

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of Customer Billing	)	
Impacts of a Recent Tornado	)	File No. GO-2013-0513
In the Area of St. Louis, Missouri	)	

**STATUS REPORT OF LACLEDE GAS COMPANY**

COMES NOW Laclede Gas Company (“Laclede” or “Company”) and in response to the Commission’s June 7, 2011 Order in the above-referenced matter, submits the following Status Report:

1. On May 31, 2013, a category 3 tornado and related storm struck and damaged the facilities of the St. Louis, Missouri contractor, Fiserv, that Laclede uses for purposes of printing and mailing bills to its customers. Fortunately, no loss of life or serious injury resulted from the event. Unfortunately, the storm struck at the very moment that Laclede’s customer bills were on the loading dock and ready to be taken to the post office for mailing. Significant damage was done to the building, including water damage. Specifically, electric power to the building was lost, portions of the roof collapsed, and several interior walls collapsed. The building was declared unsafe due to the structural damage, and authorities did not allow anyone to enter the building from Friday, May 31 until Tuesday, June 4. As a result, the bills that should have been mailed Friday evening could not be mailed until Tuesday.

2. Because Laclede takes with the utmost seriousness its obligation to render bills to its customers in accordance with the Commission’s rules, Laclede had contractual arrangements in place to ensure that Fiserv had emergency back-up facilities to process bills in the event of such a disaster. For Laclede, these Fiserv facilities were located in Houston, Texas. Fiserv, in

cooperation with Laclede, immediately notified Fiserv's back-up facilities of the event and began the transition process necessary to send out subsequent bills from these alternative facilities. Because the inserts that were supposed to go in subsequent bills were destroyed in the storm and because inserts and new billing stock had to be transported to the Houston facility, the bills that would normally have been delivered to the post office on Monday and Tuesday were mailed on Thursday, and the bills that would have been mailed on Wednesday and Thursday were mailed on Friday. Since Friday, June 7, bills have been mailed on their customary date. A summary of the changes in mailing dates and the number of bills affected is set forth below.

Normal Mailing Date	Delinquent After	Date Bills Mailed	Number of Bills Affected
5/31/2013	6/21/2013	6/4/2013	31,140
6/3/2013	6/24/2013	6/6/2013	35,056
6/4/2013	6/25/2013	6/6/2013	36,632
6/5/2013	6/26/2013	6/7/2013	33,508
6/6/2013	6/27/2013	6/7/2013	35,458
6/7/2013	6/28/2013	6/7/2013	No bills affected

3. The Commission's rules and the Company's tariff contain billing provisions which address the timing of customer billing. Specifically, 4 CSR 240-13.020(7) provides as follows for residential bills:

A monthly-billed customer shall have at least twenty-one (21) days and a quarterly-billed customer shall have at least sixteen (16) days from the rendition of the bill to pay the utility charges, unless a customer has selected a preferred payment date in accordance with a utility's preferred payment date plan. If the due date or delinquent date falls upon a Sunday, legal holiday, or any other day when the offices of the utility regularly used for the payment of customer bills are not open to the general public, the due date or delinquent date shall be extended through the next business day. The date of payment for remittance by mail is the date on which the utility receives the remittance. A utility shall not base an assessment of a deposit or delinquent charge, or a discontinuance of service, on a payment that was made to a payment agent on or before the due date or delinquent date.

In addition, 4 CSR 240-13.015 defines the "rendition" of a bill to mean "...the mailing or hand delivery of a bill by a utility to a customer." Finally, Laclede's tariff also provides that bills become delinquent after twenty-one (21) days from the date of the bill. (Laclede Gas Tariff Rule 6(A)(7), Tariff Sheet R-6-b)

4. To ensure consistency with the Commission's rules and its tariff regarding the time frames that customers should have to pay their bills without incurring a late fee, Laclede has re-programmed its billing system to provide an extra five day grace period for any customer bills that were affected by the disruption in service. Because only one day's bills were mailed as many as 4 days late, Laclede believes that providing this five day grace period will be sufficient to ensure that no customer will be adversely affected by the delay.

5. In addition to bills, the tornado and damage to the Fiserv building delayed delivery of disconnect notices, including the second disconnect notice, which is also known as the 48-96 hour notice because it is mailed such that, with normal postal delivery, the customer will receive it 2-4 days before potential discontinuance of service. (See Laclede Gas Tariff Rule 14(7) on Sheet R-12-c) Laclede has delayed its collection activity on these notices accordingly.

6. Laclede has also placed a notice on the homepage of its website as well as on its social media channels informing the public of this issue and of the fact that customers who received their bills late may pay their bill up to 5 days later with no late fee.

7. Laclede also intends to use this event as an opportunity to further enhance the speed with which its vendors can react to a situation of this nature. Specifically, Laclede has put measures in place to ensure that should an event of this nature reoccur, sufficient billing stock and inserts will be available to alternative facilities so that even a two to four day delay in mailing bills can be reduced.

8. Laclede appreciates the opportunity to advise the Commission as to the status of this situation and the actions the Company has taken to address it. Laclede will certainly cooperate with the Commission Staff to provide whatever additional information may be desired.

WHEREFORE, for the foregoing reasons, Laclede respectfully requests that the Commission accept this Status Report.

Respectfully submitted,

**/s/ Michael C. Pendergast**

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ATTORNEYS FOR LACLEDE GAS COMPANY

**Certificate of Service**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronic mailed to the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission and to the Office of the Public Counsel on this 14th day of June, 2013.

**/s/Michael T. Cline**