

**Melnykovych, Andrew (PSC)**

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**From:** Melnykovych, Andrew (PSC)  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2009 10:50 AM  
**To:** HRMCAT2@EMAIL.UKY.EDU  
**Subject:** RE: Columbia Gas Complaint - Case No 2009-00173

Ms. McAtee:

As this is an open case, I am forwarding your e-mail to the PSC attorney who is handling it. I also will arrange for it to be entered into the case record.

**Andrew Melnykovych**  
 Director of Communications  
 Kentucky Public Service Commission  
 502-564-3940 x208

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**From:** PSC - Public Information Officer  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2009 10:34 AM  
**To:** Melnykovych, Andrew (PSC)  
**Subject:** FW: Columbia Gas Complaint - Case No 2009-00173

RECEIVED  
 MAY 21 2009  
 PUBLIC SERVICE  
 COMMISSION

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**From:** McAtee, Heather R[SMTP:HRMCAT2@EMAIL.UKY.EDU]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 21, 2009 10:33:02 AM  
**To:** PSC - Consumer Web Inquiry; PSC - Public Information Officer  
**Subject:** Columbia Gas Complaint - Case No 2009-00173  
**Auto forwarded by a Rule**

I am having an issue with Columbia Gas. I found out in March that Columbia Gas had not read my gas meter for 16 months. They informed me that I was being billed an additional \$2,425.12 because of this. They cite my neighbor's fence as the reason that the gas meter could not be read. However, the meter was read the five preceding months prior to the 16 month period. There have been no changes with this fence from the time period of July 2007 to the present. I was never notified by Columbia Gas that access could not be reached. They refuse to accept any responsibility for this outrageous bill. Even though they admit that my gas should have been shut off after one year of not obtaining an actual read, it was not and, according to them, I owe the amount.

I have filed a formal complaint with the Public Service Commission, which is attached. I received Columbia Gas' position yesterday, which is also attached. They still accept no responsibility for any part of this bill. They have not explained why I was never notified that the fence was a problem. They have sidestepped every question that I have asked by hiding behind KRS 278.225. They also deny violating 807 KAR 5:006, Section 6(5) by saying that they could not read the meter due to reasons beyond its control. That is not true. They could have contacted me and

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made arrangements prior to this bill growing to the absurd amount of \$2,425.12. I had **no** idea that there was an issue. They have created this situation by failing to notify me that the meter could not be read. This was not beyond their control and they were negligent in this whole matter.

In their response, the information cited by the serviceman who performed the "High Bill Inquiry" is not correct. It is stated that my filters had not been changed once in 30 months. I moved into my house in July 2007. Currently, I have only lived at my residence for 22 months. My statement was that I had not changed my filters in a few months. Maybe the "30" should be a "3". Also, it was stated that my thermostat was 2 degrees off calibration. I find that hard to believe. First of all, my thermostat is not digital. It would be very hard for anyone to tell two degrees on my thermostat. In addition, as stated in my report, my heat was turned off for over an hour as the serviceman replaced my gas meter and then proceeded to talk to my next-door neighbor for over 40 minutes. I was watching television during this time period. I saw two episodes of "Will and Grace" and saw the beginning of "Frasier." My house was chilly and I had to cover myself with a blanket. He showed me my thermostat was "not calibrated correctly" immediately after he turned the heat back on. Of course the room temperature is going to be less than the temperature the heat was set at after being off for over an hour. I don't know how they can cite a flawed report.

In addition, they failed to read my meter on April 15, 2009. This was the next meter reading after this issue was brought to light. They claim in their report that they have made notes and adjustments to my account to ensure that the meter is read. The fact that they did not read the meter on April 15, 2009 shows that this is incorrect. Had I not submitted my own reading, Columbia Gas would have no information about my March-April usage. The fact that they did not take this issue seriously enough to gain an actual reading verifies the negligence of the company.

Just because a company is a monopoly, they shouldn't be able to ignore legitimate customer complaints. They caused this situation and they need to rectify the issue.

**In response to their submitted statement, I would like them to address the following issues that were not addressed from my original complaint:**

- 1) The gas meter was read every month for the 5 months prior to the 16 month time period in which the meter was not read. What changed that prevented my meter from being read?
- 2) Please list the dates that the meter reader left a note stating that my meter could not be read.
- 3) Please list the dates that Columbia Gas contacted me via telephone to inform me that my meter could not be read.
- 4) Please list the dates that Columbia Gas mailed me notification that my meter could not be read.
- 5) Please list the dates that Columbia Gas emailed me notification that my meter could not be read.
- 6) Why did Columbia Gas not notify me that my meter was not accessible when I called to set up my budget in June 2008?
- 7) Why did Columbia Gas not notify me that my meter was not accessible when they called me back three days later to inform me that my budget was being adjusted an additional \$40 a month?

- 8) Why was my gas not shut off after one year of not obtaining actual reads?
- 9) Why was my meter not read when Columbia Gas investigated a potential gas leak at my residence in December 2008?
- 10) After this issue was brought to light, why was my meter not read on April 15, 2009?
- 11) I still have not been provided with a bill for the \$2,425.12. All that I have received is a past due amount. Why is this?

I will file a formal complaint with the Attorney General and may seek legal action if there is no satisfactory resolution. Thank you for your time.

Heather McAtee

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Heather McAtee

Director of Compliance

University of Kentucky Athletics

859-257-5475 - Office

859-948-9799 - Cell

859-323-4999 - Fax

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