

OF THE  
STATE OF MISSOURI

FILED

APR 13 2005

Name: John R. O'Brien (JRO)  
Complainant

Missouri Public  
Service Commission

vs.

Case No.

Company Name: Laclede Gas Co. (LGC)  
Respondent

COMPLAINT

Complainant resides at 2184 Wide Oak Ct.  
(address of complainant)

Chesterfield, Mo 63017

1. Respondent, Laclede Gas Co.  
(company name)

of St. Louis, Mo  
(location of company), is a public utility under the

jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of the State of Missouri.

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

Due to an adjusted LGC's meter reading in January 2004 for the period from September 03 to January 04 of 2300 CCf, the bill was almost three times as much as any other year, see Exhibit A attached.

We made no changes in our living or usage patterns during the time period in question.

According to the National Weather Service's data for the greater St. Louis area, the average daily temperature readings for these months showed no significant variation over the previous two years (see Exhibit B, attached). Consequently, the questionable reading is not attributable to climatic conditions.

Home appliance malfunction was ruled out by LGC, subsequent to inspection by their own technicians, LGC replaced the gas meter following the questioned billing period and usage immediately returned to the range of the previous years (see Exhibit C attached)

Consequently, it stands to reason that the extraordinary reading for the time in question was attributable to either a malfunction in the discarded meter or a faulty reading of the meter.

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

We telephone LGC in February 2004 to challenge the 2300 CCf reading, and requested an equipment inspection.

On May 8, 2004, we wrote to the Attorney General's office and requested a review of the matter, (see Exhibit D attached).

On September 17, 2004, we telephoned LGC and requested an adjustment of the billing for September 24, 2003 to January 28, 2004.

Called the Missouri Public Service Commission on September 17, 2004. On November 2, 2004, they suggested we file a complaint.


WHEREFORE, Complainant now requests the following relief:

It is apparent the LGC made a gross error on our September, 2003 to January, 2004 ready. Since a new meter was installed, our readings are back to normal.

Therefore, we request that billing for this time period be adjusted to 1055 CCF, which is the average reading for the same months over the previous three years.

April 8<sup>th</sup> 2005  
Date

John R. Osburn  
Signature of Complainant

Attach additional pages, as necessary.  
Attach copies of any supporting documentation.

**A**

Commissioners

STEVE GAW  
Chair

CONNIE MURRAY

ROBERT M. CLAYTON III

JEFF DAVIS

LINWARD "LIN" APPLING



## Missouri Public Service Commission

POST OFFICE BOX 360  
JEFFERSON CITY MISSOURI 65102  
573-751-3234  
573-751-1847 (Fax Number)  
<http://www.psc.mo.gov>

ROBERT J. QUINN, JR.  
Executive Director

WESS A. HENDERSON  
Assistant Executive Director

ROBERT D. HALL-LOUGHEE  
Director, Utility Services

DALE HARDY ROBERTS  
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

DANA K. JOYCE  
General Counsel

November 2, 2004

Mr. John R. O'Brien  
2184 Wide Oak Ct.  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Dear Mr. O'Brien:

This letter is in response to your call of September 17, 2004, regarding issues and experiences you were having with Laclede Gas Company. I appreciate your call and knowing the experiences the consumers are having with regulated utilities in the State of Missouri.

As previously stated in a letter to you dated June 23, 2004, our investigation of your account records were conducted from 9/26/2000 through 3/12/2004. Following are the records we found:

- On 10/10/03, a 2-month bill was issued for service from 07/30/03, X8331, to 09/26/04, X8985, actual read, in the amount of \$583.76. The bill was an adjustment to correct the August bill, which was estimated due to meter reader vacation.
- On 11/06/03, a bill was issued for service from 09/26/03, X8985, to 10/24/03, X9641, modification, in the amount of \$569.35. The read obtained from the meter reader was X0641, which appeared to be too high (1656 CCf in one month). A letter was mailed to the customer advising that the Index had been reduced.
- On 11/28/03, a bill was issued for service from 10/24/03, X9641, to 11/25/03, X9766, actual, in the amount of \$123.66.
- On 12/31/03, a bill was issued for service from 11/25/03, X9766, to 12/29/03, X0101, actual, in the amount of \$295.19.
- On 01/28/04, a reading of X1285 was obtained, which was out of line with the previous read. A billing error was generated, causing a delay in the billing.

On 02/14/04, an adjusted bill was issued for service from 9/26/03, x8985, to 01/28/04, X1285, actual, in the amount of \$2026.00 (2300 CCf). The previous bills were allowed out, in the amount of \$988.20, which left an account balance of \$1037.80. The adjustment was issued to correct the prior meter reading errors.

A review of our records indicates the following:

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| • 09/26/00 to 01/29/01 | 1120 CCf |
| • 09/26/01 to 01/29/02 | 804 CCf  |
| • 09/26/02 to 01/29/03 | 1227 CCf |
| • 09/26/03 to 01/28/04 | 2300 CCf |

On 02/18/04, Mr. O'Brien contacted Laclede Customer Relations regarding the bill he had received and a high bill inspection was scheduled for 03/05/04.

B

MONTHLY AND SEASONAL MEAN TEMPERATURE

YEAR	WINTER SEASON				SPRING SEASON				SUMMER SEASON				FALL SEASON		
	DEC	JAN	FEB	AVG	MAR	APR	MAY	AVG	JUN	JUL	AUG	AVG	SEP	OCT	NOV
1838/37		29.6	38.7	34.2	41.7	49.6	63.4	61.6							
1837/38		34.7	20.8	27.8	50.5	58.5	60.5	56.5	75.7	86.1	80.4	80.7	68.6	50.6	34.7
1838/39	27.4	37.2	38.5	34.4	45.0	63.1	66.8	58.3	70.4	76.4	74.3	73.7	64.4	62.8	38.5

1986/87	35.4	30.6	40.1	35.4	48.6	56.9	72.6	59.4	77.9	81.0	78.9	79.3	70.5	53.8	49.1
1987/88	38.0	29.2	30.5	32.6	45.2	57.1	69.0	57.1	77.7	81.6	82.7	80.7	72.5	53.9	47.2
1988/89	37.2	41.2	28.2	35.5	45.0	57.7	64.3	55.7	74.8	79.3	77.8	77.3	67.4	61.3	47.1
1989/90	24.1	42.9	41.3	36.1	49.8	55.7	63.6	56.4	77.2	80.2	77.9	78.4	74.1	58.1	52.7
1990/91	34.7	29.3	41.7	35.2	50.1	61.5	73.0	61.5	79.9	80.9	79.7	80.2	72.4	60.5	42.4
1991/92	39.2	37.0	42.7	39.6	48.5	57.8	65.1	57.1	73.8	79.0	73.4	75.4	69.2	59.4	44.3
1992/93	35.7	32.1	31.7	33.2	41.5	54.2	66.4	54.0	75.1	81.9	80.4	79.1	66.4	56.1	43.9
1993/94	37.2	26.8	35.0	33.0	47.7	57.7	65.0	56.8	79.0	79.5	76.6	78.4	70.2	61.5	52.1
1994/95	41.5	31.1	36.4	36.3	49.0	56.8	64.7	56.8	75.6	81.3	83.9	80.3	68.0	60.9	42.7
1995/96	33.8	29.4	37.5	33.6	41.0	54.6	66.6	54.7	74.6	75.8	77.6	76.0	67.2	58.1	39.0
1996/97	35.5	26.7	36.1	33.4	47.6	50.9	61.7	53.4	73.6	80.2	76.0	76.6	70.2	59.1	42.0
	35.1	36.4	42.6	38.0	43.2	55.3	71.2	56.5	75.5	78.9	79.1	77.8	75.0	60.2	49.5
	37.2	31.3	42.5	37.0	42.8	58.6	66.8	56.1	74.9	82.9	76.5	78.1	69.7	58.8	52.6
1999/00	38.3	33.0	42.9	38.1	49.1	55.2	69.0	57.8	72.9	77.6	80.4	77.0	69.6	61.3	41.3
2000/01	21.6	30.5	35.1	29.1	41.5	63.1	68.7	57.8	74.1	80.7	79.6	78.1	68.8	57.7	53.1
2001/02	39.9	38.1	39.3	39.1	42.8	59.5	63.6	55.3	78.0	82.6	80.0	80.2	73.4	55.3	44.1
2002/03	37.5	28.1	31.4	32.3	47.5	58.1	65.1	56.9	71.3	79.9	80.8	77.3	67.7	60.0	49.3
2003/04	38.7	30.9	35.9	35.2	49.9	59.3	70.8	60.0	74.4	77.9	73.6	75.3	71.5	60.2	49.3
2004/05															

YEAR	DEC	JAN	FEB	AVG	MAR	APR	MAY	AVG	JUN	JUL	AUG	AVG	SEP	OCT	NOV
Avg	34.7	31.3	35.0	33.6	44.5	56.3	66.0	55.6	75.0	79.5	77.5	77.3	70.0	58.2	44.9
Max	49.8	46.8	44.6	43.1	59.8	66.7	73.0	63.6	83.1	87.4	84.9	82.7	77.4	66.9	54.4
Min	20.5	14.6	21.1	23.8	27.5	44.4	58.3	48.6	66.6	73.7	70.4	72.9	62.3	47.1	33.0

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Arno Pertlow:

# Laclede Gas Company

DRAWER 2  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63177



PRESORTED

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
POST CARD RATE  
PERMIT NO. 735

SERVICE AT: 2184 WIDE OAK CT

ACCT NO. 484245-001-8 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM 71623 DEGREE DAYS 172

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	CHANGE (DIFF)	BTU FACTOR	THERMS
4098	3784	314	1.018	319.7

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

CURRENT CHARGES 298.85

AMOUNT DUE \$298.85

PAYMENT DUE BY 11-05-04 DELINQUENT AFTER 11-18-04

## BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
PRIOR GAS BALANCE	310.09
PAYMENT THANK YOU	310.09
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 09-24-04 TO 10-22-04	283.91
(INCLUDES A MONTHLY ISRS CHARGE OF 0.45)	
CHESTERFIELD TAX	14.94
ACCOUNT BALANCE	298.85

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED. GIVE TO DOLLAR-HELP. CHECK THE RED BOX BELOW TO ADD \$1 TO EACH MONTH'S GAS BILL.

TIS THE SEASON FOR GAS LOGS, FIREPLACES AND SPACE HEATERS. CALL THE GAS EXPERTS.

# Laclede Gas Company

DRAWER 2  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63177



PRESORTED

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
POST CARD RATE  
PERMIT NO. 735

SERVICE AT: 2184 WIDE OAK CT

ACCT NO. 484245-001-8 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM 65079 DEGREE DAYS 308

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	CHANGE (DIFF)	BTU FACTOR	THERMS
4160	4093	67	1.025	63.6

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

CURRENT CHARGES 76.18

AMOUNT DUE \$76.18

PAYMENT DUE BY 12-08-04 DELINQUENT AFTER 12-17-04

## BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
PRIOR GAS BALANCE	298.85
PAYMENT THANK YOU	298.85
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 10-22-04 TO 11-23-04	72.37
(INCLUDES A MONTHLY ISRS CHARGE OF 0.45)	
CHESTERFIELD TAX	3.01
ACCOUNT BALANCE	76.18

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED. GIVE TO DOLLAR-HELP. CHECK THE RED BOX BELOW TO ADD \$1 TO EACH MONTH'S GAS BILL.

CALL FOR SAME OR NEXT DAY WATER HEATER REPLACEMENT. PAY ON YOUR MONTHLY BILL.

# Laclede Gas Company

DRAWER 2  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63177



PRESORTED

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
POST CARD RATE  
PERMIT NO. 735

SERVICE AT: 2184 WIDE OAK CT

ACCT NO. 484245-001-8 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM 69934 DEGREE DAYS 982

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	CHANGE (DIFF)	BTU FACTOR	THERMS
4343	4128	215	1.031	188.7

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

CURRENT CHARGES 211.76

AMOUNT DUE \$211.76

PAYMENT DUE BY 01-11-05 DELINQUENT AFTER 01-19-05

## BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
PRIOR GAS BALANCE	76.18
PAYMENT THANK YOU	76.18
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 11-23-04 TO 12-27-04	201.17
(INCLUDES A MONTHLY ISRS CHARGE OF 0.45)	
CHESTERFIELD TAX	10.59
ACCOUNT BALANCE	211.76

WE APPRECIATE YOUR 2004 PROMPT PAYMENT RECORD

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED. GIVE TO DOLLAR-HELP. CHECK THE RED BOX BELOW TO ADD \$1 TO EACH MONTH'S GAS BILL.

# Laclede Gas Company

DRAWER 2  
ST. LOUIS, MO 63177



PRESORTED

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
POST CARD RATE  
PERMIT NO. 735

SERVICE AT: 2184 WIDE OAK CT

ACCT NO. 484245-001-8 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM 64392 DEGREE DAYS 846

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	CHANGE (DIFF)	BTU FACTOR	THERMS
4587	4343	244	1.032	231.8

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

CURRENT CHARGES 263.59

AMOUNT DUE \$263.59

PAYMENT DUE BY 02-09-05 DELINQUENT AFTER 02-18-05

## BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
PRIOR GAS BALANCE	211.76
PAYMENT THANK YOU	211.76
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 12-27-04 TO 01-26-05	250.61
(INCLUDES A MONTHLY ISRS CHARGE OF 0.62)	
CHESTERFIELD TAX	13.18
ACCOUNT BALANCE	263.59

HELP SOMEONE IN NEED. GIVE TO DOLLAR-HELP. CHECK THE RED BOX BELOW TO ADD \$1 TO EACH MONTH'S GAS BILL.

\$49.00 OFF THE PURCHASE OF A NEW GAS WATER HEATER! SAME DAY OR NEXT DAY SERVICE AVAILABLE.



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF MISSOURI

JEFFERSON CITY

65102

September 23, 2004

JAY NIXON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

P.O. Box 899  
(573) 751-3321

Mr. John R O' Brien  
2184 Wide Oak Ct.  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

RE: Complaint No. CF-2004-07061      Laclede Gas Co

Dear Mr. O' Brien:

After reviewing your complaint, a determination has been made that formal state action is not appropriate at this time. This determination does not mean your claim is without merit. Since we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to resolve your complaint through our informal procedures, we suggest you consult a private attorney or consider an action in the small claims court.

We will keep your complaint on file should further action be appropriate in the future.

Sincerely,

JEREMIAH W. (JAY) NIXON  
Attorney General

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kimberly D. Slote".

Kimberly D. Slote  
Complaint Investigator  
Consumer Protection Division