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Decision 95-07-020 July 19, 1995

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Jacklyn Bouzaglou,

Complainant,

vs.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS COMPANY
(U 904 G),

Defendant.

ORIGINAL

(ECP)

Case 95-03-025
(Filed March 28, 1995)

Jacklyn Bouzaglou, for herself, complainant.
Connie Christensen, for defendant.

O P I N I O N

Complainant seeks reparations of \$300 because of excessively high bills. Defendant asserts that its gas meter was accurate and no adjustment is warranted. Public hearing was held May 26, 1995.

Complainant testified that when she moved into her rented home in November 1993, she immediately received excessively high gas bills from defendant. She complained and in January 1994, defendant checked her meter and made suggestions to reduce consumption by replacing filters and reducing the setting on the water heater. She complied with those suggestions and her bills immediately went down. She feels, however, that the excessively high bills were due to more than old filters and a high water heater setting and she seeks reparations. In February 1994, defendant replaced her meter and her bills have been reasonable ever since. She believes her old meter was inaccurate. A comparison of her bills for the relevant period is:

	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>
December	222.81	117.80
January	319.87	177.10
February	238.21	129.07

Defendant's witness testified that a high bill investigation was completed on January 3, 1994 in response to complainant's high bill inquiry. That investigation indicated no incorrect meter reads or gas leakage in either the customer's or the company's equipment. Upon inspection of complainant's gas appliances, the filters to the heating system were found to be clogged and dirty, which would contribute to increased gas consumption; also complainant's water heater was set at 145°, well above the recommended setting of 120°. Defendant tested the meter. The results showed that the instrument was recording within the 2% variance required by the Commission. Complainant was provided all documentation of the meter test results and the findings of the company's high bill investigation.

In our opinion, the gas meter at the home at the time complainant moved in was recording accurately. Complainant's high bills were caused by old, dirty filters and a high temperature setting on her water heater. When the filters were replaced and the water temperature lowered, the bills went down. The lower bills were not due to the change in meters.

ORDER

IT IS ORDERED that the relief requested in the complaint is denied. The money on deposit with the Commission in this case shall be paid to defendant.

This order is effective today.

Dated July 19, 1995, at San Francisco, California.

DANIEL Wm. PESSLER
President
P. GREGORY CONLON
JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.
HENRY M. DUQUE
Commissioners

I CERTIFY THAT THIS DECISION
WAS APPROVED BY THE ABOVE
COMMISSIONERS TODAY.

Wesley Franklin
Acting Executive Director