

William L. Hackney, Jr. and Catrina Hackney,  
Complainants,  
v.  
Spire Missouri Inc., d/b/a Spire,  
Respondent.

## STAFF REPORT

1. On September 3, 2019, William L Hackney, Jr. and Catrina Hackney (Hackneys) filed a complaint against Spire alleging that Spire illegally and unlawfully entered their home and incorrectly billed them. The Hackneys seek a replacement meter, refund of overpayments, punitive damages,<sup>1</sup> a written apology, a review of accounts linked to them, a list of accounts on their bills that belong to others, and for an investigation of Spire's allegations of nonpayment, stealing, and tampering.

2. On September 4, 2019, the Commission issued its *Order Directing Notice, Adding Parties, and Directing Responses to Application*, ordering Spire to respond to the Hackneys' complaint by October 4, 2019, and Staff to file a report by October 21, 2019.

3. Spire answered the complaint on October 4, 2019, denying the Hackneys' claims. However, Spire stated it is amenable to changing the Hackneys' meter, refunding any overpayments, identifying the Hackneys' accounts, and for the Commission to

1

investigate allegations of nonpayment, stealing, and tampering. Spire is not amenable to paying punitive damages, issuing a formal apology, or identifying others' accounts.

4. On October 15, 2019, Staff filed a motion requesting additional time to conduct its investigation and file its report. The Commission granted Staff's motion on October 17, 2019 and set December 5, 2019 as the new due date for Staff to file its report.

5. Having concluded its investigation, Staff offers its *Report of the Customer Experience Department Staff* and *Report of the Safety Engineering Department Staff*, filed concurrently and respectively as Appendix A with supporting schedules and Appendix B, and incorporated herein for all purposes (collectively Staff Report). Both Staff reports are Confidential pursuant to 20 CSR 4240-2.070(11), and describe Staff's investigation and analysis. Staff concludes that as to this complaint, Spire did not violate any applicable statutes, Commission Rules, or its Commission-approved tariff.

6. However, Staff's investigation did identify areas where Spire could make improvements to its operational procedures, customer service practices, and its safety program in gas turn-off situations. The attached Staff Report more fully explains the facts and analysis that led Staff to its conclusions and recommendations. Staff recommends that the Commission make findings in accordance with the analysis and conclusions contained in the Staff Report.

**WHEREFORE** Staff prays the Commission accept and consider the Staff Report pursuant to the Commission's September 4, 2019 *Order Directing Notice, Adding Parties, and Directing Responses to Application* regarding the above-captioned complaint.

Respectfully submitted,

**/s/ Karen E. Bretz**

Karen E. Bretz  
Senior Counsel  
Missouri Bar No. 70632  
Attorney for the Staff of the  
Missouri Public Service Commission  
P.O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
573-751-5472 (Voice)  
573-751-9285 (Fax)

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been emailed to all parties and/or counsel of record on this 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

**/s/ Karen E. Bretz**