

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

David E. Shewmon)	
10421 Hopewell Hills Dr.)	
Cincinnati, Ohio 45249)	
)	
Complainant)	Case No. 17-2207-EL-CSS
)	
v.)	
)	
)	
Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.)	
)	
Respondent)	

ANSWER OF DUKE ENERGY OHIO, INC.

For its Answer to the Complaint of David F. Shewmon (Complainant), Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., (Duke Energy Ohio or Respondent) states as follows:

1. The Complaint is not in a form allowing for specific admission or denial as to individual allegations. Accordingly, Duke Energy Ohio generally denies the allegations set out in the Complaint.

2. In response to the allegations contained in the first paragraph of the Complaint, Duke Energy Ohio admits that it is exercising its lawful right, pursuant to grants of easement, to engage in vegetation management activities that include, but are not limited to, removing vegetation within its easement and right-of-way. Such removal is necessary to enable the continued safe and reliable operation of high-voltage power lines used in the provision of service to Duke Energy Ohio's customers, including those located in Cincinnati, Ohio. All remaining allegations of this paragraph are denied.

3. In response to the allegations contained in the second paragraph of the Complaint, Duke Energy Ohio denies that it is negatively impacting Complainant's property value. Duke Energy Ohio admits that it is exercising its lawful right, pursuant to grants of easement, to engage in vegetation management activities that include, but are not limited to, removing vegetation within its easement and right-of-way. Such removal is necessary to enable the continued safe and reliable operation of high-voltage power lines used in the provision of service to Duke Energy Ohio's customers, including those located in Cincinnati, Ohio. Answering further, Duke Energy Ohio states that its actions are consistent with its express grants of easement and with its Programs for Inspection, Maintenance, Repair and Replacement of Distribution and Transmission Lines, Section (f), as approved on June 13, 2016. All remaining allegations of this paragraph are denied.

4. Duke Energy Ohio denies each and every allegation of fact and conclusion of law not expressly admitted herein.

AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSES

1. Duke Energy Ohio asserts as an affirmative defense the easement attached to the Complaint does not concern the property owned by Complainants. Such easement, therefore, cannot support the Complaint. Answering further, such easement expressly confirms the rights of Duke Energy Ohio to engage in vegetation management activities with regard to the property on which such easement exists.

2. The Complainant does not assert any allegations of fact that would give rise to a cognizable claim against Duke Energy Ohio.

3. Duke Energy Ohio asserts as an affirmative defense that pursuant to R.C. 4905.26 and O.A.C. 4901-9-01-(B)(3), Complainant has failed to set forth reasonable grounds for complaint.

4. Duke Energy Ohio asserts as an affirmative defense that Complainant has not stated any request for relief that can be granted by this Commission.

5. Duke Energy Ohio asserts that to the extent Complainant is seeking monetary damages, such relief is beyond the scope of the Commission's jurisdiction.

6. Duke Energy Ohio asserts that, to the extent the Complainant is seeking equitable relief, such relief is beyond the scope of the Commission's jurisdiction.

7. Duke Energy Ohio asserts that it has superior property rights, as confirmed by lawful grants of easement.

8. Duke Energy Ohio reserves the right to raise additional affirmative defenses or to withdraw any of the foregoing affirmative defenses as may become necessary during the investigation and discovery of this matter.

CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, having fully answered, Duke Energy Ohio respectfully requests that the Commission dismiss the Complaint of David E. Shewmon for failure to set forth reasonable grounds for the Complaint and to deny Complainant's request for relief, if any.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Elizabeth H. Watts

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Attorneys for Respondent Duke Energy Ohio, Inc.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing Answer of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., was served via regular US Mail postage prepaid, or by electronic mail service, this 14th day of November 2017, upon the following:

David E. Shewmon
10421 Hopewell Hills Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45249

/s/ Elizabeth H. Watts

Elizabeth H. Watts