

Informal Complaint Report

Index Number: 4457 **Company Name:** Rocky Mountain Power

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

Customer Name: Caithness Condo HOA **Account Number:** 75489749-0019
Other Contact Info: Joel **Phone Number:** (801) 718-0278
Customer Address: **Other Phone:**
Customer Address: 86 N. B Street **Email Address:**
City: Salt Lake City **State:** UT **Zip Code:** 84103

COMPLAINT INFORMATION

Type of Call: Complaint **Complaint Type:**
Date Received: 5 /8 /2012 **Date Resolved:** 5 /11/2012
Complaint Received By: Maria Martinez **DPU Analyst Assigned:**
Utility Company Analyst:
Company at Fault: **Actual Slamming Case:** **Actual Cramming Case:**

Complaint Description:

This call was forwarded by the Commission (PSC). Please respond.

Background:

The building is 103 years old and operates on its original power system. In 2010, the condo HOA hired an engineering firm to assess what's needed and what entails a total replacement of the building's electrical system.

According to Joe, he met two RMP representatives in 2010 and verbally agreed that a master meter can be done. The plan and specifications was then given to the engineering firm. However, when Joe met with two different RMP representatives in 2011, he was given a different solution. Also, when the plan was sent to several different contractors, RMP had given the project a new job number, different specifications, etc. from the previous plan given in 2010. RMP now requires that each apartment unit have its own meter. It has gone from verbally agreeing to have a master meter for the building in 2010, to now requiring 34 individual meters. The issue is that there are no more flat surfaces in the building. There would be nowhere to put the individual meters as well as it would cost more.

The HOA would like to know why having a master meter is no longer allowed.

Complaint Response:

5-11-2012
Caithness Homeowners Assoc.
86 N. B St.
Salt Lake City, UT 84103

For Review:

The building is 103 years old and operates on its original power system. In 2010, the condo HOA hired an engineering firm to assess what's needed and what entails a total replacement of the building's electrical system. According to Joe, he met two RMP representatives in 2010 and verbally agreed that a master meter can be done.

***There is no record of a verbal agreement to allow for master metering. There is record of a June 2010 request in which Mr. Joel Smith inquired about upgrading service at the 86 B St. address. A meeting took place on June 10, 2010 and the customer informed the estimator they were considering upgrading from a 200 amp installation to a 1200 amp installation. The customer was advised that a load sheet was needed before the job could be planned. On June 18, 2010 the customer was again reminded that a load sheet was needed. The request did not progress any further beyond the initial meeting and after no additional contact from the customer the request was closed.

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The plan and specifications was then given to the engineering firm. However, when Joe met with two different RMP representatives in 2011, he was given a different solution.

On October 31, 2011 Mr. Smith called in a new request indicating they wanted to upgrade electrical service to the building, and an onsite meeting was held on November 2, 2011. The estimator was told the building had been a hotel prior to it being changed to condominiums, and now the HOA needed to upgrade the electrical service to allow for additional load to each unit, along with air conditioning. Mr. Smith was advised a completed load sheet was needed before the requested work could be designed and estimated. He was also informed his request for a new installation would need to follow code and applicable rules and tariffs, which requires installation of individual meters to each unit. Mr. Smith tried to convince the estimator that he received verbal permission to master meter at the June 2010 meeting. In February 2012 the request was closed due to inactivity.

Also, when the plan was sent to several different contractors, RMP had given the project a new job number, different specifications, etc. from the previous plan given in 2010. RMP now requires that each apartment unit have its own meter. It has gone from verbally agreeing to have a master meter for the building in 2010, to now requiring 34 individual meters. The issue is that there are no more flat surfaces in the building. There would be nowhere to put the individual meters as well as it would cost more.

***There have been multiple requests created for new service at the location over the last few years. Requests are closed out when there is a lack of activity on a request, typically after 90 days, which is what happened in this case. There is no record of an agreement to master meter the condominiums. In terms of lack of flat services on the building, the Company would work with the customer and can allow for a free-standing metering installation. However, none of the past requests, or the current request, has progressed to the point of a firm written estimate or design as the estimating department is still waiting for a load sheet.

On April 13, 2012 a request was initiated by Far-West Electric, and then later on May 3, 2012 by Hunt Electric. Both contractors indicated they were bidding on the project to do the electrical work. The estimator relayed the same basic requirements to each contractor: a load sheet is still needed, master metering is not an option, and each unit plus the common areas would need to be metered, for a total of 36 individually metered services.

The HOA would like to know why having a master meter is no longer allowed.

***The construction of new or remodeled installations and the maintenance of electrical facilities must conform to applicable codes, provisions, rules, ordinances, and requirements set forth by governments, agencies, and the utility.

Master metering is restricted by PURPA – Standards for Master-Metered Multiple Tenancy Dwellings, which standard was adopted by the commission, R746-210-1.

The customer's request will involve installing new electrical service to the building which will necessitate government and Company inspections prior switching on power. A building permit will likely be required before the electricians commence work as well. When new service is installed the installation is required to adhere to current code and requirements.

Please note that when the hotel was converted to condominiums the Company was not aware of the changes because the electrical system wasn't converted at the time. Although hotels, motels, nursing homes and other "transient multiple occupancy buildings" are exempted under the rule that prohibits master-metering, condominiums are not exempted, and require individual metering.

Customer Contact & Summary

I was able to speak with Mr. Smith this morning and discuss the above information. He maintained he was provided an option to continue to master meter the building in conjunction with the replacement of the building's electrical system. I advised Mr. Smith I have no record of this and confirmed that from the information we currently have this wouldn't be an option for him. He stated that rules are meant to be amended and changed, and he had thought the rule governing master-metered services was the Company's. I clarified that it is not our rule, but our tariff does align with the rule.

The conversation was mostly amicable but it was clear that Mr. Smith was frustrated with the situation. I let Mr. Smith know the Division of Public Utilities would review our response, and I agreed he would be sent a copy.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns, and we'll show that a response has been provided on our end.

Thank you,
Eric Holje
Regulatory Analyst
(801) 955-2456

Additional Information:

May 14, 2012

Caithness Homeowners Association
1390 Thornton Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT 84105-1611
c/o Joel Smith @ Sierra Management

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Dear Mr. Smith:

The Utah Public Service Commission has requested that I investigate and respond to questions concerning your request for electrical service at 86 B St., Salt Lake City, UT. Your concerns were received by our office on May 8, 2012 and a response provided to the Division of Public Utilities on May 11.

As was explained during our conversation on May 11, electrical service for each condominium will need to be individually metered if new service to the building is installed. Enclosed is my response to the concerns that you filed with the commission.

If you have any questions concerning the information provided, or if I can be of any further assistance, please let me know. I can be reached at (801) 955-2456, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Kindest Regards,

Eric Holje
Customer & Regulatory Liaison

C- Maria Martinez - Utah Division of Public Utilities

5-24-2012

Mr. Smith called and was sent a copy of this report as well as the Formal Complaint form. Sent to: 1390 Thornton Ave, Salt Lake City, UT 84105

