



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

## Kaminsky, Gillen Call For Investigation of American Water Billing Spikes

TODD KAMINSKY July 27, 2018

Dear Chair Rhoades, Ms. Story, Mr. Mazza and Ms. Burgess,

**We are writing to request that you commence an investigation into widespread complaints by American Water customers living in the Town of Hempstead who have experienced a sharp, inexplicable increase in their monthly water bills. In recent days, our offices have received scores of complaints from customers, some of whom have seen triple-digit billing increases, yet all of whom report that their water usage has not increased commensurately, if at all. Some of these constituents are elderly and live on a fixed-income, making these billing spikes untenable and troubling.**

**Specifically, residents from Southwest Nassau County reported to our offices that their bills have increased exorbitantly, in some cases doubling in the amount over the same period last year. When residents have reported these increases to American Water, the company told them that they must have a leak or other faulty mechanisms. In almost every case, upon inspection, no leak or faulty mechanism was discovered. When pressed for an explanation, American Water told our offices that these customers must be increasing their water usage. However, in nearly every case, constituents contend that they use automated sprinklers and their water usage has remained flat.**

Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky and Town of Hempstead Supervisor Laura Gillen called for an investigation of New York American Water after customers complained about sharp, inexplicable increases in their monthly water bills. The Town of Hempstead and the Senator's office received scores of complaints from customers, some of whom have seen triple-digit billing increases, yet all of whom report their water usage has not increased commensurately, if at all.

*July 27, 2018*

*John B. Rhodes, Chair*

*Susan N. Story, President/CEO*

*NYS Public Service Commission*

*NY American Water Company, Inc.*

*Three Empire State Plaza, 20th Floor*

*1025 Laurel Oak Road*

*Albany, NY 12223*

*Voorhees, NY 08043*

*Guy Mazza, Director*

*Hon. Kathleen Burgess*

*NYS Department of Public Service, LI*

*NYS Department of Public Service*

*125 East Bethpage Road*

*Three Empire State Plaza*

*Plainview, NY 11803*

*Albany, NY 12223*

*Dear Chairman Rhoades, Ms. Story, Mr. Mazza and Ms. Burgess,*

*We are writing to request that you commence an investigation into widespread complaints by Town of Hempstead, American Water customers who have experienced a sharp, inexplicable increase in their monthly water bills. In recent days, our offices have received scores of complaints from customers, some of whom have seen triple-digit billing increases, yet all of whom report that their water usage has not increased commensurately, if at all. Some of these constituents are elderly and live on a fixed-income, making these billing spikes untenable and troubling.*

*Specifically, residents from Southwest Nassau County reported to our offices that their bills have increased exorbitantly, in some cases doubling in the amount over the same period last year. When residents have reported these increases to American Water, the company told them that they must have a leak or other faulty mechanisms. In almost every case, upon inspection, no leak or faulty mechanism was discovered. When pressed for an explanation, American Water told our offices that these customers must be increasing their water usage. However, in nearly every case, constituents contend that they use automated sprinklers and their water usage has remained flat.*

*The cost of living on Long Island is high and this dramatic billing spike has residents stressed and confused. It is important that the Commission get to the bottom of what is going on. Long Islanders have no choice but to get their water from one source and depend on the fact that they are being treated fairly by the utility. We look forward to your response.*

*Sincerely,*

*Todd Kaminsky*

*Senator, 9th District*

*Laura Gillen*

*Supervisor, Town of Hempstead*