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October 1, 2021

Ms. Tanowa M. Troupe
PUCO Docketing Division
180 East Broad Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3716

Re: *In the Matter of the Application of Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., for an Increase in Electric Distribution Rates*
PUCO Case Nos. 21-887-EL-AIR, *et al.*
MPP Functional Area Three, Exhibits CS-1 and CS-2

Dear Ms. Troupe:

Duke Energy Ohio, Inc., (Company) filed a motion for a protective order today, in the above-referenced proceedings. As described in footnote 2 of that document, the Company is filing, with this letter Exhibits CS-1 and CS-2, which are attachments to the third functional area of the MPP.

Should you have any questions or comments regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

/s/Jeanne W. Kingery

Jeanne W. Kingery
Associate General Counsel

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

Introduction

In this lesson, you will be able to identify a high bill call and assist the customer with their inquiries by reviewing several factors that can cause high bills.

Objectives

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- Determine if the customer is inquiring about a true high bill call, or if the high bill is due to some other factor on the account
- Explain a high bill call to the customer
- Offer programs to assist the customer with their high bill
- Satisfy the customer's high bill question

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

Customers buy our service 24 hours a day, 365 days per year. The utility bill can take up a large chunk of the customer's monthly income, especially during the extreme heating and cooling seasons.

Customers call Duke Energy because they don't understand our business like you do; it's not their area of expertise. They have just experienced "sticker shock" and are hoping something is wrong with their bill because how the meter works, along with our billing system is mysterious to them.

With any type of High Bill call, you need to check the following items first:

- What is the customer questioning? Are the current charges in question, or is there a balance forward that's causing the inquiry?
- Are there transferred final bills added to the account? Transferred payments? Returned checks? Miscellaneous charges? Cancelled and rebilled charges?
- Are the reads estimated?
- Do the meter reads appear to be over read or under read?
- How many days are in the current billing cycle compared to previous months?

Once you have checked everything above and it's all okay, then it's time to decide if this is a high bill call that falls into one of these categories:

- Heating (gas meter usage)
- Air Conditioning (electric meter usage)
- Non-heating/air conditioning (maybe something else is driving the high bill)

Before we break each of these down, start off by comparing the usage (gas or electric) to the same time last year (current customer or previous customer). Are these numbers comparable?

03/07/11	1649	139	MRD	Y
02/04/11	1510	176	MRD	Y
01/06/11	1334	184	MRD	Y
12/03/10	1150	84	MRD	Y
11/02/10	1066	34	MRD	Y
10/04/10	1032	19	MRD	Y
09/02/10	1013	16	MRD	Y
08/04/10	0997	16	MRD	Y
07/06/10	0981	20	MRD	Y
06/04/10	0961	25	MRD	Y
05/05/10	0936	32	MRD	Y
04/06/10	0904	74	MRD	Y
03/05/10	0830	151	MRD	Y
02/04/10	0679	156	MRD	Y
01/06/10	0523	178	MRD	Y
12/03/09	0345	77	MRD	Y

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

In the previous screenshot, if the customer was calling concerning their bill after the February 4, 2011 meter read, we can see that the customer used 20 CCF's more in 2011 than 2010.

- The weather for the billing period always influences the use of air conditioning or heating devices
- The level of insulation and “tightness” of the dwelling are a big factor
- The relative condition of appliances and devices determines the efficiency of use
- Personal habits, choices, and preferences determine the demand for service delivered through the meter
- Square footage of the house might be a factor
- Rates could be a factor
 - Rate per kWh or CCF
 - Fuel Adjustment Clause
 - Riders
 - Etc.
- Number of days in the billing cycle

So, how do we help the customer understand the 20 CCF increase from 2010 to 2011? We know that the meters were read, not estimated. The billing cycle was the same.

- Ask the customer ***probing questions***
 - Did they have anybody “extra” stay with them during the February 2011 bill cycle that they didn’t have in 2010?
 - Maybe a son or daughter came home from college, for example, or the parents visited for a week or two
 - What is the thermostat set at?
 - Is it the same setting as last year?
 - Did the customer add any additional gas appliances to the home?
 - Maybe they just added a gas fireplace?
 - Do they have any faulty appliances that they are aware of?
 - Do they maintain these appliances according to the manufacturer's suggestions?
 - How big is their home/apartment?

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

Why does the weather and the different seasons have such an impact on a customer's bill? Let's take a deeper look.

- Heating
 - The cold weather means that your heating system is going to start working. The colder it is, the more energy is needed to heat your home.
 - If you have your thermostat set at 75° and it's only 60° outside, your furnace only has to make up that 15° difference.
 - But, imagine if your thermostat is set at 75° and it's 15° outside. That's a difference of 60°. Your heating unit is going to run longer and more often to keep the temperature at 75° because of how cold it is outside.
 - If you use a heat pump or some other form of electric heat, then your electric bill will be higher for colder months. Even if you have a heating system that is primarily fueled by natural gas, it has a fan which uses electricity more during colder months
- Lighting
 - Winter also means longer nights and shorter days. You may find yourself turning the kitchen light on in the early evening more than you would in the summer.
 - The longer the lights are on, the more electricity you will use.
- Water Heating
 - In the winter, water comes into the home at a much colder temperature. This means that your water heater works harder to heat the water up to temperature.
 - Even if you use the same amount of hot water in the winter as you do in the summer, your water heater will still use more energy, pushing up your winter energy bills
- Holidays
 - Holiday celebrations can also increase your energy bills. Holiday cooking and baking certainly contribute to a higher bill. If you have guests for the holiday, you will have increased use with the lighting, water heater, and the television, for example. Decorative lighting – both inside and outside the home – also contributes to higher bills during the holiday season.

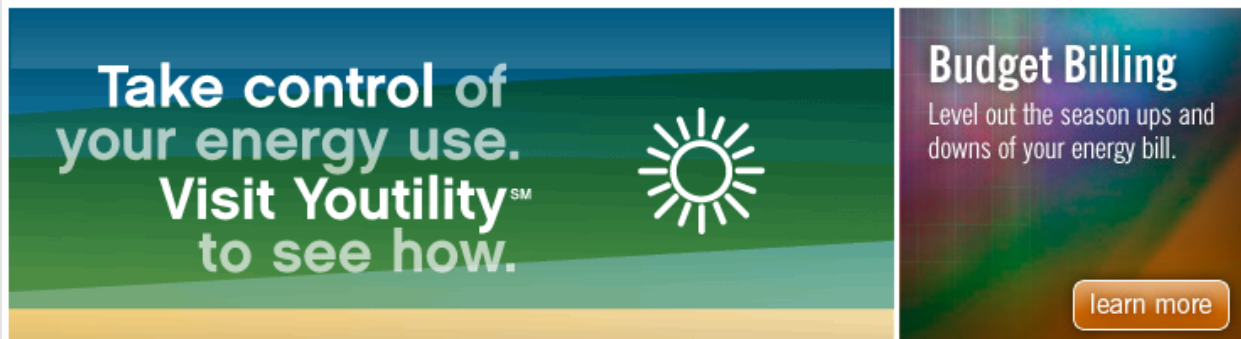
Only telling the customer that their high bill is “due to the weather” is not acceptable. We need to take it a step further by explaining how weather can impact the usage as described during this lesson. The Source has many more talking points around high bills. Look for these tips under the heading of ***Seasonal High Bill; Ways to Reduce Bill***.

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

Oftentimes, a customer might be calling about a high bill, but what they really need is some help managing their usage. Here are some solutions that can be offered to the customer:

- Budget Billing Plan
 - The customer will know what they owe every month, regardless of the usage
- Agreement/Payment arrangement
 - If the customer is eligible
- Provide names and phone numbers of local agencies that may be able to provide assistance
- Refer the customer to the Duke Energy Website to take advantage of various Winter programs for each state
 - The customer can also review ways to save on their energy bill each month

Save Energy & Money



The banner features a landscape background with a sun icon. On the left, it says "Take control of your energy use. Visit YoutilitySM to see how." On the right, it says "Budget Billing Level out the season ups and downs of your energy bill." with a "learn more" button.

[Easy Ways to Lower Your Bill](#)

Find out how you can save money by making small changes in your household routine.

[Calculate Your Home Energy Savings](#)

Get personalized recommendations on how you can save energy and money in your household.

[Understand Your Energy Usage](#)

Learn how you can get a Personalized Energy Report to help you better manage your energy costs.

[Energy Savings Q&A](#)

Get answers to your energy questions and learn how to make simple low cost changes that result in big savings.

[Save More with Home Improvements](#)

Our home improvement calculators help you determine which home improvements help you save energy and money.

[Energy & Money Saving Offers](#)

Take advantage of these money-saving offers to boost your home's energy efficiency.

[Low Income Programs](#)

Learn about our special assistance programs for low income customers.

Exhibit CS-1 High Bill Inquiries

Walking a customer through a high bill call takes a lot of finesse and understanding. Here are five key points to remember:

- **Patience**
 - Take time to let the customer tell their story
 - Guaranteed to take less time in the long run
 - Their first time telling you the story, your “millionth” time hearing it
 - **Many customers are calling not expecting to receive any help!!**
- **Be Humble**
 - Even if the customer is wrong or acting inappropriately, your strategy should be to proceed with humility in what you say and how you say it
 - This simple step often puts customers at ease and can quickly change the direction of the call
- **Focus on a Solution**
 - Put aside emotions, find the important details of the situation, and focus on what can be done to resolve the issue or the problem
 - Information and how it is exchanged is often the solution
 - In most cases, once you move the focus from the problem to the solution, the customer will follow your lead
- **Remain Poised**
 - Regardless of how the customer is acting, you should remain poised, calm, and CONFIDENT
 - This allows you to focus on the solution and shows the customer that you have the situation under control
- **Avoid Defensiveness**
 - Your job is to serve customers, not to defend yourself against them
 - Stick to the facts and carry on with finding a solution

Notate the account with any pertinent information discussed during the high bill call. Be sure to explain timeframes, charges, what is going to happen next, and review all other relevant information.

High bill calls can take an extended amount of time. However, if we handle it right the first time, we can prevent multiple calls from the same customer.

- Each additional time the customer calls back could result in an escalation, which takes even more time to resolve

Utilize your resources, including team leads and OJT's, in making sure the customer has a complete understanding of their high bill before the call is over.

Exhibit CS-2 DEMW Escalated Call Process

Introduction

In this lesson, you will be able to determine how to proceed with a customer's request to speak to a supervisor regarding an account specific complaint.

Objectives

After completing this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify if the customer is requesting an Supervisor
- Take control of the call by engaging in dialogue through making statements of reassurance
- Determine if the customer needs to speak with the team lead/OJT immediately, or if a call back will suffice

Exhibit CS-2 Escalated Call Process

Escalated calls are typically the result of increased intensity brought by a customer who wants to express frustration about a situation they believe warrants resolution with someone in a position of authority who can remedy the situation. More people tend to be brought in to the call once it becomes escalated. The relationship with the customer begins to deteriorate depending on how “high” the customer must go to get resolution.

Duke Energy Customer Services Leadership’s position is clear that the resolution needs to occur at the initial level of the call and when that is not possible, an escalated call process in place to review and resolve the issue. Our objective is to prevent a customer from escalating into a commission inquiry. We do **NOT** want to refer or make influence to a customer to contact the commission. We should always use the internal escalated call process and view complaints as a mechanism for continuous improvement and avoid taking a defensive mindset.

The initial customer call is typically received by a representative; then, based on the outcome, the call could escalate and the Escalated Call Process will begin. Representatives should not transfer direct-requests to speak with a supervisor without making multiple attempts to assist all customers with complaints, issues or problems. Use resources such as The Source, job-aids and portal to assist customers. Customers who refuse to speak with a representative should be encouraged to engage in dialog through making statements such as:

- Is there anything I can do to assist you? It may save you some time.
- My goal today is to assist you in a timely manner. Perhaps if you share your concern with me, I can help you.
- I don’t want to delay you. Is there something I can help you with?
- Your time is valuable to me and Duke Energy. I am able to assist with most concerns and will be glad to help you.
- Our supervisors are here to help customers, but there are many concerns that I am able to resolve.

Once the representative has attempted to resolve the issue and the caller continues to request to speak with someone else, the representative should:

- Determine if a team lead/OJT is available to take the call immediately:
 - If **yes**, the rep should:
 - Advise the customer that the transfer will be taking place. The rep should also provide the team lead/OJT with as much information about the account and the situation as possible
 - If **no**, the rep should:
 - Advise the customer that a supervisor will call them back within 4 hours. Rep should obtain a good contact phone number.
 - Send a workfile to their team lead/OJT with as much information as possible regarding the incident
 - If the rep’s individual team lead/OJT is out of the office, rep should send to another lead/OJT that is on duty that day

Exhibit CS-2 Escalated Call Process

- Notate the account regarding the interaction and whether the customer was immediately transferred to a team lead/OJT, or if a call back has been requested

The team lead/OJT will attempt to resolve the customer's concern. If they are unable to do so, the team lead/OJT will then get their supervisor involved. If the customer is still unsatisfied after speaking with the supervisor, the Escalated Complaints Team will get involved.

Note: Representatives should **never** advise the customer to call the commission. It is our job to handle the customer's complaint/concern.

Escalated Call Process Flow

MW Rep → Team Lead/OJT → Call Center Supervisor → Customer Complaints Team

Please also review The Source topic **DEMW – Customer Threats**