

BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Complaint of)	
Eva M. Hadley,)	
)	
Complainant,)	
)	
v.)	Case No. 14-2027-GA-CSS
)	
Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc.)	
)	
Respondent.)	

ENTRY

The attorney examiner finds:

- (1) On December 29, 2014, Eva M. Hadley (Complainant) filed a complaint with the Commission against Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. (Columbia or Respondent). In the complaint, Ms. Hadley states her Columbia bill issued March 13, 2014, listed a previous amount due of \$200.21, and a payment received on March 3, 2014, of \$200.21. Thus, Complainant contends her Columbia bill issued March 13, 2014, reflected a previous amount due of \$0.00. Further, the Complainant states she received a one-time Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) credit of \$256.00 to be submitted to Columbia and applied to her account. However, the Complainant states that her subsequent Columbia bill issued April 7, 2014, stated an amount due by April 23, 2014, of \$22.86. Further, the Complainant notes that, according to the bill issued May 7, 2014, the total amount due was \$107.37. Ms. Hadley argues that Columbia failed to properly apply the full amount of the HEAP credit to her account, and that, as a result, she has incurred late fees on her account. Filed along with the complaint are copies of Ms. Hadley's Columbia bills issued January 13, 2014, and March 13, 2014, through July 8, 2014, and two payment receipts dated June 9, 2014, and on or about February 24, 2014.¹

¹ The exact date of the receipt dated February 2014 is unclear.

- (2) On January 20, 2015, Columbia filed its answer to the complaint along with a chart of the billing history on the Complainant's account for November 2013, through December 2014 (Appendix A) and copies of the Complainant's Columbia bills issued November 2013, through December 2014 (Appendix B).

In its answer, Columbia admits that the Complainant is a customer with natural gas utility service to 920 Indiana Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43607. Respondent also admits that the Complainant's bill issued March 13, 2014, reflects: a previous amount due by February 26, 2014, of \$200.21; payments received by March 3, 2014, of \$200.21, and charges for the billing period totaling \$168.02, which included \$164.03 for natural gas and \$3.99 for optional services, due by March 28, 2014. Further, Columbia admits that a \$256.00 HEAP credit was applied to the Complainant's account as reflected on the bill issued April 7, 2014, resulting in a credit of \$87.98. Columbia avers that it has accurately billed the Complainant's account as detailed in Appendix A and supported by the bills issued and attached in Appendix B.

Respondent denies any allegation of wrongdoing as to the billing of Ms. Hadley's account. Furthermore, Columbia submits that the Complainant has failed to state reasonable grounds to sustain a complaint in accordance with R.C. 4905.26. Finally, Columbia states that it has complied with its tariff, all applicable Ohio statutes, and Commission rules, regulations and orders. Accordingly, Columbia requests that the complaint be dismissed.

- (3) At this time, the attorney examiner finds that this matter should be scheduled for a settlement conference. The purpose of the conference will be to explore the parties' willingness to negotiate a resolution of this complaint in lieu of an evidentiary hearing. In accordance with Ohio Adm.Code 4901-1-26, any statements made in an attempt to settle this matter without the need for an evidentiary hearing will not generally be admissible in future proceedings in this case or be admissible to prove liability or invalidity of a claim. Nothing prohibits any party from initiating settlement negotiations prior to the scheduled settlement conference. An attorney examiner with the Commission's Legal Department will facilitate the settlement process.

- (4) Pursuant to Ohio Adm.Code 4901-1-26(F), the representative of the public utility shall investigate the issues raised in the complaint prior to the settlement conference. Further, all parties participating in the conference shall be prepared to discuss settlement of the issues raised and shall have the requisite authority to settle those issues. In addition, parties participating in the settlement conference should have with them all documents relevant to this matter. Accordingly, a settlement conference shall be scheduled for February 24, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 1246, at the offices of the Commission, 12th Floor, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215.
- (5) At the conference, the parties should also be prepared to establish a procedural schedule for discovery and a hearing date to facilitate the timely and efficient processing of this complaint in the event this matter cannot be resolved during the conference.

It is, therefore,

ORDERED, That this case be scheduled for a conference on February 24, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 1246, at the offices of the Commission, 12th Floor, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215. It is, further,

ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon each party of record.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

s/ Greta See

By: Greta See
Attorney Examiner

JRJ/dah

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in

Case No(s). 14-2027-GA-CSS

Summary: Attorney Examiner Entry that this case be scheduled for a conference on February 24, 2015, at 1:00 p.m., in Room 1246, at the offices of the Commission, 12th Floor, 180 East Broad Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215; electronically filed by Debra Hight on behalf of Greta See, Attorney Examiner.