

1. Name: Darlene D. Weeden, 3615 Brookstone Dr. Florissant Mo. 63033, telephone no. 314-560-8720, email address: [darweeden@yahoo.com](mailto:darweeden@yahoo.com). Do not have a fax machine.

Against

Laclede Gas – Legal Department – Saint Louis, Mo.

**2. As the basis of this complaint, Complainant states the following facts:**

I would like to dispute the charges for two (2) transferred amounts to my bill, \$683.98 and 1000.00.

The \$683.98 was transfer from an account I had with Laclede Gas – 15 years ago. I talked to a Lawyer and I was told that Missouri have a statue of Limitations on debts and it is 5 to 10 years.

The second transferred amount is \$1000.00 from my sister (Wilma Harris) account. (April to February) I felted this was transfer to my account because me and the Laclede Rep. (Reatha) could not come to an understanding. At the end of our conversation, Ms. Reatha asks me who Wilma Harris was. I explained to Ms. Reatha in desperation I tried to get the service turn on in my sister name, and latter on decided that was not a good idea. She said ok and that was the end of the conversation. A couple days later I got a call from the counselor from Public Service Commission stating that Laclede Gas had added my sister bill on to my account, (\$1000.13) this amount had to be paid before I could turn on my service. The counselor also informed me that Laclede Gas did not want to do business with me.

I have moved all over St. Louis, plus out of town within the last 15+ years. Since, Ms. Reatha took time to look up my previous address; she should have looked up **all** of my addresses. I have in the past used several of my relatives' addresses as mailing addresses. I felted she went looking for something, anything to hold over my head because I put in a complaint with the Mo. Public Service Commission.

I also do not understand how Laclede Gas can transfer someone else bill to my account without telling me. If I was able to come up with the 1200.00, I would have been shock when I called in expecting to get my service turn back and was told that I had to come up with another 1,000.

**3. The Complainant has taken the following steps to present this complaint to the Respondent.**

When Ms. Reatha called me after I put in my original complaint with the commissions, she went over the reasons why my gas was turn off. Even through I was making payments every month. The main complaint was that I did not make any payments until

March 3<sup>rd</sup>. I tried to explain to Ms. Reatha that I was the main caregiver to my mother, who is 72 years old and a diabetic, she weight 350+ pounds, she is going blind and she can hardly walk. I am also the caregiver to my sister who has uncontrollable seizure and is mentally ill. I tried to explain to her, that I spend a lot of time taking my sister and mother to their doctors. With my limit income (10.00/hr) I was paying \$950.00 a month for rent, buying food, and trying to paid bills. By February I knew we could not live off my salary. I made the decision to work part-time on the weekend (10 hours on Saturday and 10 hours on Sunday) and I took another job working 40 hours a week. (60 hours a week)

With the knowledge that I could now start making regularly payments I call Laclede Gas to make payment arrangements. At that time I was told I need to pay 258.00 a month. I had other bills and responsibilities, and I told the rep. the payment she quota was too high and I would not be able to make those payments. The rep. told me she could not lower the payments. I send in payments every month, and within 5 months I was able to paid 1296.00. Ms. Reatha informed me that the amount I was sending to Laclede Gas (150.00 a month) was not enough and she felted that I could not afford to have gas service. At that time I told her that my goal was to start paying more in September. I tried to explain to Ms. Reatha that I had a plan, but she kept repeating herself that Laclede Gas was a business and she felted that I could not afford the gas. Since, Laclede Gas was the only gas company in St. Louis, I honest could not understand what she meant. Was she telling me that my family did not deserve gas for the winter? I was trying to explain to her that I had every attention to pay my bill. Ms. Reatha kept telling me that I could not afford to pay Laclede Gas, and I would never be able to catch up. What I was trying to tell Ms. Reatha was that I was paying a rental bill for bedding and I was making my last payment in September. The bill was 200.00, with that money I would be able to put on my Laclede Gas account and with the 150.00 I was paying, and I would be able to pay \$350.00 a month. I felt this would lower my balance a great deal; even through most of the balance was 700.00 deposit and 685.00 transfer amount. Even through I stretch the point that I need the gas for heat and cooking. My Diabetic (72 year old) Mother could easy get sick, and because of her age and her failing health, if she gets pneumonia she will die. Again, Ms. Reatha told me that Laclede Gas was a business, and I need to call around for assistance. I told Ms. Reatha that I need to have the service on before Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.

The second concern was that I wrote a check and it bounce. In February, the gas was turn off, the one and only day in February the temp. was over 32 degrees. I panic when the gas was turned off in the dead of winter. Again, I have a very sick mother, and if she gets pneumonia, she might die. By listen to the weather station, I knew the weather was going to get worst. I panic and I wrote a check for 411.00, so that the service would be turn back on the next day. When the check was return, and Laclede Gas sent me a notice, I made sure the check was paid right away. (500.00)

**3. WHEREFORE, Complainant now requests the following relief:**

1. Ms. Reatha informed me that I could not pay my gas bill. I feel that I can pay my bill; I am not able to pay the two transfer amounts, 1683.98 and the 700.00 deposit. Take away those extra charges and the 1296.00 I have paid, my gas balance comes to 516.02. (I am sure I can get help on that amount)
2. I feel that I should not be charge 1000.13 for another person bill. (This bill only covers 10 months).
3. I did call a couple of the agencies that help paid utilities bills. I was told since there is such a high volume of people that needed assistance; I was told that I was going to be put on a waiting list. I have no problem to try to come up with the money my self, but I know I cannot come up with 2200.00. This month have been very hard on my Mother, it have been hard to cook the food she need, and to keep her clean, (she can not control her bladder). Waiting on November will be a nightmare. Since, there is no guaranteed I will be able to get any assistance. If the temper drops within the next month, and with her illness, I am really worried about her getting pneumonia. If she does, I know she will not be able to come out of it. (No, I do not have anybody that would take her in. My mother needs a lot of one on one care)