

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 87578 July 12, 1977

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

GISELE S. CHOBAJI,
 Complainant,
 vs.
 PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC CO.,
 Defendant.

Case No. 10149
(Filed August 2, 1976)

Gisele S. Chobaji, for herself,
 complainant.
Kathy Graham, Attorney at Law for
 Pacific Gas and Electric Company,
 defendant.

O P I N I O N

Hearing was held on this complaint before Examiner Coffey in San Francisco on January 14, 1977. The matter was submitted on January 28, 1977 with the receipt of a late-filed Exhibit 5.

Complainant complains that she was overcharged in December 1974 when she was unable to use warm water and her kitchen for more than a month. Complainant further alleges that the meter readings which she takes do not correspond with those used for billings, that she was prevented from using a telephone and threatened by a collector, and that the meters are incorrectly read or faulty.

Complainant recommends that all public utilities be taken over by the State of California and requests reimbursement of "estimated differences". At the hearing, complainant requested punitive damages "for the much accommodation and much discomfort and the much time I had to spend and what I had to endure being kept prisoner in my own home". In addition, she asked that she be

notified when the meter would be read so that she observe "and control" the readings.

Defendant's Showing

PG&E's Supervisor of Customer Services testified all of complainant's appliances appeared to be operating properly. Exhibit 1 shows the electric meter indicated 0.2 percent low at light load and 0.6 percent low at full load. Exhibit 2 shows that the gas meter indicates 0.75 percent high. This means that if complainant's bill for electric service had been \$10 she would have paid about six cents less than if the electric meter had been perfectly adjusted and if her gas bill had been \$10 she would have paid about seven cents more than if the meter had been perfectly adjusted.

Service to complainant began on December 8, 1972.

Defendant's Exhibit 5 shows the following comparison of complainant's consumption by billing period prior to billing dates:

MONTHLY GAS CONSUMPTION
(Therms)

<u>Billing Period</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
Jan.-Feb.	-	96	77	92	83
Feb.-March	-	79	97	88	88
March-April	-	86	70	102	84
April-May	-	74	63	88	65
May-June	-	47	65	46	60
June-July	-	45	46	47	40
July-August	-	42	40	36	33
August-Sept.	-	44	37	35	37
Sept.-October	-	44	39	42	34
October-Nov.	-	45	49	70	41
Nov.-Dec.	-	81	75	81	61
Dec.-Jan.*	159	101	117	117	92

*Following year.

Likewise, the following is a comparison of complainant's electric consumption by billing periods prior to billing dates:

MONTHLY ELECTRIC CONSUMPTION

(kwh)

<u>Billing Period</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
Jan.-Feb.	-	162	171	198	186
Feb.-March	-	174	194	186	205
March-April	-	166	158	204	199
April-May	-	157	160	188	175
May-June	-	137	182	156	170
June-July	-	142	150	157	171
July-August	-	142	164	153	136
August-Sept.	-	142	154	153	156
Sept.-October	-	148	163	161	155
October-Nov.	-	153	175	202	189
Nov.-Dec.	-	202	202	191	234
Dec.-Jan.*	225	200	270	239	231

*Following year.

Exhibit 4 contains reproductions of five statements of account furnished complainant.

Discussion

Review of complainant's statements of account, Exhibits 3, 4, and 5, together with complainant's usage, does not reveal any inconsistencies that support complainant's contention of being over-charged for service in December 1974 and January 1975. Complainant's gas and electric usage, 117 therms and 270 kwh, respectively, in the period from December 11, 1974 to January 13, 1975, was the highest recorded. However, we note that complainant's gas usage from December 11, 1975 to January 13, 1976 was also 117 therms.

The electric meter was tested on August 30, 1976, in the presence of a Commission staff engineer, and the gas meter was exchanged and tested on September 21, 1976. Complainant's recorded usage appears unaffected by these tests.

The meter readings taken by complainant will not agree with those recorded unless they were read at the same time on the same day. PG&E has offered to provide complainant with the schedule of meter reading dates for her service and for several months to have the meter reader invite complainant to read the meter when it is read for billing. We shall expect that, without further order,

PG&E will furnish complainant the dates in 1977 and 1978 when it expects that complainant's meters will be read and that each time complainant's meters are read in 1977 the meter reader will ascertain if complainant is at home and wishes to read her meter when he does.

Defendant denies complainant's allegations of misconduct by a bill collector. There is nothing in this record to support complainant's allegations of misconduct by a PG&E employee.

Findings

1. On August 20, 1976, the electric meter measuring service to complainant indicated 0.2 percent low at light load and 0.6 percent low at full load.

2. On September 21, 1976, the gas meter measuring service to complainant indicated 0.75 percent high.

3. The meters servicing complainant are within the accuracy of 2.0 percent prescribed by this Commission.

4. Complainant has used the amounts of gas and electricity in December 1974 and January 1975 for which she has been billed.

We conclude that the relief requested should be denied.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that the relief requested is denied.

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

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 12th day of JULY, 1977.

Robert Bafman
President
William Agnew Jr.
Vernon L. Sturgeon
Richard W. Chaville

Commissioner CLAIRE T. DEDRICK did not participate in the disposition of this proceeding.

Commissioners