

2009-00459

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RECEIVED

MAY 20 2010

PUBLIC SERVICE  
COMMISSION

May 19, 2010

Public Service Commission  
211 Sower Boulevard  
PO Box 615  
Frankfort, KY 40602-0615

Re: KY Power Company Rate Increase Request  
Salyer Family  
Shelbiana, Pike County, KY

Dear Sir or Madam:

I respectfully oppose the rate increase requested by Kentucky Power Company for Pike County, Kentucky and the surrounding area. It is excessive, unfair, and unjust for the residents and property owners of this community to be expected to support these additional utility fees.

My family and I live at Shelbiana in Pike County, KY, on Collins Highway or Route 122, which is located several miles south of Pikeville. We experience power outages on a regular basis. We are frustrated that the utility company is unable to provide uninterrupted service, especially for those of us who live in rural areas.

**How long would a business last if it provided service in the same manner Kentucky Power has to the citizens of Pike County – and then asked for a 30% increase in its sales prices? In our area, there have been six to eight outages per year – many for extended periods of time. There have been no notices given before hand – and no explanations provided after service has been restored. Public relations have been attempted only when it wanted to raise prices. This is appalling.**

During December 2009, our home lost power for approximately eight days – our food for the holidays, as well as all of our other food stored in our refrigerator was lost. These items had to be replenished at our own expense. We have learned that this outage was due to trees falling across lines during a snow storm – trees that should have been cut back during routine maintenance performed by contractors hired by Kentucky Power. We and our neighbors paid a dear price – having to run generators for light and heat, losing food and medicine, losing the use of security systems for homes and businesses, and having to use outdoor grills to warm or cook until power was restored. Perhaps these things seem trivial – unless you consider they occurred when there was snow and ice throughout the area and the temperatures were routinely below freezing.

Many of us had to seek shelter with other family members or in hotels. Mountain hospitality was certainly present, but we should not have had to endure the costs just because Kentucky Power did not maintain its lines.

We've also lost power numerous other times in the months since December 2009. It has been confirmed with management of Kentucky Power these outages were due both to equipment failure and again, trees falling across lines.

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To clear the lines and surrounding area of fallen trees from the snow storm in December, it has taken the service provider contracted by Kentucky Power – Asplundh – no less than three separate visits to clear the trees from the lines in the area surrounding Branham Heights – our small community. Calls, letters, and e-mails had to be made to request that this issue be addressed, and finished. Perhaps if this work had been done correctly when the power was restored in December or had been adequately supervised, it could have been completed during the first trip, during the first month. Instead, the work was still being completed five months later.

While we appreciate the willingness of Bob Shurtleff who is manager of Kentucky Power to discuss the causes of the recent outages and his attempts to address the downed trees, it is disappointing that the company has not taken a proactive stance on line maintenance, that it has not kept closer control of and supervision of those responsible for the line maintenance that is attempted, and that the public is not kept informed regarding outages.

Very little notice was given regarding the times for the public hearings held here in Eastern Kentucky. Why not include the times several months in advance on the public access television channels, in the bill inserts, and in the newspapers so that all individuals would have had adequate notice of the events and would have had an opportunity to be present to ask questions and have their voices heard?

As stated in the beginning, our family does not feel it is acceptable for the residents of this region to bear this financial burden.

This substantial increase would be unreasonable given:

- The services, or continual lack thereof provided in the past,
- The lack of oversight regarding the contracted tree maintenance companies – poor quality of workmanship,
- The lack of public information provided – notice regarding outages in areas both before and after they occur.

Sincerely,

*Jane Ledford Salyer*

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