

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Regarding the “prayer for relief” which Questar Gas has made to the Public Service Commission of Utah I think that a number of things need to be put into perspective or check.

1. The insinuation made by the local broadcasting company KSL that there are contractors **“double dipping”** is simply a false statement and needs to be taken out of all conversations regarding this issue. It insinuates that contractors are sneaky, conniving, tricky people who are looking at taking more than their fair share. Has it not long been established that we are a capitalistic society and that we can determine our margins, our overhead, the cost we desire to spend on advertising, and the price that we can offer our services and materials at? Now let me put this into a clear precise message.
2. I’m going to pick on a local large company, Home Depot, who has determined that based on the previously mentioned items that they need to charge the following in order to make the profit that their company has determined that they need to make in order to stay profitable.



3. Having presented this information, I don’t think that it’s fair for anyone to state that contractors are “Double Dipping”. There are some of us smaller contractors out here who have little overhead, do little in regards to advertising costs, and are personally going door to door to make sales work. When you’re meeting with a sweet grandma or a widow of six, sometimes you make margins work that you’d never allow in any other case. You give them the deal for a near cost basis. Because some contractors have been very, very generous to people, people feel that the contractor needs to or is required to offer that low, generous price to all people. I believe this to be false. It certainly shouldn’t be considered “Price Gauging” when you take the average size attic at let’s say for arguments purpose, 1,000 square feet, and times it by \$.35 and as a contractor make \$350.00 on a job that takes a good amount of time, energy, effort, “pounding the pavement”, \$350.00 isn’t a slaying to make on a job of that nature. Especially as you can clearly see above what is being made by a national big box company. THIS IS A CAPITALISTIC SOCIETY.

Regarding the story that was completed by KSL in a very timely manner with the filing of Questar's request for a drop in rebate price to one that was more of an incentive than a "free upgrade" was an absolute one-sided horrific piece that if I were in any position at KSL to talk to my "Journalist" regarding her investigation it would have probably been a "you're looking for a new job" type of a talk, unless they had incentives from Questar to do it.

I think a big portion of the problem is the number of participants that Questar wants using their incentives. They had estimated that 8 homes among the 650,000 home Wasatch Front would use their "Duct Sealing" incentive. They didn't want the kind of participation that they are getting. See, in order for them to make more money, they need more energy flowing with a "margin" on the money that is flowing. It would be great to see them try and instigate an incentive program that more than 2 line items (attic insulation – estimated participants out of 650,000 homes was 7,012, and windows – estimated participants out of 650,000 homes was 7,166) would have more than just a 1% participation rate. Those numbers are horrific. Their actions are speaking louder than their words.

We are trying to make America a country which is not bound by the powers that have the ability to control portions of our energy. We want become an energy efficient nation, and that starts at home. As "Homeowners should generally concentrate on adding additional attic insulation as it provides the best payoff." - Public Service Commission State of Utah Web Site as of 3/24/2009

I think that this entire scam has been all too tiresome and am sick of the games that Questar Gas is playing, from informing all of the Contractors that it will continue through 2010 and then to yank the rug out from under our feet as that we've spent all the costs that would be necessary to run through the year. Based on their earlier statements, we spent \$12,000-\$15,000 creating material, forms, bank accounts, companies, applying for credit cards, 90 days same as cash, etc and spending countless hours in so doing in order that we be ready to help the people upon being set-up.

Questar sent out a flyer with all of their invoices in March that stated that consumers "Avoid contractors who come to your home seeking business". I say "Shame on Questar Gas Company". They want their program to fail. They want the contractors who are trying to help homeowners benefit from their programs to fail. I think that Questar has done a very poor job handling this from the slopping reporting job that they asked KSL Investigates to do, to the flyer that they sent out, to the "prayer for relief".

They do not have the public's interest in their best mind. Actions speak volumes over words.

A plan that would work, and help all involved has been outlined in a previous email which I sent last night to the commissioners. I would ask the commissioners to think long and hard about all that has very quickly, too quickly occurred in the past 3 weeks. Why so fast? They don't want questions. They don't want understanding. They don't want their program to succeed. That's why. Their actions are yelling so loud I can't make out what they are saying.

Sincerely yet again,

Matthew Milar