

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Paula Gianella,)	
)	
Complainant.)	
v.)	
)	Case No. GC-2008-0009
Laclede Gas Company,)	
)	
Respondent .)	

STAFF'S REPORT CONCERNING COMPLAINT

COMES NOW the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff) and in compliance with the Commission's August 12, 2007 Order Directing Filing submits the attached Staff Report:

1. On July 10, 2007, Paula Gianella filed a formal complaint case against Laclede Gas Company (Laclede or Company) stating in her complaint that her gas bills are too high.

2. In support of her complaint, Ms. Gianella compared her bills with a friends, had a HVAC company check her heating system and asked for a high bill investigation.

3. Laclede preformed a high bill inspection and checked Ms.Gianella's furnace and also checked for insulation problems. The inspector did not find any problems with the furnace and advised the Complainant that she had done more than enough to adequately insulate her home.

4. In an earlier complaint and again in this complaint, Ms. Gianella raises the issue that Laclede preformed a home sale inspection in the spring of 1996 when Ms. Gianella initially purchased the home and passed the furnace that was in the residence.

When the weather changed later in the year, and the Complainant used the furnace for the first time since moving to the residence, she ended up with carbon monoxide poisoning. Staff has informed Ms. Gianella that personal injury claims are beyond the jurisdiction of the Commisison.

5. Ms. Gianella is requesting that Laclede reimburse her out-of-pocket costs; that Laclede credit her account against already paid bills; and that Laclede pay personal and monetary damages sustained due to Company negligence regarding the safety inspection of furnace at or before the home closing.

“The Public Service Commission has full authority to investigate complaints about rates or service and can make reports to remedy the situation in the future, but it cannot grant monetary relief for compensation for past overcharges or damages.”

May Department Stores Company v. Union Electric Light & Power Company et al., S.W. 2d 41.58 (1937).

6. Staff has reviewed the information provided by Ms. Gianella with her formal complaint, along with Laclede’s records. Laclede’s records show that the Complainant’s monthly bills have been based on actual usage (Schedule 1).

7. Staff’s review of these records indicate that Ms. Gianella’s bills do not seem to be unreasonable considering the number of heating degree days and the cost of natural gas.

8. As a result of the high bill inspection, Ms. Gianella’s requested that the meter be tested Laclede removed the meter at Ms. Gianella’s residence. Laclede sent a letter to Ms. Gianella on April 26, 2007, which invited the Complainant to witness the special meter test scheduled for May 11, 2007, at 10:15 am. The special meter test

was preformed on May 11, 2007, which showed that the meter tested within standards (Schedule 3).

9. In its investigation, Staff has not found any tariff or rule violations by Laclede that would warrant a recommendation other than that the Commission dismisses this complaint.

10. Staff understands that Ms. Gianella has taken steps to reduce her gas bills, Staff's investigation does not indicate that Complainant's bills are unreasonable when the cost of natural gas and the heating degree days for each period are considered. Staff does not rely on bill comparisons because each customer's usage may vary depending on a number of factors including: the number and type of gas appliances in the home, when occupants are home, and home construction.

11. Staff's investigation shows that Laclede has not violated any Commission rules or filed tariffs for the billings rendered to Ms. Gianella and recommends that this complaint may be dismissed.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Lera L. Shemwell

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Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or emailed to all counsel of record this 11th day of September, 2007.

/s/ Lera L. Shemwell