



GARY HERBERT  
*Governor*  
SPENCER J. COX  
*Lieutenant Governor*

State of Utah  
Department of Commerce  
Division of Public Utilities

FRANCINE GIANI  
*Executive Director*

THOMAS BRADY  
*Deputy Director*

CHRIS PARKER  
*Director, Division of Public Utilities*

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 9, 2015

**TO:** Public Service Commission

**FROM:** Division of Public Utilities  
Chris Parker, Division Director  
Marialie Martinez, Customer Service Manager  
Erika Tedder, Office Specialist  
Stefanie Liebert, Office Specialist

**RE:** Dell and Luceal Ellertson v. Questar Gas Company  
Docket No. 15-057-15

**Recommendation: Schedule a Hearing**

**Complaint Analysis:**

On April 10, 2015, Mr. Dell Ellertson (Complainant) called the Division of Public Utilities (Division) to submit a complaint against Questar Gas (Company) regarding unresolved account and service-restoration issues.

Complainant claims that when his residence received shut-off notices from the Company, he called the Company numerous times but was not given information on the account. Complainant stated that the Company did not have him on the account, nor did he provide a correct password to gain access to account information. Complainant made several attempts to obtain balance information, but was denied by the Company. Complainant made payments to the Company in amounts that he thought would cover the balance, but without knowing what that was, his gas service was subsequently shut-off.

Following the termination of the gas service, Complainant began receiving billing notices addressed to his name from the Company. He was informed that the Company's Fraud Department had investigated the account and determined that he is the current occupant at the property. Therefore, due to the result of the investigation, the Company transferred the account

from Luceal Ellertson's (account holder) to Complainants' name. Complainant stated that the Company changed the account to his name without instruction or consent from him. Complainant claims Company unreasonably refused to disclose the account balance resulting in termination of his service, costing him the additional required restoration fee.

**Company Response:**

Elia Lopez, Questar Gas Company's Regulatory Analyst, responded to Complainant's informal complaint on April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Ms. Lopez verified that the account has been active for many years in the name of Luceal Ellertson. She stated that account information was not provided to Complainant because he is not authorized on the account. Complainant was advised to provide proper identification in order to continue service. Ms. Lopez adds that in May of 2014, the Company's Fraud Department had investigated the account and determined that Complainant is the current occupant of the property. The Company determined that the account should have been in Complainant's name.

Ms. Lopez adds that the Company sent an Urgent 10-Day Notice on February 19, 2015 as well as an Urgent 48-Hour Notice on March 12, 2015 that was left in the Complainants' address. On March 16, 2015, a payment was received from Complainant but was not enough. Complainant's service was terminated on March 23, 2015. Complainant was advised that all applicable charges must be paid and a new account holder application must be set up in order to restore service.

On November 3, 2015, the Division received an additional response from the Company's Paralegal, Leora Price informing the Division that on October 12, 2015, the Company cancelled the collections process on the Ellertson account. Ms. Price adds that a new account was opened in Complainant's name and gas service was restored on the address on October 19, 2015.

**DPU Comments & Recommendation:**

In reviewing the Company's and Complainant's statements, many questions arise. There is an obvious discrepancy on why Luceal Ellertson is the account holder and Complainant is not authorized on the account.

There is also the question of why the Company conducted a Fraud Investigation on the account yet made no changes or demands in May 2014. In addition, the Company apparently opened a new account in Complainant's name without Complainant's consent, and restored service without a full payment of amount due. Therefore, the Division recommends a hearing be scheduled for further evaluation of evidence and sworn testimony.