

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Ralph E. Pridgen Jr.,)	
)	
Complainant,)	
)	
v.)	<u>Case No. EC-2008-0021</u>
)	
The Empire District Electric Company,)	
)	
Respondent.)	

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT
AND ORDER DIRECTING STAFF INVESTIGATION

Issue Date: July 18, 2007

Effective Date: July 18, 2007

Legal Department
The Empire District Electric Company
P.O. Box 127
Joplin, Missouri 64802
CERTIFIED MAIL

On July 16, 2007 Ralph E. Pridgen Jr. filed a complaint with the Missouri Public Service Commission against The Empire District Electric Company, a copy of which is enclosed. Pursuant to 4 CSR 240-2.070, Respondent Empire shall have 30 days from the date of this notice to file an answer or to file notice that the complaint has been satisfied.

In the alternative, the Respondent may file a written request that the complaint be referred to a neutral third-party mediator for **voluntary mediation** of the complaint. Upon receipt of a request for mediation, the 30-day time period shall be tolled while the Commission ascertains whether or not the Complainant is also willing to submit to voluntary mediation. If the Complainant agrees to mediation, the time period within which an answer

is due shall be suspended pending the resolution of the mediation process. Additional information regarding the mediation process is enclosed.

If the Complainant declines the opportunity to seek mediation, the Respondent will be notified in writing that the tolling has ceased and will also be notified of the date by which an answer or notice of satisfaction must be filed. That period will usually be the remainder of the original 30-day period.

All pleadings (the answer, the notice of satisfaction of complaint or request for mediation) shall be mailed to:

Secretary of the Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0360

A copy shall be served upon the Complainant at the Complainant's address as listed within the enclosed complaint. A copy of this notice has been mailed to the Complainant.

Further the Commission will direct the Staff of the Commission to investigate the facts in this case and to file a report under Commission Rule 4 CSR 240-2.070(10).

Under this rule, the Commission may request, after a formal complaint has been filed, an analysis by its Staff of the reasons underlying the complaint. The Staff must then file its findings with the Commission and serve copies on the other parties.

The Commission views its Staff as an unbiased third party in this complaint case and will direct the Staff to investigate the contested issues set out in the pleadings and to file a report of its findings with the Commission. Staff also has the discretion to report findings as to any other contested issues in this case, which may appear during its investigation.

The Commission will direct the Staff to file a report and will allow the parties to file responsive pleadings to that report.

IT IS ORDERED THAT:

1. The Empire District Electric Company shall, no later than August 17, 2007, file a response to this complaint.
2. The Staff of the Commission shall file, no later than September 17, 2007, a report of its investigation in this matter.
3. Any party may file a response to Staff's report no later than September 27, 2007.
4. This order shall become effective on July 18, 2007.

BY THE COMMISSION



Colleen M. Dale
Secretary

(S E A L)

Kennard L. Jones, Senior Regulatory
Law Judge, by delegation of authority
pursuant to Section 386.240, RSMo 2000.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 18th day of July, 2007.