

Decision 97-07-026 July 16, 1997

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

<p>Ahmed Mohamed Hassan, Complainant, vs. Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Defendant.</p>
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ORIGINAL

(ECP)
Case 97-04-053
(Filed April 22, 1997)

Ahmed Mohamed Hassan, for himself, complainant.
Mary M. Canby, for Pacific Gas and Electric Company,
defendant.

OPINION

Ahmed Mohamed Hassan, complainant, contends his past electric bills are unreasonably high. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) contends the bills accurately reflect his usage.

A hearing was held under the Commission's expedited complaint procedure on May 21, 1997. Based upon the evidence and argument presented by both parties at this hearing, we conclude that the complaint should be denied.

Evidence Presented

Hassan established service with PG&E on May 8, 1996. Prior to his complaint, his usage was as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Billing Days</u>	<u>Usage (kWh)</u>	<u>Daily Usage (kWh)</u>	<u>Charges (\$)</u>
06/07/96	30	402	13.4	47.76
07/10/96	33	519	15.7	62.78
08/08/96	29	345	11.9	40.35
09/09/96	32	319	10.0	37.03
10/09/96	30	361	12.0	42.29
11/06/96	28	659	23.5	81.34
12/10/96	34	914	26.9	109.10
12/18/96	8*	193	24.1)	
01/08/97	22	488	23.2)	79.91
01/16/97	8**	285	35.6)	
02/07/97	22	182	8.3)	54.21
03/11/97	32	256	8.0	29.72
04/10/97	30	228	7.6	26.47

*Reread meter

**Meter test and reread meter

In November 1996, Hassan complained about high bills. In January 1997, PG&E concluded from a meter test at Hassan's premises that the meter was operating within the prescribed limits of accuracy. PG&E's investigator, Karen Allen, noted that Hassan's thermostat was an older model which had no "off" setting. She believes the lack of an "off" position may indicate the heat is always on and is causing additional usage. She also noted that Hassan had the window open in the living room even though it was a winter day. She testified that cold air from the window may have caused the thermostat to start the heater more frequently. However, under cross-examination, she admitted that she did place her hand on the heater under the window during the field visit and the heater was not operating, although she did not inspect three other base heaters in the house. During the visit, she advised Hassan to shut off his heater at the circuit box. PG&E argues that Hassan must have done this since usage after the field visit dropped considerably. However, Hassan adamantly denies having done so.

It is apparent that after PG&B investigated his high bill complaint, Hassan's usage decreased considerably. There is no evidence to corroborate either party's asserted cause of this usage decrease. Therefore, we must conclude that an error by PG&B is not shown by a preponderance of the evidence as required in this proceeding.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that this complaint is denied.

This order is effective today.

Dated July 16, 1997, at San Francisco, California.

P. GREGORY CONLON

President

JESSIE J. KNIGHT, JR.

HENRY M. DUQUE

JOSIAH L. NEEPER

RICHARD A. BILAS

Commissioners

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