

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 68863

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

THOMAS BEDDOE and DOROTHY BEDDOE,
both of 19994 Valley View,
Topanga, California

Plaintiffs

Case No. 8123

against

HILLSIDE WATER COMPANY of
1700 West Coast Highway,
Newport Beach, California

Defendant

Thomas Beddoe, for complainants.
Jerry J. Levander, for the Commission staff.

O P I N I O N

Thomas Beddoe and Dorothy Beddoe, complainants herein, reside at 19994 Valley View, Topanga, and are general meter service customers there of Hillside Water Company, defendant, a public utility water corporation under the jurisdiction of this Commission. Service has been rendered by defendant to complainants at said address since approximately December, 1963, and at other addresses for about five years. Complainants allege that defendant rendered them excessive charges for water service for the months of September, October, and November, 1964, and they seek an order requiring defendant to adjust said alleged excessive charges to reflect the average monthly usage for all months except the three disputed months. Complainants' bills have remained unpaid for the disputed months and to date.

After notice to the parties, public hearing was held before Examiner Warner on March 15, 1965, at Los Angeles. Defendant did not appear. Evidence was taken and the matter was submitted on said date.

Exhibit No. 1 purports to be defendant's answer to the complaint. It was not filed pursuant to Rule No. 12 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, and it alleges that the disputed bills are reasonable.

Exhibit No. 2 is a chart, submitted by complainants, showing the months of water service for the period mid-December, 1963 through mid-February, 1965. Said Exhibit shows the lowest water bill rendered complainants to be \$3.00 for December, 1964; the highest nondisputed bill to be \$9.10 for July, 1964; and the disputed bills to be \$21.55 for September, 1964, \$15.98 for October, 1964 and \$14.57 for November, 1964.

Exhibit No. 3 submitted by a Commission staff engineer shows that defendant erroneously applied its tariff in September, and December, 1964. After allowing for corrected bills and for corrected average usage the average monthly billing from January 1964 through mid-February, 1965, is \$6.43.

Complainant testified that when his water bill for September, 1964, jumped he noticed that his water meter was defective and that water was leaking around the connection and through the lid. He advised defendant. His high water bills continued until the meter was replaced. Then, they dropped back to normal. He knew no reason for the defective meter or its connection.

The Commission finds that defendant has erroneously charged complainants for water service for the months of September, October,

and November, 1964, due to a defective meter or service connection and that the total of such charges amounting to \$52.10 reasonably should be adjusted to a total of \$19.29.

The Commission further finds that the defendant applied its tariffs erroneously and charged complainants \$3.00 for 1160 cu.ft. consumption for December, 1964, and that such charge should correctly have been \$9.45.

It is concluded that the total adjusted water bills for the months of September through December, 1964 should be \$25.74, instead of \$55.10 as rendered, and defendant should be ordered to effect such adjustment.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that Hillside Water Company within five days after the effective date of this order shall render adjusted bills for water service to Thomas Beddoe and Dorothy Beddoe, at 19994 Valley View, Topanga, for the months of September, October, November and December, 1964, totaling \$25.74, and shall forthwith cancel the bills heretofore rendered for said months totaling \$55.10, and shall report its compliance herewith to the Commission in writing within three days thereafter.

The effective date of this order shall be ten days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 13th day of April, 1965.

Frederick B. Holdhoff
President
George E. Trover
William C. Bennett
Commissioners