

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
JEFFERSON CITY
January 23, 2001**

CASE NO: GC-2001-386

Office of the Public Counsel
P.O. Box 7800
Jefferson City, MO 65102

John B. Morthland
Wasinger, Parham, Morthland, Terrell &
Wasinger, L.C.
P. O. Box 962
Hannibal, MO 63401

General Counsel
Missouri Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

United Cities Gas Company
Legal Department
810 Crescent Centre Drive, Suite 600
Franklin, TN 37067

Enclosed find certified copy of a NOTICE in the above-numbered case(s).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dale Hardy Roberts". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge**

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Palmyra R-1 School District,)	
)	
Complainant,)	
)	
v.)	<u>Case No. GC-2001-386</u>
)	
United Cities Gas Company,)	
)	
Respondent.)	

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

United Cities Gas Company
Legal Department
810 Crescent Centre Drive
Suite 600
Franklin, Tennessee 37067
CERTIFIED MAIL

On January 12, 2001, Palmyra R-1 School District filed a complaint with the Missouri Public Service Commission against Missouri Gas Energy, a copy of which is enclosed. Pursuant to 4 CSR 240-2.070, Respondent United Cities Gas Company 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 shall be 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
Post Office 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.

BY THE COMMISSION



Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

(S E A L)

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 23rd of January, 2001

Kevin A. Thompson, Deputy Chief Regulatory Law Judge

Copy to: John B. Morthland
Wasinger, Parham, Morthland, Terrell & Wasinger, L.C.
2801 St. Mary's Avenue
Post Office Box 962
Hannibal, Missouri 63401-0962

Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission
Post Office Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Office of the Public Counsel
Post Office Box 7800
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102



Commissioners

SHEILA LUMPE
Chair

M. DIANNE DRAINER
Vice Chair

CONNIE MURRAY

ROBERT G. SCHEMENAUER

KELVIN L. SIMMONS

Missouri Public Service Commission

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

BRIAN D. KINKADE
Executive Director

GORDON L. PERSINGER
Director, Research and Public Affairs

WESS A. HENDERSON
Director, Utility Operations

ROBERT SCHALLENBERG
Director, Utility Services

DONNA M. KOLILIS
Director, Administration

DALE HARDY ROBERTS
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

DANA K. JOYCE
General Counsel

Information Sheet Regarding Mediation of Commission Formal Complaint Cases

Mediation is a process whereby the parties themselves work to resolve their dispute with the aid of a neutral third-party mediator. This process is sometimes referred to as "facilitated negotiation." The mediator's role is advisory and although the mediator may offer suggestions, the mediator has no authority to impose a solution nor will the mediator determine who "wins." Instead, the mediator simply works with both parties to facilitate communications and to attempt to enable the parties to reach an agreement which is mutually agreeable to both the complainant and the respondent.

The mediation process is explicitly a problem-solving one in which neither the parties nor the mediator are bound by the usual constraints such as the rules of evidence or the other formal procedures required in hearings before the Missouri Public Service Commission. Although many private mediators charge as much as \$250 per hour, the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law has agreed to provide this service to parties who have formal complaints pending before the Public Service Commission at no charge. Not only is the service provided free of charge, but mediation is also less expensive than the formal complaint process because the assistance of an attorney is not necessary for mediation. In fact, the parties are encouraged not to bring an attorney to the mediation meeting.

The formal complaint process before the Commission invariably results in a determination by which there is a "winner" and a "loser" although the value of winning may well be offset by the cost of attorneys fees and the delays of protracted litigation. Mediation is not only a much quicker process but it also offers the unique opportunity for informal, direct communication between the two parties to the complaint and mediation is far more likely to result in a settlement which, because it was mutually agreed to, pleases both parties. This is traditionally referred to as "win-win" agreement.

The traditional mediator's role is to (1) help the participants understand the mediation process, (2) facilitate their ability to speak directly to each other, (3) maintain order, (4) clarify misunderstandings, (5) assist in identifying issues, (6) diffuse unrealistic expectations, (7) assist in translating one participant's perspective or proposal into a form that is more understandable and acceptable to the other participant, (8) assist the participants with the actual negotiation process, (9) occasionally a mediator may propose a possible solution, and (10) on rare occasions a mediator may encourage a participant to accept a particular solution. The mediator will not possess any specialized knowledge of the utility industry or of utility law.

In order for the Commission to refer a complaint case to mediation, the parties must both agree to mediate their conflict in good faith. The party filing the complaint must agree to appear and to make a good faith effort to mediate and the utility company against which the complaint has been filed must send a representative who has full authority to settle the complaint case. The essence of mediation stems from the fact that the participants are both genuinely interested in resolving the complaint.

Because mediation thrives in an atmosphere of free and open discussion, all settlement offers and other information which is revealed during mediation is shielded against subsequent disclosure in front of the Missouri Public Service Commission and is considered to be privileged information. The only information which must be disclosed to the Public Service Commission is (a) whether the case has been settled and (b) whether, irrespective of the outcome, the mediation effort was considered to be a worthwhile endeavor. The Commission will not ask what took place during the mediation.

If the dispute is settled at the mediation, the Commission will require a signed release from the complainant in order for the Commission to dismiss the formal complaint case.

If the dispute is not resolved through the mediation process, neither party will be prejudiced for having taken part in the mediation and, at that point, the formal complaint case will simply resume its normal course.



Date: January 23, 2001

Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary of the Commission

P 102 316 559

US Postal Service
Receipt for Certified Mail

No Insurance Coverage Provided.

Do not use for International Mail (See reverse)

Sent to United Cities Gas Co.	
Street & Number 810 Crescent Centre Dr. S.E.	
Post Office, State, & ZIP Code Franklin, TN 37067	
Postage	\$
Certified Fee	
Special Delivery Fee	
Restricted Delivery Fee	
Return Receipt Showing to Whom & Date Delivered	
Return Receipt Showing to Whom, Date, & Addressee's Address	
TOTAL Postage & Fees	\$
Postmark or Date	

Thank you for using Return Receipt Service.
Return Receipt valid April 1995

GC-2001-386

I also wish to receive the following services (for an extra fee):

1. ☐ Addressee's Address
 2. ☐ Restricted Delivery

Consult postmaster for fee.

SENDER:

- Complete items 1 and/or 2 for additional services.
- Complete items 3, 4a, and 4b.
- Print your name and address on the reverse of this form so that we can return this card to you.
- Attach this form to the front of the mailpiece, or on the back if space does not permit.
- Write "Return Receipt Requested" on the mailpiece below the article number.
- The Return Receipt will show to whom the article was delivered and the date delivered.

3. Article Addressed to:

United Cities Gas Company
Legal Dept.
810 Crescent Centre Dr.
Suite 600
Franklin, TN 37067

4a. Article Number

P 102 316 559

4b. Service Type

- ☐ Registered ☒ Certified
☐ Express Mail ☐ Insured
☐ Return Receipt for Merchandise ☐ COD

7. Date of Delivery

1-25-01

5. Received By: (Print Name)

B. H. Greer

6. Signature: (Addressee or Agent)

X *[Signature]*

8. Addressee's Address (Only if requested and fee is paid)

PS Form 3811, December 1994

Domestic Return Receipt

STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and

I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City,

Missouri, this 23rd day of Jan. 2001.*Dale Hardy Roberts*

Dale Hardy Roberts

Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

