

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

Ronald Kitchen,	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	<b><u>Case No. GC-2006-0066</u></b>
	)	
Missouri Gas Energy,	)	
Respondent.	)	

**NOTICE OF COMPLAINT**

Issue Date: August 9, 2005

Missouri Gas Energy  
Legal Department  
3420 Broadway  
Kansas City, Missouri 64111  
**CERTIFIED MAIL**

On August 8, 2005, Ronald Kitchen 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 Missouri Gas Energy 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 Complainants at the Complainants' address as listed within the enclosed complaint. A copy of this notice has been mailed to the Complainants.

**BY THE COMMISSION**



Colleen M. Dale  
Secretary

( S E A L )

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,  
on this 9th day of August, 2005.

Jones, Regulatory Law Judge

Copy to:     Ronald Kitchen  
                  10602 East 20  
                  Independence, MO 64052



**Commissioners**

**JEFF DAVIS**  
Chairman

**CONNIE MURRAY**

**STEVE GAW**

**ROBERT M. CLAYTON III**

**LINWARD "LIN" APPLING**

*Missouri Public Service Commission*

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

**WESS A. HENDERSON**  
Executive Director

**ROBERT SCHALLENBERG**  
Director, Utility Services

**WARREN WOOD**  
Director, Utility Operations

**COLLEEN M. DALE**  
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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colleen M. Dale', with a stylized, flowing script.

Colleen M. Dale  
Secretary

Date: August 9, 2005.