

- BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH -

In the Matter of the Formal Complaint of)
Russell Larsen against Questar Gas, Related) DOCKET NO. 09-057-02
to Transponder Back-billing Issue) REPORT AND ORDER
)

ISSUED: April 23, 2009

By The Commission:

This matter is before the Commission on Russell Larsen's formal complaint against Questar Gas. Mr. Larsen filed an informal complaint on October 9, 2007. He said that he had been renting a home in Logan, Utah for which he received a final bill in the amount of about \$160. The bill was for service for the month of June 2006 and two days in July 2006. He felt Questar had misread his meter and called to complain about the late bill and asked Questar to fix it.

Questar informed Mr. Larsen that the bill was correct. Questar responded that the amount was due to an incorrect meter reading or recording error. When service was turned on for Mr. Larsen, in July 2006, the gas meter had the same reading as when it was turned off previous to Mr. Larsen entering the home. During the time he lived at the residence, Mr. Larsen's usage was measured by transponder and meter and he was billed based on the transponder measurements. When he terminated his service, Mr. Larsen's meter was shut-off and the meter index read 8205 in July 2007. In August 2007 a technician read the meter index and it read 8227, but the transponder read 8106. The company found that although the transponder had not read the usage correctly, the meter had. The final bill that Mr. Larsen received included usage that was not recorded by the transponder during the year that he lived at

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the residence. Questar determined that since it could back-bill for meter errors for a period of 24 months, it billed Mr. Larsen. In Mr. Larsen's case, the back-billed period was one year.

The Division submitted its recommendation on March 18, 2009. It essentially reviewed the same background as previously stated. It agreed that, despite Mr. Larsen's contentions that he had been billed for another's usage, he had only been billed for his usage—albeit for back-billed amounts. It also noted that his formal complaint filed on January 6, 2008 was consolidated into Docket 08-057-11 even though the problem with his transponder was not with a pre-divide error as dealt with in that docket. The Division recommended that the Commission regard this as a slow meter reading and only allow Questar to back-bill for six months, per the terms of the December 3, 2008 Order approving the Stipulation in Docket 08-057-11. Since Questar could not determine when, in the previous 12-month period, the gas was used, the Division reasoned that Questar should then only be allowed to back-bill for half the 12-month period. Accordingly, the Division also reasoned and recommended that Mr. Larsen only be required to pay half the amount owed.

ORDER

Therefore, based on the findings above, the Commission, orders that Questar back-bill Mr. Larsen for only half the usage of the 12-month period at issue, and that this complaint be dismissed.

Pursuant to Utah Code § 63G-4-301 and 54-7-15, an aggrieved party may request agency review or rehearing of this Order by filing a written request for review or rehearing with the Commission within 30 days after the issuance of the Order. Responses to a request for

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agency review or rehearing must be filed within 15 days of the filing of the request for review or rehearing. If the Commission does not grant a request for review or rehearing within 20 days after the filing of a request for review or rehearing, it is deemed denied. Judicial review of the Commission's final agency action may be obtained by filing a petition for review with the Utah Supreme Court within 30 days after final agency action. Any petition for review must comply with the requirements of Utah Code §§ 63G-4-401, 63G-4-403, and the Utah Rules of Appellate Procedure.

DATED at Salt Lake City, Utah, this 23rd day of April, 2009.

/s/ Ruben H. Arredondo
Administrative Law Judge

Approved and confirmed this 23rd day of April, 2009, as the Report and Order of the Public Service Commission of Utah.

/s/ Ted Boyer, Chairman

/s/ Ric Campbell, Commissioner

/s/ Ron Allen, Commissioner

Attest:

/s/ Julie Orchard
Commission Secretary
G#61537