

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 81888

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mary A. Campisi,

Complainant,

v.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS
COMPANY,

Defendant.

Case No. 9525
(Filed March 21, 1973)

Mary A. Campisi, for herself, complainant.
E. R. Island, Attorney at Law, for Southern
California Gas Company, defendant.

O P I N I O N

Complainant Mary A. Campisi alleges that defendant, Southern California Gas Company (SoCal), has been overcharging her for gas service for six and one-half years and seeks reimbursement for alleged aggravations suffered these past years.

Public hearing was held before Examiner Johnson at Los Angeles on July 16, 1973 and the matter was submitted.

Complainant's Position

Complainant testifying on her own behalf made the following statements in support of the alleged overcharges:

1. She lives alone and is charged more than families occupying similar apartments with comparable equipment.
2. She does not use her gas heater but still receives high bills.
3. Her gas stove was operating improperly so that she would be unable to use her oven had she so desired.
4. She cooks very few meals in her apartment.

Defendant's Position

Defendant presented testimony and eight exhibits through its district supervisor of credit and collections. This witness presented a statement of complainant's account from January 7, 1971 through July 6, 1973, a summary of SoCal's meter tests and field investigations and a statement of unpaid billings. He further testified that SoCal made every effort to satisfy complainant but was unable to do so in spite of meter tests indicating accurate operation of the gas meter.

Discussion

Complainant's entire showing consists of comparing her gas bill with those of other tenants in the apartment building where she resides. Such comparisons are at best a very rough approximation of relative use levels and do not properly reflect such factors as different equipment efficiencies, differences in use patterns, size and insulation differences, and various other factors. With other uses such factors could easily result in families occupying similar apartments paying less for gas service than complainant in spite of the fact she uses her heater not at all and does a minimum of cooking. One such other usage that is known is based on complainant's statement "I had polio when I was a child, and it left me with poor blood circulation and I have to take a hot bath every day, especially when the weather is cold or I have no peace with my legs." Such a practice obviously consumes gas for the hot water heater and might very well account for the major portion of her gas use. SoCal's records indicate that the meter is operating within the prescribed limits of accuracy and that field representatives were unable to find any basis for recommending an adjustment to her account.

Findings

1. The gas meters recording complainant's gas consumption were operating within the prescribed limits of accuracy.
2. SoCal's field representatives, after investigation of

complainant's informal complaint, were unable to find any basis for making an adjustment to her account.

3. Complainant is consuming the gas for which she is being billed.

The Commission concludes that the relief requested should be denied.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that the relief requested in Case No. 9525 is denied.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this
14th day of SEPTEMBER, 1973.

Vernon L. Stearns
President
William J. Lyons
[Signature]
[Signature]
Commissioners

Commissioner Thomas Moran, being necessarily absent, did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.