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State of Utah
Department of Commerce
Division of Public Utilities

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Deputy Director

CHRIS PARKER
Director, Division of Public Utilities

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Service Commission

FROM: Division of Public Utilities
Chris Parker, Division Director
Marialie Wright, Customer Service Manager

DATE: March 02, 2017

RE: Docket #17-057-02 In the matter of Formal Complaint of [REDACTED] Ratepayer vs. Questar Gas Company

Recommendation: Reject complaint if further evidence of violation is not provided

Complaint Analysis: Ratepayer

On January 17, 2017, [REDACTED] (Complainant) called the Division of Public Utilities (Division) to file an informal complaint against Questar Gas (Company).

Complainant's gas service was terminated on January 12, 2017. He claimed that he never received a 48-hour notice from Company. Complainant contacted Company and spoke with Kelly, who informed him that Company is not required to give him notice before disconnecting service.

Complainant requested a same day reconnection of his gas service due to having little children at home. He was not pleased with having to pay an extra \$100 fee to get his service reconnected. Complainant adds that his service has never been disconnected in the past. He further explained that he would have ensured his balance of \$34 was paid to avoid the disconnection. He asks that Company refund him the additional \$100 connection fee he was required to pay.

Company Response:

Elia Lopez, Company's Consumer Affairs representative responded to Complainant's informal complaint. Ms. Lopez explained that an urgent 10-day letter was mailed to Complainant on December 7, 2016 in addition to mailing the required monthly statements to customers. The 10-day letter advised a payment of \$34.77 or credit arrangements to avoid termination of gas service. In addition, Ms. Lopez provided a copy of Complainant's payment itemization which shows that no payment was received therefore the credit process continued. An urgent 48-hour

notice was left at Complainant's door on January 3, 2017 followed by a credit shut off on January 11, 2017.

Ms. Lopez confirmed that Complainant contacted Company on January 11, 2017 at 5:58 p.m. asking for a same-day reconnection. Ms. Lopez explained that Company's office hours are Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The after-hours connection fee of \$100 was explained to Complainant as well as the security deposit required once service is terminated. Ms. Lopez adds that Complainant paid \$41 which is 1/3 of the \$123 security deposit that will be billed in two more monthly installments. Ms. Lopez also provided copies of the Utah Natural Gas Tariff to Complainant which explains security deposit and connection fee options, including the \$100 after-hours connection fee.

Ms. Lopez apologized to Complainant for the incorrect information the Company employee gave him regarding the required notices before gas service is terminated. Ms. Lopez continued by thanking Complainant for bringing the issue to Company's attention so that it can be addressed internally.

Division Review and Recommendation:

Complainant has carried a balance every month except January and October of 2016 per review of Complainant's Customer Account Itemization report provided by Company. Per review of the report, no payment was made on the account for the month of November which carried a balance to the December billing cycle. This put Complainant in a delinquent status. Company confirmed that proper procedure was followed under the Commission Rule R746-200-7(B) Delinquent Account and (G) Notice of Proposed Termination of Service that a delinquent statement, a 10-day letter, and urgent 48-hour notice was mailed and delivered before service was terminated.

It is Complainant's responsibility to review the Statement of Company Customer Rights and Responsibilities that provides information on other available payment arrangements. These include the availability of deferred payment agreements and contacting other possible financial assistance from any federally funded programs with contact information provided in Company's Statement of Customer Rights and Responsibilities. Company also offers several options for customers to pay bills through its online Customer Self Service or other methods such as auto pay, checking or savings, credit cards, payment drop boxes, pay stations and by mail.

It is not apparent that Company has violated any Commission Administrative Rules, Commission ruling or Company tariff. Therefore, the Division recommends that this complaint be dismissed unless Complainant provides evidence demonstrating the Company's failure to comply with relevant rules, tariff, or laws.