

# BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Willie J. Harris Jr.,	)	
	)	
Complainant	)	
	)	<b><u>File No. WC-2021-0129</u></b>
v.	)	
	)	
Missouri-American Water Company,	)	
	)	
Respondent	)	

## NOTICE OF DESIGNATION AS SMALL FORMAL COMPLAINT AND EXTENSION FOR GOOD CAUSE

Issue Date: March 16, 2021

On November 2, 2020, Willie J. Harris Jr. filed a complaint with the Commission against Missouri-American Water Company (MAWC). Mr. Harris's complaint did not specify an amount in dispute. Commission rules require complaints involving less than \$3,000 to be designated small formal complaints.<sup>1</sup> The Commission directed Mr. Harris to file a statement of the amount, if any, in dispute.

Mr. Harris's response, filed on November 23, 2020, does not state an amount in dispute, but indicates that Mr. Harris wishes to "begin anew [and] reinstate [his] water services with no charges."<sup>2</sup> MAWC filed its answer on December 11, 2020, and attached documents indicating that MAWC's records state an amount due on Mr. Harris's account of less than \$800 as of October 2020, before Mr. Harris filed a formal complaint with the Commission.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 20 CSR 4240-2.070(15).

<sup>2</sup> *Response to Order*, p. 2 (Nov. 23, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> *Answer to Complaint and Motion to Dismiss*, Attachment A (Dec. 11, 2020). This observation regarding the parties' allegations does not constitute a finding.

On February 4, 2021, the Staff of the Commission filed its recommendation. Staff recommends this case should not be designated as a small formal complaint based on the conclusion that Mr. Harris “questions all billing and his billing history is more than \$3000.”<sup>4</sup>

While the Commission agrees with Staff that some of Mr. Harris’s allegations are broadly stated, the parties’ pleadings at this time indicate this controversy comes to the Commission after the parties were unable to resolve a dispute regarding less than \$800 in charges on Mr. Harris’s account. Because the amount in dispute is less than \$3,000, Mr. Harris’s complaint is designated a small formal complaint.

Commission rules require that a recommended report and order be issued within 100 days after the filing of a complaint in a small formal complaint case.<sup>5</sup> This 100-day period can be extended upon a finding of good cause by the regulatory law judge assigned to the case.<sup>6</sup>

Good cause exists to extend the time period allowed to resolve this matter. Although MAWC filed a timely answer and Staff conducted its investigation in a prompt manner, the 100-day deadline expired on February 10, 2021, shortly after Staff filed its recommendation. Therefore, the time period allowed to resolve this case is extended for good cause.



**BY THE COMMISSION**

Morris L. Woodruff  
Secretary

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<sup>4</sup> *Staff Recommendation*, ¶ 6 (Feb. 4, 2021) (citing \$3,446.03 in MAWC billing to Mr. Harris from Feb. 4, 2015, through Oct. 8, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> 20 CSR 4240-2.070(15)(G).

<sup>6</sup> 20 CSR 4240-2.070(15)(G).

Jana C. Jacobs, Regulatory Law Judge,  
by delegation of authority pursuant to  
Section 386.240, RSMo (2016).

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,  
on this 16th day of March, 2021.

**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 16<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021.**



  
**Morris L. Woodruff**  
**Secretary**

**MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**March 16, 2021**

**File/Case No. WC-2021-0129**

**Missouri Public Service  
Commission**

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**Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).**

**Sincerely,**



**Morris L. Woodruff  
Secretary**

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Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.