

Informal Complaint Report

Index Number: 1502395649 **Company Name:** Rocky Mountain Power

CUSTOMER INFORMATION

Customer Name: Seftel, Steven **Account Number:** 67233001-001
Other Contact Info: **Phone Number:** (801) 860-4358
Customer Address: 2500 S 600 E **Other Phone:**
Customer Address: **Email Address:** socastevie@yahoo.com
City: Salt Lake City **State:** UT **Zip Code:** 84106

COMPLAINT INFORMATION

Type of Call: Inquiry **Complaint Type:** Non-Regulated
Date Received: 8/10/2017 **Date Resolved:** 8/10/2017
Complaint Received By: Stefanie Liebert **DPU Analyst Assigned:** 0
Utility Company Analyst:
Company at Fault: **Actual Slamming Case:** **Actual Cramming Case:**

Complaint Description:

The following complaint was received via e-mail and has been copied and sent exactly as received.

DPU ONLINE COMPLAINT
UTILITY CUSTOMER
FROM: steven seftel

CONTACT: steven seftel

PHONE: 8018604358

OTHER PHONE: 8018604358

EMAIL: socastevie@yahoo.com

SERVICE ADDRESS:
2500s 600e salt lake city, UT 84106

MAILING ADDRESS:
2500s 600e salt lake city, UT 84106

INCIDENT DETAILS

UTILITY: Rocky Mountain Power

ACCOUNT NUMBER: 67233001-001

COMPLAINT TYPE: Other

COMPLAINT:

On June 12, approximately 11:20 AM, our lights started flickering, then we momentarily lost power, then flickered again, then all incandescent lights were glowing dimly, which had never happened before. The kitchen fluorescent light began flickering. We soon smelled a strong odor of burning electrical motor. I immediately called Rocky Mtn Power and was told they would send someone to the house to inspect, and they would call first. I was

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also advised in that phone call to file a claim for any damage. I felt unsafe so walked through the house to find the source of odor. Towards the back of the main floor I heard a loud hum coming from the basement. I went down to investigate and found the furnace making the noise. We hadn't used the furnace for well over a month due to warm weather, and because we have other heat sources. I turned the power switch to the furnace off and the hum stopped. We left the house due to the strong, and surely unhealthy odor. A few hours later I received an automated call that "power has been restored in your area". I called RMP to ask about the status of their worker coming to the house, and now was told by Aubrey they do not provide this service, which contradicted what I was told previously. She advised me to file a damage claim with repair/replace estimate and information of the incident, and the cost of my service call. I had made a third call to RMP that day as well. I went home and aired out the house. The kitchen light continues to flicker occasionally since this incident. I had an ESCO technician come to the house (which I had to pay for) and he confirmed the odor present, and he confirmed that the furnace had just suffered electrical damage. He documented that all electrical parts would need to be replaced but he recommended replacing the furnace due to the excessive cost of repair and parts. We had never had a minute's trouble with the furnace before, and I would maintain it regularly. On June 19, 12:52PM, I called RMP Operations Department and spoke to Maria to start a claim. She gave me claim# 6374106. I filed a damage claim form with RMP and included full ESCO documentation, phone records, and description/photos of the kitchen light. Janet Garcia of RMP phoned me to ask if the kitchen light is still flickering, and informed me she would be denying my claim. I received a letter from Ms. Garcia of RMP, denying my damage claim based on "Electric Service Regulation No.4". I was given a copy of this regulation, but I have not seen the other Regulation Numbers 1,2,3,5,etc. My 13 year old son was home with me on June 12 and witnessed the incident. Over the years of owning this home, I have experienced numerous power outages. The power would always either be "On" or "Off", I had never seen a dim-lights situation before and this incident was irregular because of that. Because of the frequency of prior power outages, often while close neighbors had power, I had once about 5 years ago telephoned RMP to inquire into this. I was told that the transformer (I think it was transformer) was quite old compared to most transformers on their grid, but it was not to the point where they would replace it. I said this did not seem fair and I was told they are extremely expensive so they would hope to get more use out of it. As a homeowner I have concerns as to the regulated quality of power coming from RMP to my home, and I believe that having a whole-house furnace fry in early summer while not in use is not a normal occurrence. My limited understanding is that RMP must have automatic protective equipment in place so when there are power discrepancies, customers will not undergo the damages which I incurred, and I suspect that any such protection equipment likely was not up to optimal quality on June 12.

SUGGESTED RESOLUTION: I believe RMP should accept liability and cover the replacement cost of an equivalent 80% efficiency single stage home furnace (\$3,737.00) and also the replacement and installation cost (\$230.00) of an equivalent kitchen 4-tube fluorescent light. If RMP does not agree to this then I would request mediation, as long as a representative from the Public Services Commission of Utah would be present to help represent me. I have medical limitations and no working technical or legal knowledge to represent myself alone in this situation.

Complaint Response:

From: Holje, Eric <Eric.Holje@pacificorp.com>
Date: Tue, Aug 15, 2017 at 2:55 PM
Subject: Response: Inquiry UT - Seftel, Steven
To: "socastevie@yahoo.com" <socastevie@yahoo.com>
Cc: Stefanie Liebert <sliebert@utah.gov>

Good afternoon Mr. Seftel,

We received the concerns you shared with the Division of Public Utilities on August 10, and I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I've reviewed the events that transpired on June 12, 2017, including the weather, associated power disruption and subsequent restoration efforts on the electric circuit.

Rocky Mountain Power strives to maintain reliability and limit interruptions in service, however there will be circumstances that are outside the control of the utility, such as weather. On the day of your loss, high winds caused flickering / dimming lights, and eventually an outage for over 1500 customers after a substation fuse operated. My investigation confirms that equipment operated as designed, and standard activities were conducted to restore electric service.

We sincerely regret the inconvenience and loss you experienced on June 12. Unfortunately when power variations occur as result of circumstances beyond our reasonable control, we're unable to provide compensation for loss. As such, I respectfully reaffirm the claim denial letter dated July 20, 2017. You may wish to check your home owner's insurance policy in the event this type of loss is covered.

Best Regards,

Eric Holje
Sr Customer Regulatory Analyst
Rocky Mountain Power

Additional Information:

Dear Steven Seftel,

The Division of Public Utilities has received your complaint. You should receive resolution/response from the utility company within five business days. Also, please be advised that the Public Service Commission does not have the authority to award damages.

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Respectfully,

The Division of Public Utilities

From: Stefanie Liebert <sliebert@utah.gov>
Date: Fri, Aug 11, 2017 at 9:12 AM
Subject: Fwd: UT - Seftel, Steven
To: "Holje, Eric" <eric.holje@pacificorp.com>

Good morning Eric,

I spoke with Mr. Seftel after I sent over his complaint, he asked for RMP's response to be in writing. Mr. Seftel stated that he has a traumatic brain injury and it will be easier for him to correspond with RMP in writing.

Thank you in advance for your help,

Stefanie Liebert
Office Specialist
Division of Public Utilities
(801)-530-6285
Business hours are 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday