone failed to provide the requested information, the Consumer Advocate requests the Commission direct Limestone to provide detailed responses with supporting documentation to the Consumer Advocate's previously filed questions which are as follows:

(1) Stone Brook Inn (Shiloh Falls SOP-94011).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the First Utility District of Hardin County, which provides water service Stone Brook Inn, to terminate the water services for Stone Brook Inn, a Limestone wastewater customer as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a copy of the written notice of the termination of wastewater service to Stone Brook Inn.

(2) Shiloh Falls (SOP-94011) other than Stone Brook Inn.

- a. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- b. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(3) Aqua (SOP-92082).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(4) Arrington Retreat (SOP-04019).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(5) The Grasslands (NPDES TN0027278).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(6) The Hideaway/Troubadour (SOP-0790).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(7) Hardeman Springs (SOP-17002).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

(8) Lakeview Estates/DSH (SOP-07073).

- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
- b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
- d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

WHEREFORE, the Consumer Advocate respectfully requests that the Commission direct Limestone to respond in writing to the questions set out above and include a verification of the responses.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Handwritten signature of Jonathan Skrmetti in blue ink, with the words "ad permission" written above it.

JONATHAN SKRMETTI (BPR No. 031551)

Attorney General and Reporter
State of Tennessee

Handwritten signature of Karen H. Stachowski in blue ink.

KAREN H. STACHOWSKI (BPR No. 019607)

Deputy Attorney General

VANCE L. BROEMEL (BPR No. 011421)

Senior Attorney General

Office of the Tennessee Attorney General

Consumer Advocate Division

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Email: karen.stachowski@ag.tn.gov

Email: vance.broemel@ag.tn.gov

TPUC Docket No. 26-000_____

Consumer Advocate Petition for Information from Limestone

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing was served via U.S. Mail,
with a courtesy copy by electronic mail upon:

Melvin Malone
Butler Snow LLP
1320 Adams Street, Suite 1400
Nashville, TN 37208 Tel: (615) 651-6700
Email: Melvin.Malone@butlersnow.com

This the 9th day of July, 2026.



KAREN H. STACHOWSKI
Deputy Attorney General

Attachment 1:
Request Ltr CA-1

STATE OF TENNESSEE

Office of the Attorney General



JONATHAN SKRMETTI
ATTORNEY GENERAL AND REPORTER

P.O. BOX 20207, NASHVILLE, TN 37202
TELEPHONE (615)741-3491
FACSIMILE (615)741-2009

May 19, 2026

Melvin Malone, Esq.
Butler Snow LLP
1320 Adams Street, Suite 1400
Nashville, Tennessee 37208
Email: melvin.malone@butlersnow.com

RE: TPUC Docket No. 24-00044. Petition Of Limestone Water Utility Operating Company, LLC To Increase Charges, Fees and Rates, and For Approval of a General Rate Increase and Consolidated Rates

Dear Mr. Malone:

Mr. Jay Patel with Stone Brook Inn contacted the Consumer Advocate Division about a pre-recorded message he received from Limestone providing notice that his wastewater service will be disconnected. The message stated that Limestone representatives would be in the area at an unspecified time in the future to disconnect the service.

Considering this customer complaint, and concerns there are similarly situated commercial customers receiving pre-recorded calls, the Consumer Advocate has a few information requests for the Company regarding the wastewater systems subject to this Docket. Please respond to the following:

1. Stone Brook Inn (Shiloh Falls SOP-94011).
 - a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
 - b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the First Utility District of Hardin County, which provides water service Stone Brook Inn, to terminate the water services for Stone Brook Inn, a Limestone wastewater customer as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
 - c. Provide a copy of the written notice of the termination of wastewater service to Stone Brook Inn.

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2. Shiloh Falls (SOP-94011) other than Stone Brook Inn.
 - a. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
 - b. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.
3. Aqua (SOP-92082).
 - a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
 - b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
 - c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
 - d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.
4. Arrington Retreat (SOP-04019).
 - a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
 - b. Provide a copy of executed agreement between Limestone and the applicable water utility to terminate the water services to Limestone's commercial wastewater customers as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a).
 - c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
 - d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.
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- c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
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- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
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- a. Has Limestone installed or does it have exclusive rights to use a cutoff valve in the water line between the water meter and the premises as contemplated in TPUC Rule 1220-0-12-14(a)?
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 - c. Provide a list of commercial customers who have received pre-recorded calls regarding termination of Limestone's wastewater service.
 - d. Provide copies of the written notices of the termination of wastewater service to commercial customers issued since April 28, 2026.

The Consumer Advocate requests no information regarding Chapel Woods (NPDES TN0062073) commercial customers since it has no such customers per the filings by Limestone in this Docket. However, if this is incorrect, please let us know.

We appreciate your time and attention to this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at the above address or at karen.stachowski@ag.tn.gov.

Sincerely,



Karen H. Stachowski
Deputy Attorney General

cc: Tory Lawless, TPUC
Monica Smith-Ashford, Esq., TPUC
Chris Eaton, TPUC
Michelle Mairs, TPUC
Cole McCormick, TPUC