

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF PATRICIA RAYMOND,

COMPLAINANT,

v.

CASE NO. 21-787-EL-CSS

OHIO EDISON COMPANY,

RESPONDENT.

ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on March 3, 2022

{¶ 1} Pursuant to R.C. 4905.26, the Commission has authority to consider written complaints filed against a public utility by any person or corporation regarding any rate, service, regulation, or practice relating to any service furnished by the public utility that is in any respect unjust, unreasonable, insufficient, or unjustly discriminatory.

{¶ 2} Ohio Edison Company (OEC) is a public utility as defined in R.C. 4905.02 and, as such, is subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission.

{¶ 3} On July 8, 2021, Patricia Raymond (Ms. Raymond or Complainant) filed a complaint against OEC. Complainant contends that on February 23, 2021, WEI Energy Inc. (WEI), a subcontractor for OEC, installed a new smart meter at her home. Ms. Raymond alleges that, before making the change in meters, the WEI service representative informed her that power would be disrupted for about 15 seconds during installation. Complainant adds that, during the procedure, she “heard a loud cracking sound,” lights were flashing, and her refrigerator was “going crazy.” Ms. Raymond explains that she called WEI and was told to unplug her refrigerator, which was difficult because of the location of the electrical outlet. Complainant adds that a WEI agent sent after installation checked the meter and told her that the meter was “fine,” but did write a claim for the refrigerator. In Ms. Raymond’s opinion, there was a power surge when WEI installed the new meter, and the surge “blew out my thermostat, two televisions, my cable box and my in-house

vacuum system,” in addition to causing her refrigerator to operate incorrectly. Complainant explains that WEI has denied her claim. She adds that she also contacted OEC, but neither OEC nor WEI takes responsibility. Finally, Complainant expresses concern about the number of service technicians who have entered her residence to repair damaged appliances, thus placing her at risk of Covid.

{¶ 4} OEC filed its answer on July 28, 2021. OEC admits that a smart meter was installed at Complainant’s address on February 23, 2021, and that WEI performed a field visit at Ms. Raymond’s home on July 28, 2021, in response to her complaint regarding damage to appliances. OEC states that the WEI representative investigated the meter socket and meter but did not find any signs of overheating or arc damage, which would indicate whether a surge had occurred. OEC admits that it denied Ms. Raymond’s claim for damages to her appliances.

{¶ 5} The parties participated in a January 26, 2022 settlement conference but were unable to resolve the matter.

{¶ 6} Accordingly, a hearing will be held remotely on April 14, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and will be conducted using virtual hearing technology. Instructions for participation in the evidentiary hearing will be emailed to the parties. Additionally, all exhibits intended to be used on direct and cross-examination shall be marked and exchanged by the parties and provided to the attorney examiner via electronic means prior to the hearing. Individuals interested in attending the evidentiary hearing as a non-party can access the hearing using the link <https://bit.ly/21-787-EVH> and entering the password PUCO, or by calling 1-408-418-9388 and entering access code/event number 2334 618 4903.

{¶ 7} As is the case in all Commission complaint proceedings, the complainant has the burden of proving the allegations of the complaint. *Grossman v. Pub. Util. Comm.*, 5 Ohio St.2d 189, 214 N.E.2d 666 (1966).

{¶ 8} It is, therefore,

{¶ 9} ORDERED, That the evidentiary hearing take place as scheduled remotely on April 14, 2022, in accordance with Paragraph 6. It is, further,

{¶ 10} ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon all parties of record.

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

/s/James M. Lynn

By: James M. Lynn
Attorney Examiner

SJP/hac

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities
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in

Case No(s). 21-0787-EL-CSS

Summary: Attorney Examiner Entry ordering that the evidentiary hearing take place as scheduled remotely on April 14, 2022, in accordance with Paragraph 6 electronically filed by Heather A. Chilcote on behalf of James M. Lynn, Attorney Examiner, Public Utilities Commission