

From: Dennis Miller
To: Orchard, Julie; Petersen, Rea; Powlick, Phil
Date: 10/23/2008 10:30 AM
Subject: Fwd: Proposed settlement before the PSC for Questar's underbilling.

>>> Gary McCall 10/23/2008 9:15 AM >>>
Attn: Utah Division of Public Utilities, Questar Gas, Utah Committee of
Consumer Services and Salt Lake Community Action Program:

Greetings to you all:

I would like to express my outrage at the current proposal before the public service commission to force thousands of Questar customers to pay for natural gas that was delivered to a handful (some 582 customers), due to an error on the part of Questar.

I offer the following scenario for your consideration:

What if you were one of these 582 affected customers, but instead of being undercharged for 2 years, you'd been overcharged - paying for gas you never used. Would you feel you were entitled to a full refund? I believe you would.

But what would your reaction be if:

Questar went to the PSC and said, we've decided that it is fair for us to keep \$480K of that overpayment and to only refund those overcharged customers a fraction of what was due them, and would only issue that refund as a prorated credit over 2 years, and that the balance of the refund (some \$336K) would be equally distributed to all of the other Questar customers as a one-time credit.

Obviously, if you were one of those 582 customers, you'd be livid! You'd want a full refund of every dime you'd overpaid and while the PSC might allow Questar to prorate that refund as a credit on your monthly bill over the next 2 years, you would have every right to expect to get that money back one way or another, and you'd be pounding your fists demanding that money back.

Well, I see no difference between the above scenario and the flip-side for this underbilling error.

FACT: Those 582 customers used more gas than they paid for, while the rest of the Questar customers paid for all of the gas they used. Had those meters/reading software been accurate, those 582 customers would have already paid for all of the gas they used.

FACT: The underbilling was the result of a computer software glitch, so most reasonable people believe that Questar should at least accept some responsibility for the error and should have to absorb some portion of the loss, but in practice, they do have every right to be paid for every cubic foot of gas they delivered to their customers.

The other tens of thousands of Questar customers who are (in this proposal) going to be asked to pay for this gas, did NOT use this excess gas, and should NOT therefore have to pay for it, anymore than they would be entitled to a refund for overcharges paid by those same 582 customers in the above overcharge scenario.

I believe that the PSC should penalize Questar for their computer error

and should require Questar to absorb some portion of the shortfall, but should otherwise require those 582 customers to PAY FOR THE GAS THEY USED, and should allow that since the underbilling occurred over a period of 2 years, that those customers be allowed to pay back the shortfall over a 2 year period without any interest or penalty.

It is completely unreasonable to expect the tens of thousands of other Questar customers to pay for either Questar's software glitch and oversight mistakes, OR to expect them to pay for the gas that those other customers used, and I don't care if it amounts to .01 cent per customer!

The customers who used the gas have an obligation to pay for the gas they used and while [again] I believe the PSC should penalize Questar for the mistake and should reduce the amount those customer have to pay, we all pay for what we use, whether it is electricity, natural gas, fuel for our automobiles or milk.

If those customers were due a refund, we'd expect them to get back every dime, so it is outrageous that they should expect others to pay for the gas they used, or that the PSC should approve of a plan that would force everyone else to pay for some portion of the gas they used.

Whether it only amounts to .43 cents per customer or not, the public service commission has a responsibility to protect those consumers by not asking them for pay for gas they never used.

While I can empathize with those 582 customers, who would otherwise be facing a significant increase in their gas bill over the next two years, the fact remains that those 582 customers did use that gas, and did NOT pay for it.

The currently proposed settlement should be flatly rejected.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gary McCall