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ORIGINAL

Decision No. 77544

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

AGNES L. BENEFIEL,

Complainant,

vs.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON
COMPANY,

Defendant.

Case No. 9060

(Filed May 8, 1970)
(Answered June 1, 1970)

Agnes L. Benefiel, complainant.
Dennis G. Monge, for defendant.

O P I N I O N

Agnes L. Benefiel, an individual, residing at 3077 North Maine Avenue, Baldwin Park, California, in a modest residence with minimal lighting, refrigeration, and former water cooler load, complains that her bill for electric service from the defendant, Southern California Edison Company, for the period from May 21, 1969, through July 22, 1969, in the amount of \$20.37, was excessive inasmuch as she had been out of the state from June 16 to July 11, 1969, and the dwelling had been unoccupied. Also, she alleges that upon checking her records, she found previous billings which she believed to be equally excessive. After contacting defendant, she was informed that it was necessary to, and she did, have an electrician inspect the wiring for shorts and grounds; said electrician found no problem with the wiring, but suggested the replacement of her

5-amp meter with a 15-amp meter. She further alleges that defendant attributed her high KWH consumption to her refrigerator and to the use of her air conditioner and to higher than normal temperature in 1969 than in 1968.

The house meter was found to be operating at 106.4 percent of normal and defendant rebilled her account from March 1969 and credited her with the amount of \$5.18. She alleges that the previous meter was more inaccurate than the defendant found and the meter now on her house is little, if any, better.

Public hearing was held before Examiner Warner on June 25, 1970, in Los Angeles.

Exhibit 3 is an analysis of the Benefiel account from January 1966 through March 23, 1970. It shows a minimum billing of \$12.52 for the two-month period commencing January 22, 1968, and ending March 21, 1968. For the two-month period ending July 22, 1968, the bill was \$20.40, compared with the aforementioned bill of \$20.37 for the same period in 1969, which is the basis of the complaint.

The complainant admitted that she had installed a new refrigerator in August 1968, and that she was in the habit of turning on her air conditioner in the morning just before leaving for work and allowing it to run until the early evening hours.

During the period in dispute, when she was out of the state for her father's funeral, her son, who is a Los Angeles County lifeguard stationed and living in Long Beach, came to the house to receive periodic collect long distance calls from his mother; sometimes his girlfriend accompanied him; and a neighbor

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had a key and access to the house and had access to the back yard where a large dog was kept, watered and fed during complainant's absence.

Complainant now has a 15-amp meter and she has disposed of her air conditioner.

We find that complainant's allegation that her house was unoccupied during her absence is not correct, and that access was had by at least two persons who, at least, in part and for undisclosed periods of time did occupy the house.

We find no violation of defendant's tariffs. We further find no error in the metering of complainant's electricity usage or billing therefor.

We conclude that the complaint should be dismissed.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that this complaint be dismissed.

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

Dated at ~~San Francisco~~ _____, California, this 28th day of JULY, 1970.

[Signature]
Chairman
[Signature]
William J. Lyons, Jr.
[Signature]
Vernon L. Sturgeon
Commissioners