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August 6, 2024

VIA E-MAIL (IDTHEFT@OAG.STATE.MD.US)

Anthony G. Brown
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Security Breach Notification
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: Incident Notification

Dear Sir or Madam:

We are writing on behalf of our client, Blue Ridge Rural Water Company, Inc. ("Blue Ridge"), to notify your office of a security incident involving Maryland residents.¹ Blue Ridge is located at 2241 Fewes Chapel Rd., Greer, South Carolina 29651.

On July 23, 2024, Blue Ridge detected unusual activity within its corporate network, which is separate from its water management and delivery systems. It immediately implemented its response protocols, took measures to contain the activity, and launched an investigation. A cybersecurity firm that has assisted other companies with similar situations was engaged. Blue Ridge also notified law enforcement and is supporting its investigation.

The evidence showed that on July 23, 2024, an unauthorized actor viewed and obtained files stored on certain servers in Blue Ridge's network. Blue Ridge conducted a careful review of the files and determined that one or more of the files contained the names and Social Security numbers of two Maryland residents.

Today, August 6, 2024, Blue Ridge is mailing letters to the Maryland residents via United States Postal Service First-Class mail in accordance with Md. Code Ann., Com. Law. § 14-3504. A copy of the notification letter is enclosed. Blue Ridge is offering one year of complimentary

¹ This notice does not waive Blue Ridge's objection that it is not subject to Maryland's laws and that Maryland lacks jurisdiction over it regarding any claims relating to this incident.

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credit monitoring and identity protection services through CyEx Identity Defense Total to the residents. Blue Ridge also has established a dedicated, toll-free incident response line to answer questions that the residents may have.

To prevent something like this from happening again, Blue Ridge has taken and is taking steps to further enhance its existing security measures.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this incident.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. Bruemmer", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph L. Bruemmer
Partner

Enclosure



Secure Processing Center
P.O. Box 3826
Suwanee, GA 30024

Postal Endorsement Line

<<Full Name>>

<<Address 1>>

<<Address 2>>

<<Address 3>>

<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>

<<Country>>

***Postal IMB Barcode

<<Date>>

Dear <<Full Name>>:

The Blue Ridge Rural Water Company, Inc. recognizes the importance of protecting information. We are writing to inform you of an incident involving some of your information. This notice explains the incident, measures we have taken, and additional steps you may consider taking in response. The incident did not involve our water management and delivery systems.

What Happened?

On July 23, 2024, we detected unusual activity within our corporate network, which is separate from our water management and delivery systems. We immediately implemented our response protocols, took measures to contain the activity, and launched an investigation. A cybersecurity firm that has assisted other companies with similar situations was engaged. We also notified law enforcement and are supporting its investigation.

The evidence showed that on July 23, 2024, an unauthorized actor viewed and obtained files stored on certain servers in our network. We conducted a careful review of the files and determined that one or more of the files contained some of your information.

What Information Was Involved?

The file(s) contained your name and Social Security number.

What We Are Doing.

We wanted to notify you of this incident and to assure you that we take it seriously. To help prevent something like this from happening again, we have taken and are taking additional steps to further enhance our existing security measures.

What You Can Do.

We have arranged for you to receive one year of access to CyEx Identity Defense Total credit monitoring. This product is designed to detect potential misuse of your information and offers identity protection solutions aimed at promptly identifying and resolving any instances of identity theft. Activating this product will not impact your credit score negatively. For more information on identity theft prevention and CyEx Identity Defense Total, including instructions on how to activate your one year of access, as well as some additional steps you can take in response, please review the pages that follow this letter.

For More Information.

We regret that this occurred and apologize for any inconvenience. If you have any questions, please contact us at 833-215-3619, Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Sincerely,

Blue Ridge Rural Water Company, Inc.



<<Full Name>>

Enter your Activation Code: <<Activation Code>>

Enrollment Deadline: <<Enrollment Deadline>>

Service Term: 12 Months*

Identity Defense Total

Key Features

- 3-Bureau Credit Monitoring
- Monthly Credit Score and Tracker (VantageScore 3.0)
- Real-Time Authentication Alerts
- High-Risk Transaction Monitoring
- Address Change Monitoring
- Dark Web Monitoring
- Wallet Protection
- Security Freeze Assist
- \$1 Million Identity Theft Insurance**

Enrollment Instructions

To enroll in Identity Defense, visit app.identitydefense.com/enrollment/activate/brrwc

1. **Enter your unique Activation Code** <<Activation Code>>
Enter your Activation Code and click 'Redeem Code'.
2. **Create Your Account**
Enter your email address, create your password, and click 'Create Account'.
3. **Register**
Enter your legal name, home address, phone number, date of birth, Social Security Number, and click 'Complete Account'.
4. **Complete Activation**
Click 'Continue to Dashboard' to finish enrolling.

The deadline to enroll is <<Enrollment Deadline>>. After <<Enrollment Deadline>>, the enrollment process will close, and your Identity Defense code will no longer be active. If you do not enroll by <<Enrollment Deadline>>, you will not be able to take advantage of Identity Defense, so please enroll before the deadline.

If you need assistance with the enrollment process or have questions regarding Identity Defense, please call Identity Defense directly at 1.866.622.9303.

*Service Term begins on the date of enrollment, provided that the enrollment takes place during the approved enrollment period.

**Identity Theft Insurance is underwritten by insurance company subsidiaries or affiliates of American International Group, Inc. The description herein is a summary and intended for informational purposes only and does not include all terms, conditions, and exclusions of the policies described. Please refer to the actual policies for terms, conditions, and exclusions of coverage. Coverage may not be available in all jurisdictions.

ADDITIONAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

We remind you it is always advisable to be vigilant for incidents of fraud or identity theft by reviewing your account statements and free credit reports for any unauthorized activity. You may obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, once every 12 months from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies. To order your annual free credit report, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call toll free at 1-877-322-8228. Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting companies is as follows:

- *Equifax*, PO Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374, www.equifax.com, 1-888-378-4329
- *Experian*, PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com, 1-888-397-3742
- *TransUnion*, PO Box 1000, Chester, PA 19016, www.transunion.com, 1-800-916-8800

If you believe you are the victim of identity theft or have reason to believe your personal information has been misused, you should immediately contact the Federal Trade Commission and/or the Attorney General's office in your state. You can obtain information from these sources about steps an individual can take to avoid identity theft as well as information about fraud alerts and security freezes. You should also contact your local law enforcement authorities and file a police report. Obtain a copy of the police report in case you are asked to provide copies to creditors to correct your records. Contact information for the Federal Trade Commission is as follows:

- *Federal Trade Commission*, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580, 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338), www.identitytheft.gov

Fraud Alerts and Credit or Security Freezes:

Fraud Alerts: There are two types of general fraud alerts you can place on your credit report to put your creditors on notice that you may be a victim of fraud—an initial alert and an extended alert. You may ask that an initial fraud alert be placed on your credit report if you suspect you have been, or are about to be, a victim of identity theft. An initial fraud alert stays on your credit report for one year. You may have an extended alert placed on your credit report if you have already been a victim of identity theft with the appropriate documentary proof. An extended fraud alert stays on your credit report for seven years.

To place a fraud alert on your credit reports, contact one of the nationwide credit bureaus. A fraud alert is free. The credit bureau you contact must tell the other two, and all three will place an alert on their versions of your report.

For those in the military who want to protect their credit while deployed, an Active Duty Military Fraud Alert lasts for one year and can be renewed for the length of your deployment. The credit bureaus will also take you off their marketing lists for pre-screened credit card offers for two years, unless you ask them not to.

Credit or Security Freezes: You have the right to put a credit freeze, also known as a security freeze, on your credit file, free of charge, which makes it more difficult for identity thieves to open new accounts in your name. That's because most creditors need to see your credit report before they approve a new account. If they can't see your report, they may not extend the credit.

How do I place a freeze on my credit reports? There is no fee to place or lift a security freeze. Unlike a fraud alert, you must separately place a security freeze on your credit file at each credit reporting company. For information and instructions to place a security freeze, contact each of the credit reporting agencies at the addresses below:

- *Experian Security Freeze*, PO Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com
- *TransUnion Security Freeze*, PO Box 160, Woodlyn, PA 19094, www.transunion.com
- *Equifax Security Freeze*, PO Box 105788, Atlanta, GA 30348, www.equifax.com

You'll need to supply your name, address, date of birth, Social Security number and other personal information.

After receiving your freeze request, each credit bureau will provide you with a unique PIN (personal identification number) or password. Keep the PIN or password in a safe place. You will need it if you choose to lift the freeze.

How do I lift a freeze? A freeze remains in place until you ask the credit bureau to temporarily lift it or remove it altogether. If the request is made online or by phone, a credit bureau must lift a freeze within one hour. If the request is made by mail, then the bureau must lift the freeze no later than three business days after getting your request.

If you opt for a temporary lift because you are applying for credit or a job, and you can find out which credit bureau the business will contact for your file, you can save some time by lifting the freeze only at that particular credit bureau. Otherwise, you need to make the request with all three credit bureaus.

Blue Ridge Rural Water Company, Inc. is located at 2241 Fews Chapel Rd., Greer, SC 29651 and can be reached at (864) 895-1719.

Additional Information for Residents of the Following States

Maryland: You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *Maryland Attorney General's Office*, 200 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202, 1-888-743-0023 / 1-410-576-6300, www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/

New York: You may contact and obtain information from these state agencies: *New York Department of State Division of Consumer Protection*, One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12231-0001, 518-474-8583 / 1-800-697-1220, <http://www.dos.ny.gov/consumerprotection>; and *New York State Office of the Attorney General*, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341, 1-800-771-7755, <https://ag.ny.gov>

North Carolina: You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *North Carolina Attorney General's Office*, 9001 Mail Service Centre, Raleigh, NC 27699, 1-919-716-6000 / 1-877-566-7226, www.ncdoj.gov

Rhode Island: This incident involves <<RI Count>> individual in Rhode Island. Under Rhode Island law, you have the right to file and obtain a copy of a police report. You also have the right to request a security freeze, as described above. You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *Rhode Island Attorney General's Office*, 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903, 1-401-274-4400, www.riag.ri.gov