

NG97-005

201

NG97-005

DOCKET NO.

In the Matter of IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT
FILED BY TODD SCHAUFENBUEL
HURON, SD, AGAINST
NORTHWESTERN PUBLIC SERVICE
REGARDING HEAT BILL

Public Utilities Commission of the State of South Dakota

DATE	MEMORANDA
4/20/97	Filed and Racketed;
4/28/97	Order Pending Probable Cause;
10/17/97	Order dismissing Complaint and Closing Racket;
10/17/97	Racket Closed

NEXT

DOCUMENT (S)

DISREGARD

BACKGROUND

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

RECEIVED

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

APR 02 1997

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

COMPLAINT

Complainant(s): (The party filing the complaint)		Respondent(s): (The person or Company complained against)	
Name	Todd Schaufrauef	Contact Person	
Address	809 Webster St SE	Company	Northwestern Public Service
City, State, Zip	Woron, SD 57850	Address	PO Box 5165
Work Phone		City, State, Zip	Sioux Falls, SD 57117
Home Phone	(607)352-2309	Work Phone	800-245-6977
Cellular Phone		Cellular Phone	
Fax		Fax	

If the Complainant is represented by an attorney, please list the attorney's name, address, telephone number and fax number below:
If Complainant is not represented by an attorney, please leave blank:

The facts giving rise to my complaint:

- Heat went from 65 therms in November to 355 therms in December and 361 therms in January. The therms increased in January even though we decreased the temperature in January.
- After leaving the house checked out by an NWPS representative they determined that there was no specific reason why the house should be using as much heat as we were.
- It was stated that in order to use the amount of heat we were using, the heat would run almost constantly.
- The gas meter was changed even though we were told nothing was wrong with the old one. We noticed a marked decline in the number of therms after the new meter was in place, indicating to us that the old heater may have not been working properly.

NOTE: Please attach additional pages, if necessary, to explain your situation. Also enclose copies of any bills or other documents which may pertain to your complaint.

nothing was wrong with the old one. We noticed a meter
decline in the number of therms after the new meter
was in place indicating to us that the old meter
may have not been working properly.

NOTE: Please attach additional pages, if necessary, to explain your situation. Also enclose copies of any bills or other documents which may pertain to your complaint.

RESOLUTION REQUEST

I ask that the Public Utilities Commission grant the following relief. (What do you think the Commission should do to solve this problem?)

We would be willing to pay 150⁰⁰ a month for the months of
December + January each - 300⁰⁰ total!

NOTE: Please attach any additional pages, if necessary.

VERIFICATION

Signature must be witnessed by a notary public.

T. S. [Signature] 4/01/97
Complainant's Signature Date

State of South Dakota)
County of _____)SS

On this _____ day of _____, before me
personally came and appeared _____
knows to me to be the individual described herein and who executed the foregoing instrument, and who duly acknowledged to me
that he/she executed same for the purpose therein contained.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and official seal.

Signature of Notary Public

(SEAL)
My commission expires: _____

(SEAL)
My commission expires: _____

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT FILED BY) ORDER FINDING PROBABLE
TODD SCHAUFENBUEL, HURON, SD, AGAINST) CAUSE
NORTHWESTERN PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY) NG97-005

On April 2, 1997, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a complaint filed by Todd Schaufenbuel of 809 Nebraska Street SW, Huron, South Dakota (Complainant), against Northwestern Public Service Company (NWPS). Complainant alleges that he experienced unusually high gas utility bills in December 1996 and January 1997, and that attempts to diagnose the cause, such as changing the gas meter, have proved futile.

Pursuant to ARSD 20 10 01 08 01 and 20 10 01 09, if a complaint cannot be settled without formal action, the Commission shall determine if the complaint shows probable cause of an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice or omission to go forward with the complaint.

On April 15, 1997, at its duly noticed meeting, the Commission reviewed the complaint. The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-2, 49-34A-4, and ARSD 20 10 01 08 01 and 20 10 01 09. The Commission voted unanimously to find probable cause, it is therefore

ORDERED, that pursuant to ARSD 20 10 01 09, the Commission finds that there is probable cause of an unlawful or unreasonable act, rate, practice, or omission and that the complaint shall be forwarded to NWPS and NWPS shall file with the Commission its answer in writing within twenty (20) days of service of this order, and it is further

ORDERED that NWPS shall have the meter which is the subject of this complaint tested by an independent laboratory not owned or affiliated with NWPS.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 28th day of April, 1997.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.

By Melaine Krebs
Date 4/28/97

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfelder
LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner



Northwestern Public Service
600 Market Street W
Huron, SD 57501-1500
Telephone: (605) 353-7478
Facsimile: (605) 353-7634

Direct Dial No.: 605-353-7605
E-mail address: sbachman@northwestern.com

April 28, 1997

Mr. Camron Hoseck, Attorney
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
State Capitol Building
500 E. Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501-5070

Re: NG97-005 -- In the Matter of the Complaint Filed by Todd Schaufenbuel, Huron,
SD, Against Northwestern Public Service Regarding Heat Bills

Dear Mr. Hoseck:

With regard to the above-referenced matter, Northwestern and Mr. Schaufenbuel have settled this matter. Mr. Schaufenbuel agreed to pay \$150 each month for the months of December 1996 and January 1997 applied to the natural gas portion of his utility bill. Northwestern agreed to credit his account with \$204.76 toward the natural gas portion of his utility bill.

Also, the natural gas meter was retrieved from disposal. We have tested it again with our meter testing equipment and have sent the meter to an independent testing facility. We will inform you of the results as such become available.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. Best regards to you.

Sincerely,

Susan Anderson Bachman
Susan Anderson Bachman
Corporate Attorney and
Ass't Corporate Secretary

RECEIVED

APR 29 1997

SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPLAINT FILED) ORDER DISMISSING
BY TODD SCHAUFENBUEL, HURON, SD,) COMPLAINT AND CLOSING
AGAINST NORTHWESTERN PUBLIC SERVICE) DOCKET
COMPANY) NG97-005

On April 2, 1997, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received a complaint filed by Todd Schaufenbuel of 809 Nebraska Street SW, Huron, South Dakota (Complainant), against Northwestern Public Service Company (NWPS). Complainant alleges that he experienced unusually high gas utility bills in December 1996 and January 1997, and that attempts to diagnose the cause, such as changing the gas meter, have proved futile.

On April 15, 1997, at its duly noticed meeting, the Commission reviewed the complaint. The Commission found that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-2, 49-34A-4, and ARSD 20 10 01 08 01 and 20 10 01 09. The Commission voted unanimously to find probable cause. The Commission further ordered NWPS to have the meter tested at an independent testing facility. Subsequently, a compromise was reached between NWPS and the Complainant. On September 23, 1997, NWPS provided the meter test results to Commission staff. At its regularly scheduled October 9, 1997, meeting, the Commission reviewed the meter test results. Staff provided information to the Commission on the meter test results and further recommended that the docket be dismissed. The Commission being satisfied with the providing of the meter test results and it appearing that the matter is resolved between the Complainant and NWPS, it is therefore

ORDERED that the complaint is hereby dismissed, and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that this docket be and is hereby closed.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 17th day of October, 1997.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.

By: Alicia Koibe

Date: 10/17/97

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfelder
LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner