

FILED²

Missouri Public
Service Commission

VS.

Company Name: Laclede Gas Co.
Respondent

Complainant resides at 3126 Nebraska Ave.
(address of complainant)

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

[illegible]

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

2 & 3. As the basis of this complaint, Complainant states the following facts and the Complainant has taken the following steps to present this complaint to the Respondent:

Complainant Facts:

In the past the gas meter reader would be around each month on the same day and you could hear them coming down the street they would yell out gas man. You would start to open up for them. Then when my wife and I were both working you gave a key to the basement to the meter reader and he would come in and read the meter and lock up and leave. All along the meter readers were cordial and personable, kind and gentle people. They spoke kindly to the customer.

Later I worked my business at home and knew what day the meter reader came each month and would plan to be there for him. He would come out each month on a certain day, knock and I would let him in to read the meter. There was a change and we were receiving estimated gas bills. I called to complain to Laclede Gas and told them that for as much as or more than a half year we were receiving estimated gas bills and that I was very upset. They asked me if I would be at home on a special date for a special meter reader to come out to get a current meter reading. They told me that the meter reader has been out each month and that he couldn't gain access to read the meter because the customer did not respond to a knock at the door. I told them that I am here all the time and that I did not hear anyone knock or ring the bell. So I paid the estimated bills. Never was the doorbell rung. I was here the following month I heard a light tap at the door and no doorbell was rung I hurried to the door and there would be no one there. For the next several months the same thing happened. I would wait for the meter reader, I would hear a light tap at the door and would hurry to answer and no one was there. Then I called up the Gas company and complained that I am here the gas guy comes and taps lightly and I hurry to the door only to find no one there again. I was tired of getting these estimated bills. Then I watched for the next month and about fifteen to twenty minutes before 8:00 in the morning I heard a light tap at the door I wondered who it could be tapping at the door before 8:00 because the gas people don't start reading meters until 8:00. I went out on the porch and looked down the street to see who it was and saw the gas meter reader walking as fast as he could down the street a half a block away. So I complained to the gas company. They told me that they were having trouble with their meter readers arriving on their routes too early in order to get off earlier because they had a certain amount of meters to read a day. And in order to save time they were not waiting for the customers to answer the doors and they were receiving complaints from the customers. I told them that would explain the shenanigans and that to tell the meter reader for our house next time to ring the bell and or knock louder. They said that they would make note of this on our meter readers route sheet. I said thank you very much.

The following month the meter reader came again early and by god this time we heard him he took out his heavy flashlight and pounded so hard on the front door glass that we

thought the glass would break. So my daughter answered the door thinking it was the police or something it scarred everyone to death and she called out to me that it was the meter reader and for me to come and answer the door. I came to the door and told him to go around to the back and I would open up the basement door for him. When he came into the basement he acted surly and rude he charged through the basement to the front where he read the meter and passed me on the way out and with a snarling attitude stormed out the door not saying a word.

A few days later on a Sunday morning I was working in the basement sawing some lumber when I heard some strange noises. I thought it to be coming from the back basement by the door. And when I went to investigate I saw that the window glass in the door had been broken out and an arm of a man was reaching in and feeling for the multiple locks & bolts that were set and was reaching down to undo a floor latch that was holding the door closed. He certainly new what he was looking for. I didn't see his face but I was suspicious because it looked like he was informed or conscious of the location of the locks. I didn't have enough time to do anything but to run upstairs to let the family know, who were in the living room, to get out of the house that it was being broken in to. I didn't know if he was armed and dangerous so I took the precaution for them to get out of the house. I returned to the basement and he was still working on unlocking the locks on the door and I hollered out to him to get the hell away. He ran. I checked the rest of the house and I found that the next door basement door was broken into and he had gone up to the first floor and broke in the door. I checked and nothing seemed to be missing in my tools and things. I called the police and a report was taken. Ever since that time my daughter and I have been super weary of letting anyone in our house or building.

I called Laclede Gas and informed them of the event that had taken placed and asked about having an outside meter installed and they said I would have to pay some large amount that Laclede Gas does not pay for the installation of that kind of meter.

One day the gas company was in the area replacing main gas lines and they said they would be back tomorrow to replace the lines in to the basement. Next day they came and I opened the basement and the steel door connecting the two basements where the main service pipe comes in. I was talking to the men and I said jokingly that I was glad to see them because I don't get to talk to many people because I work by myself. They said sit down and talk we can work it won't bother us for you to sit and chat. The men were working on taking out the old pipes and putting in the new. After a while one of the men removed a pipe and brought it over to me to examine and he showed me by pushing on the pipe that it was almost corroded completely through the wall and I could almost push my fingernail through the soft pipe. I am familiar with working in medals all my life that this pipe had it not been replaced at this time by pure fortune that it would have been tantamount to a human disaster.

The hole which my daughter photographed that was left in the street was unmarked from the replacement project and not filled in for several weeks. One evening after dark my daughter was getting out of her van with the baby in her arms and because the hole was unmarked and still not repaired she fell down with the baby and the baby hit her head.

My daughter took the baby to the emergency room because she was afraid the baby's head hit the pavement so hard. The baby was okay. She called and talked to Laclede Gas and they only agreed to pay for the baby's emergency bill and not for any of their negligence. The bill was sent to Laclede Gas and they paid for the emergency bill.

I knew that they have meters that they can read from outside so I asked about this and Laclede Gas agreed to install this remote meter so they do not have to come into the building to read the meters because I explained to them that I did not want people coming into the building aggravating and frightening the family.

November 26, 2002 My daughter called Laclede gas because we didn't receive a bill for November. They said they would look into it and make sure one was sent out.

December 3, 2002 Laclede Gas came out and shut off the gas. No one knocked on the door. My daughter went to a pay station thinking that we owed because the gas was turned off and since we hadn't received a bill didn't know the current balance, and she paid \$200. She was concerned about rushing to get the gas turned back on for me because of my age and health problems. She returned and called Laclede Gas to let them know that the payment had been made and that we still do need to have a bill sent out. They said they were sorry that the gas was turned off by their mistake due to the cold weather rule and that the earliest they could get someone out was a couple of days. My daughter explained that it needed to be turned on right away. The operator checked and said they were going to try to get it on tomorrow. We used electric heaters to get by until the gas would be restored.

December 4, 2002 The gas was turned on in the street. I went down and lit the pilot lights on the hot water tank and furnace.

December 9, 2002 Called Laclede Gas again requesting a bill.

January 2003 Still looking for a bill from Laclede Gas.

February 13, 2003 My daughter called Laclede Gas to ask if we could please have a current bill sent to us. The operator said she was pulling our account up on the computer and then said oh no something here is definitely wrong here. My daughter told her we haven't been receiving bills and she said she would note the account and have one sent right out.

March 11, April 24, May 27, June 24 and July 17, 2003 My daughter & I called once each month to ask about receiving a current bill and each time they said oh there is something wrong with their accounting system and that they would note the account so that their problem could be addressed and that we would be receiving a bill shortly.

July 17, 2003 We called Laclede Gas and the operator said that the account was showing as inactive and my daughter said that we have been calling each month about

not receiving a bill and the operator said that they would not have any record of the calls because it is listed as an inactive account.

June 26, 2003 Laclede Gas man came out and needed to read the meter and gain access to the basement and we let him in to do so. Still no bill from Laclede Gas.

August 2003 On two occasions men from Laclede Gas came out to read the meters and said they needed to check out the line. We let them in the basement to do so.

September 17, 2003 Called Laclede Gas to report that we still haven't received a bill and that we are afraid because my daughter makes sure that I have enough each month budgeted out for each of my expenses and not receiving a bill for so very long is scarring us.

September 22, 2003 A gas collector, he called himself, came out and knocked on the door. He told my daughter that he needed to gain access to the building to check out the meter and line because there was a report of a gas odor. She asked who made that report and he said I have the report right here. Becoming suspicious because of how nervous this man was acting she asked to see the report and he said he couldn't give it to her. My daughter said she didn't want the report but just wanted to see the written order he said that's it he's disconnecting the service that he is not going to stand out in the sun and talk to her any more. He took off running to his truck and drove away. My daughter called Laclede Gas and asked for them to check to see if there was a report of a spell of gas at our address and they said there was none. Ten minutes later the service was cut off. We called Laclede Gas to find out why the gas had been disconnected and to make arrangements for reconnection and they gave us the same story about how there was something wrong with their accounting system and that she would have to talk with a supervisor and call us back. Supervisor called and talked to my daughter & I together on the phone and accused us of their problem being one half our fault and half their fault that in order to have the gas restored we would have to pay the full amount due before they could reconnect the service. Which the total amount he was unsure of and couldn't tell us. He would have to go and figure out what our bill was. So we were put on hold and he came back on the phone and said we needed to pay \$1,100. He said it was half our fault because we should have been paying in to Laclede Gas all along even though we haven't been receiving a bill. I explained to him that I would never send in payment on a bill without having a record of what was owed that is the reason we made so many calls letting them know we weren't receiving bills.

When he accused us of their problem being half our fault & half Laclede Gas I thought he was saying that he was going to assume responsibility for half the bill and I would the other half. Then he said oh no I'm not saying that, you have to pay the full amount before we can turn the gas on I just can't write-off the hole bill. I let him know that I budget all my bills and that was unreasonable because I have only my retirement which is about \$200 a month and my daughter helps me out with the rest. He said I would have to come down to the downtown office to make arrangements for budget billing. I explained that I am not good on my feet and do not go out much and asked them to come here and he said

they wouldn't do that. Then he said at least \$600 needed to be paid. I asked my daughter what together we could afford and she said we could pay \$200. He said he agreed to that amount and he would put me on a budget plan to pay the remainder.

September 22-25, 2003 Pulled our resources to pay the \$200.

September 25, 2003 Paid \$200 at a pay station and still no bill showing what is due. My daughter called Laclede Gas to make arrangements to have the gas turned on and they said it would take 3-4 days. She said that because this is Laclede Gas's fault that they need to have this put on an emergency list and get the service on today. They said they were unsure if they could do this but would try. I received a call at 9:00 p.m. that evening from a Laclede Gas street worker saying that he was running behind on another job and would be out shortly. The gas was turned on about 10:00 p.m. and my daughter let two men in the basement to check out the line. One was working at the meter and the other saw that there was a little water leak on the hot water tank pipe and my daughter said that we would repair this before turning on the hot water tank and the furnace. Then he was turning around on the adjustments on the furnace which I believe didn't need to be touched. Still no bill from Laclede Gas.

October 13, 2003 My daughter called Laclede Gas and talked to the supervisor. She explained that the pipe had been replaced and that we lit the pilot light on the hot water tank and there wasn't any problems but on the furnace which the gas guy was twisting around on we couldn't get it to re-lite again. He told us that he would send out someone to take a look at it at no charge and they would only charge us if parts were needed. Still no bill from Laclede Gas.

October 16, 2003 Laclede Gas guy came out to lite the furnace, worked on it for a little over an hour replaced a small part. The supervisor told us that he would send out someone to take a look at it at no charge and they would only charge us if parts were needed. He got the furnace lit and it was working.

October 22, 2003 My daughter answered the door and a Laclede Gas guy told her that he needed to be let in and check the meter and the line. She explained to him that we are fed up of letting people in and taking the time out constantly to be opening gates and doors and dealing with Laclede Gases problems and he told her that he saw that she wasn't letting him in because of his race. She told him that she wanted his supervisor out here right now to clear this up. He called on his radio and the supervisor was working not to far away and was finishing a job and would be right over. My daughter explained the long history of problems and expressed our feelings of being fed up and not wanting to waste any more time. The meter reader said to his supervisor that she won't let me in because of and he pointed to himself like I was racist. The supervisor said to my daughter that she hated Laclede Gas and that everybody hates Laclede Gas. He then explained that they would only be out this last time for another year that everyone has to have their pipes checked by Laclede Gas once a year. We asked around and no one has had theirs checked ever. My daughter agreed to open up the basement again for another time hoping this time would be the last.

November 6, 2003 Called Laclede Gas again to ask for a copy of the bill. Still no bill!

In the meantime we contacted the Missouri Public Service Commission to file a formal complaint against Laclede Gas.

November 7, 2003 Received a bill first time in a year. Which Laclede Gas charged us for their accounting system problems a whopping \$54 reconnect charge. They did not itemize the bills for the past year that we didn't receive bills.

November 22, 2003 I received another bill, this time including \$143.32 for the service charge. The service charge which was suppose to be free minus the part.

Next week I will be paying the current charges of \$53.79

WHEREFORE, Complainant now requests the following relief:

I am requesting the following relief for the time period dating October 03, 2002 to November 22, 2003.

With regard to the months from October 3, 2002 to October 31, 2003 during which no billing for gas, penalties or any services had been innumerated, charged, justified or shown I ask that in all fairness they be struck off in-so-much-as they cannot be validated by regular billing or itemization. This amount of \$960.86 be denied Laclede Gas Company as unsubstanciateable and uncontestable on a month to month basis.

We ask to be compensated \$1,000 for the time and energy it took us to address the serious and annoying accusations and inappropriate personal conduct and lack of fair, honest and timely accounting for the services Laclede Gas Company owes us as customers.

WHEREFORE, Complainant now requests the following relief:

11/20/03
Date

Carl Hays
Signature of Complainant

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

Laclede Gas Company DRAWER 2
ST. LOUIS, MO 63171

SERVICE AT: 3126 NEBRASKA AVE 1FL

ACCT NO. 624062-003-7 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM: .56894 DEGREE DAYS 5720

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	USAGE (CCF)	X	BTU FACTOR=	THERMS
4012	2826	1186		1.039	1232.3

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

GAS CREDIT 115.22

CURRENT CHARGES 1076.08

AMOUNT DUE \$960.86

PAYMENT DUE BY 11-06-03 DELINQUENT AFTER 11-17-03

RETURN THIS STUB TO: LACLEDE GAS COMPANY, DRAWER 2, ST. LOUIS, MO 63171

AMOUNT DUE \$960.86 **AMOUNT PAID**

PAYMENT DUE BY 11-06-03
DELINQUENT AFTER 11-17-03

DOLLAR
HELP

26870

62406200370000960869

BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
RECONNECT CHRG	54.00
PRIOR BILL CHRG	115.22-
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 12-05-02 TO 10-03-03	981.19
ST LOUIS CITY TAX	40.89
ACCOUNT BALANCE	960.86

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

ST LOUIS, MO 63118

CARL HEPP
3126 NEBRASKA AVE 1FL
ST LOUIS, MO 63118

Laclede Gas Company DRAWER 2
ST. LOUIS, MO 63171

SERVICE AT: 3126 NEBRASKA AVE 1FL

ACCT NO. 624062-003-7 DEPOSIT 0.00 RATE RG

AVERAGE GAS COST PER THERM: .65884 DEGREE DAYS 132

PRESENT READING	PREVIOUS READING	USAGE (CCF)	X	BTU FACTOR=	THERMS
4059	4012	47		1.024	48.1

ACTUAL READING AMOUNT

GAS ARREARS 960.86

OTHER CHARGES 143.32

CURRENT CHARGES 53.79

AMOUNT DUE \$1157.97

PAYMENT DUE BY 11-17-03 DELINQUENT AFTER 11-25-03

RETURN THIS STUB TO: LACLEDE GAS COMPANY, DRAWER 2, ST. LOUIS, MO 63171

AMOUNT DUE \$1157.97 **AMOUNT PAID**

PAYMENT DUE BY 11-17-03
DELINQUENT AFTER 11-25-03

DOLLAR
HELP

09289

62406200370001157974

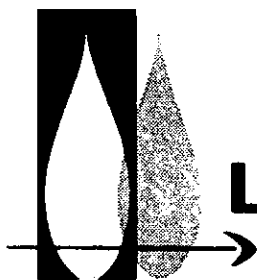
BILL DETAIL

	AMOUNT
PRIOR GAS BALANCE	960.86
HEATING-REPAIR	143.32
CHARGE FOR GAS SVC 10-03-03 TO 10-31-03	51.64
ST LOUIS CITY TAX	2.15
ACCOUNT BALANCE	1157.97

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

ST LOUIS, MO 63118

CARL HEPP
3126 NEBRASKA AVE 1FL
ST LOUIS, MO 63118



Laclede Gas

JOBING CHARGED CODE: SEE BELOW <u>02</u>					UNITS USED	STOCK NO.	DESCRIPTION OF MATERIAL	COST AMT
ADDRESS <u>3126 NEBASKA</u>								
SERVICE CHARGE	WORK CODE	START TIME	END TIME	DATE COMP.	<u>1</u>		<u>B VALVE</u>	
1ST TRIP	<u>20</u>	<u>1200</u>	<u>1320</u>	<u>10/16/03</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>LEAD HUSKY</u>	
CUST. SIGNATURE <u>X</u>								
2ND TRIP								
CUST. SIGNATURE								
HOUSE SALE INSPECTION REPORT Y/NO <u>N</u>								
MARK APPLIANCES YES=Y NO=NO								
02 CENTRAL HH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">The Liability, if any, of Laclede Gas Company for any and all property damages in connection with the performance of the inspection referred to herein (including, but not limited to, any assertion that anyone is required to pay for any new appliances because of Laclede Gas Company's alleged improper or negligent performance of such inspection) shall in every case be limited to an amount equal to the charges made by Laclede Gas Company for such inspection.</div>						
04 WATER HEATER	<input type="checkbox"/>							
03 RANGE	<input type="checkbox"/>							
08 DRYER	<input type="checkbox"/>							
02 ROOM HEATER	<input type="checkbox"/>							
07 GRILL	<input type="checkbox"/>							
06 GAS LIGHT	<input type="checkbox"/>							
05 AIR COND.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
09 FUEL RUNS O.K.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
09 CONNECT	<input type="checkbox"/>							
01 HSI	<input type="checkbox"/>							
11 MISC.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
INSPECTED BY _____					DATE _____		TOTAL	
SERVICEMAN'S REMARKS AND HSI OTHER COMMENTS <u>6152 - WESTINGHOUSE</u>								
<u>FURNACE - CLEANED, BURNERS & PILOT - REPLACED</u>								
<u>"B" VALVE & LEAD - CHECKED / OK</u>								