

LACLEDE GAS COMPANY
720 OLIVE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63101
AREA CODE 314
342-0536

THOMAS M. BYRNE
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL

December 28, 1999

FILED

DEC 29 1999

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS

Mr. Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge
Missouri Public Service Commission
Harry S Truman Building
301 W. High Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Missouri Public
Service Commission

RE: Case No. GC-2000-336

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed for filing on behalf of Laclede Gas Company, please find an original and fourteen copies of the Answer in the above referenced case. Please see that this filing is brought to the attention of the appropriate Commission personnel.

Please file-stamp the additional copy of this pleading and return the same in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Byrne

TMB:jaa

cc: All parties of record

FILED

DEC 29 1999

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

Missouri Public
Service Commission

Dennis O. Allen,)
Complainant)

vs.)

Case No. GC-2000-336

Laclede Gas Company,)
Respondent.)

ANSWER

COMES NOW Laclede Gas Company ("Laclede") and for its answer to the Complaint filed in the above-referenced proceeding on November 22, 1999, states as follows:

1. With regard to the allegations contained in Paragraph 1 of the Complaint, Laclede admits that it is a public utility under the jurisdiction of the Public Service Commission of the State of Missouri.

2. With regard to the allegations contained in Paragraph 2 of the Complaint, Laclede admits that the Complainant resided at 4410 Arco Avenue, 2nd Floor, prior to January, 1995. At this point, Laclede has insufficient information to enable it to admit or deny the specific remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 2 of the Complaint, and therefore necessarily it denies them.

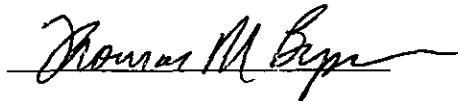
3. With regard to the allegations contained in Paragraph 3 of the Complaint, Laclede admits that Complainant has contacted Laclede's office, and that he has paid \$202.13 of the \$321.53 balance on his account. Laclede has insufficient information to

enable it to admit or deny the remaining allegations contained in Paragraph 3 of the Complaint, and therefore necessarily denies them.

4. The Complaint is based on uncertain facts that allegedly occurred nearly four years ago. The Complainant has paid \$202.13 of the amount billed and only \$119.40 remains outstanding. The Complainant apparently now resides some distance from Missouri in Decatur, Georgia. Given these facts and the costs of pursuing further collection activities, as well as defending this Complaint, Laclede has contacted the Complainant in an attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution of the matter and is awaiting the Complainant's response. Laclede is hopeful that a mutually satisfactory resolution can be reached shortly and the Complaint withdrawn.

WHEREFORE, Laclede respectfully submits this Answer for the Commission's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Thomas M. Byrne", is written over a horizontal line.

Thomas M. Byrne #33340
Associate Counsel
Laclede Gas Company
720 Olive Street, Room 1524
St. Louis, MO 63101
(314) 342-0536 Phone
(314) 421-1979 Fax

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Thomas M. Byrne, Associate Counsel for Laclede Gas Company, hereby certifies that the foregoing Answer has been duly served upon all parties of record to this proceeding by placing a copy thereof in the United States mail, postage prepaid, or by hand delivery, on this 28th day of December, 1999.

Thomas M. Byrne