

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE
STATE OF MISSOURI

Name: DZHURIANSKIY ROMAN
Complainant

vs.

Company Name: MISSOURI AMERICAN WATER COM.
Respondent

Case No.

FILED³
JAN 19 2010
Missouri Public
Service Commission

COMPLAINT

Complainant resides at 32 CRABAPPLE CT., ST. LOUIS, MO 63132
(address of complainant)

~~Ph. # (314) 692-0224~~

1. Respondent, MISSOURI AMERICAN WATER COMP.
(company name)

of St. Louis PH # 1-800-430-0820, is a public utility under the
(location of company)
jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of the State of Missouri.

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

On Sep. 14, 2009 I replaced my old water heater with a new one. To comply with a new St. Louis County plumbing code I hired a licensed plumbing company, which installed it with an expansion tank (wasn't before). It cost me an additional \$200. After installation it was inspected by St. Louis County plumbing department's inspector and it was OK.

Before the MAWC took its watermeter reading on Nov. 13, 2009, I checked it by myself. It showed 8 m³ of water usage from the previous reading. It would be OK, but I noticed some dial in the left corner behaved in unusual manner. I checked the water company website, a reference book, but couldn't find anything about a small dial. I called their Customer Service and explained the situation. At first, they couldn't explain to me what it was (same, their cust. serv. represn. not familiar with watermeters' gear). After consulting with someone in their office they said I probably had a leak somewhere in my house and they would send a field technician to investigate. By the company definition all their technicians are highly trained experts to detect a leak.

On December 4, 2009 about 10 AM, a water company technician (#2823, no name) arrived. He checked all my appliances for leakage and was also looking for some devices, such as water pressure reduction valves (which are not installed on my property) but couldn't find anything wrong. (see addit. page)

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

I have been un-successfully trying to communicate with the company's management to address the true facts and resolve the problem. Beside as indicated in my complaint there is no attempt from the company administration to investigate further and settle the issue. They insist this is only my problem to investigate and don't want either to acknowledge facts (fact 1) their employees statements or even being on my property (no reports from 2 employees).

I consider this situation a very unique one and my complaint (as a little man) is no way to fight a big corporation. I believe either a wrong person handled this matter or they didn't pay attention to unusual circumstances. I hope the MAWC will also act in good faith as I do to resolve the issue.

WHEREFORE, Complainant now requests the following relief:

I would like to settle the case directly with the company or via mediation as soon as possible if the company is interested and could be as:

1. Have their qualified engineer (expert) on my property look in at the water meter work with written explanation or report.
2. If possible, to adjust water meter in the manner of not letting water to go backward or rotating the dial backward.
3. If provision (2) impossible to make adjustments to my current and future bills as deducting just only $2m^3$ from any quarterly water usage, and report it to the MSD as actual usage.

01-11-2010

Date

Rouven B. Jancusky

Signature of Complainant

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

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

He checked the water meter movements, gave me a copy of the report indicating he couldn't find any leak and would send a crew to pump out box.

About 30 min. later, a crew of 2 men arrived. When they looked how the water dial behaved, they asked me if I recently replaced or installed any appliances. And when I said I replaced my water heater with an expansion tank they said they have already had complaints like mine. One of them came inside of my house and without hesitation declared, "I am shutting the water heater inlet water valve and you will see no movement on the water meter." After that we came outside. He was right - no movement was detected. I asked them if I have had any leak either inside or outside of my house up to the water meter, and they assured me there was no leak. They also told me that the water meter leak dial (water flow indicator) is not supposed to run in both directions when usage or leaking detected. The water in pipes is under pressure and any leak or usage should force the dial to move in one direction. Logically, this couldn't be water leak directly from the pipes, because by estimate it is about 2m³ a quarter or about 10 gal. a day, not too much. It is usually either a leaky faucet or toilet, but none failed. They also pointed out it appeared the water like pumped out backward through the water meter and pumped forward again. (And I agree with them!). They couldn't explain why and said it is their company problem and apparently we will have more complaints in the future like this one when people realize actual water usage. They promised to submit a report about this to their supervisor (pointing out the manufacturer of the water meter needs to be contacted) and I would receive a call from him about results. They also called the first technician who sent them to my home and explained the situation, all in my presence. They left no report or their names.

I waited about a week - no one called me. Then I called their Cust. Serv. (It is the only ph. #. available on our bills, no other ph. #. and address of the company listed either in the yellow pages or their web.) It was a surprise to me to learn they didn't have any records of the second crew on my property, but had a record from the first worker and his remarks to send to me another crew. I explained to them I had already had their people on my property and would like to have contact with their local office in our area. They said they have no ph. numbers and communicate only via e-mails. They promised someone will contact me soon. But no one called. I called Cust. Serv. again and again, each day without results. I even talked to their supervisor (Mrs. Dona) who personally sent a couple of e-mails and promised a call back from the local office. It never happened. Every time when I called the Cust. Serv., I requested to have my conversations to be recorded what they said they did. Then I filed an informal complaint with the MPSC. Each time afterward when I called them back, I told them about my informal complaint and they said they would send someone to replace my water meter.

On December 17, 2009 a technician from the company came on my property and asked me how she could help me. I explained her my situation, but she offered to replace my water meter with a new one. I couldn't resist because the water meter is their property. She replaced it and it behaved the same way as the previous one.

On December 18, 2009 I received a call from the local MAWC office. A woman, named Lora, said I would receive a call from the district supervisor (Lamar) today or tomorrow, no one called. I called back (314) 996-2430, asked her title (she said she was hired just 2 weeks before and couldn't provide her title). She said supervisor was sick and would call tomorrow. No one called back. I called her again. She transferred me to his voice-mail. I left him my message and have never receive a call.

On Decemb. 23, 2009 I called the Cust. Serv. again and complained about the situation. They refused to talk to me because they had already received an inquiry from MPSC and couldn't comment on the matter. But after my insistence they transferred me to a "specialist", named Mary, ext. 6849 Ph# 1-800-430-0820. to discuss the issue. Even she didn't want to discuss the issue deeply, she indicated that my water usage for a family of 3 is 2-3 times less than usual and even it was my rights to complain, it wasn't a big deal to pay a couple of dollars more for water. I indicated that issue not with my real usage of water but paying for water I don't use. It's not right, and it will affect my next sewer bills, which will cost me about \$200 more a year. As a low income family it will create a big hardship. I also indicated I had already had 2 plumbers on my property to investigate and they couldn't find anything wrong and explain the water meter leak dial moving in both directions, or not at all from 30 seconds to 2-3 min. (What kind of leak could it be?)

When I received a call from an MPSC investigator and explained the situation, I believe she didn't follow through details asking MAWC explanations why the water meter behaves improperly (not only results of the testings) a report (which can't be found) from their employees (very important piece of evidence). Instead, I received a copy from the MAWC and later conversation stating their water meter in compliance with rules and I have no excessive use of the water. (It's not of their business how much water I should use. I am a conservationist!) And I need to make repair. It is up to me to find out why the water meter shows usage. As long as it rotates I have to pay for water. (Comments from my conversation to a representative from the company Mrs. Chelsie Hamon at Ph# (314) 996-2367).

As a customer, accordingly provisions 4 CSR-240-10(5); (37); (43) I acted in good faith to resolve the issue, but the MAWC relies only on the water meter testing but no other facts and refuses to communicate with me. I believe they hide some information and don't want public to know about this. I hope you will conduct full investigation including engineering opinion. I feel I am punished by the MAWC for nothing.