

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of:

PAULETTE METCALFE)	
)	
COMPLAINANT)	
)	
V.)	CASE NO.
)	2022-00150
SALT RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE)	
CORPORATION)	
)	
DEFENDANT)	

ORDER

Paulette Metcalfe tendered a complaint on May 25, 2022, alleging that Salt River Electric Cooperative Corporation (Salt River Electric) overbilled her for electric usage. Ms. Metcalfe claimed that a “welder’s meter” was used at her premises, causing inaccurate metering. She sought recovery of six years of alleged overcharges.

Pursuant to KRS 278.260, the Commission has jurisdiction over complaints regarding rates or service. Commission regulation 807 KAR 5:001, Section 20(4)(a), requires the Commission to examine the complaint to ascertain if the complaint establishes a *prima facie* case that the utility has violated a statute, regulation, tariff, or order for which the Commission may grant relief.¹ A complaint establishes a *prima facie* case when, on its face, it states sufficient allegations that, if uncontroverted by other evidence, would entitle the complainant to the relief requested. If the Commission

¹ 807 KAR 5:001, Section 20(4)(a).

determines that the complaint does not establish a *prima facie* case, then the Commission affords the complainant the opportunity to amend the complaint within a specified time.

On March 16, 2022, in an informal complaint, Ms. Metcalfe requested that the Commission test her meter.² The Commission conducted a test on March 31, 2022, via third-party testing company Luthan Electric.³ A copy of the test results are attached as an Appendix to this Order. The meter test results showed that the average meter error was 100.04 percent, 100.06 percent, and 100.6 percent at the three applicable load conditions set forth in 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17(1).⁴ Under 807 KAR 5:006, Section 11(2)(a), a bill adjustment is permitted “[i]f test results on a customer’s meter show an average meter error greater than two (2) percent fast or slow, or if a customer has been incorrectly billed for another reason . . .”

Because the meter as tested did not fall outside the specified accuracy parameters, Ms. Metcalfe must establish that she was billed incorrectly for some other reason. Ms. Metcalfe alleged that her property was improperly served by what she refers to as a “welder’s meter.” Residences typically use a class 200-amp kilowatt meter. This indicates a maximum capacity of 200 amps, meaning that the residence can only handle up to 200 amps of electrical current at one time. A welder’s meter is an informal name used to describe a class 320-amp, higher capacity meter that would normally be installed for a commercial customer, such as a welder’s shop, which might need to use more electric power at one time. In addition, the same 320-amp meter can be installed on a

² See test request, Appendix at unnumbered page 4.

³ See Appendix at unnumbered page 1.

⁴ See test results, Appendix at unnumbered pages 8-10.

much larger residential home requiring more capacity. Here, the installation of a welder's meter would not have resulted in incorrect billing because the difference in capacity does not affect the meters accuracy. Both meters register the same number of kilowatts the customer uses. The only difference is that the 320-amp meter allows more capacity.

Having reviewed Ms. Metcalfe's complaint, the Commission finds that she has not established a *prima facie* case that the utility has violated a statute, regulation, tariff, or order for which the Commission may grant relief because the meter tested within the regulatory accuracy standards and because Ms. Metcalfe has not established that she was billed incorrectly for some other reason. In accordance with 807 KAR 5:001, Section 20(4)(a)(1)-(2), the Commission finds that Ms. Metcalfe should be afforded the opportunity to amend her complaint. The Commission further finds that Ms. Metcalfe should file an amended complaint within 20 days of the date of this Order. Ms. Metcalfe may file her amended complaint by U.S. mail or by email to PSCED@ky.gov.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that:

1. Ms. Metcalfe's complaint is rejected for filing for failing to state a *prima facie* case.
2. Ms. Metcalfe shall have 20 days from the date of this Order to file an amended complaint with the Commission that conforms to the requirements of 807 KAR 5:001, Section 20(1), and that states a *prima facie* case.
3. Ms. Metcalfe may file her amended complaint with the Commission by U.S. mail to P.O. Box 615, Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-0615 or by email to PSCED@ky.gov. Ms. Metcalfe shall include the case number, 2022-00150, in all filings with the Commission.

4. A copy of this Order shall be served upon Ms. Metcalfe by U.S. mail to 131 Tom Ballard Road, Bardstown, Kentucky 40004.

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PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION



Chairman

Vice Chairman

Commissioner



ATTEST:



Executive Director

APPENDIX

APPENDIX TO AN ORDER OF THE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION IN CASE NO. 2022-00150 DATED JUL 08 2022

TEN PAGES TO FOLLOW



Andy Beshear
Governor

Rebecca W. Goodman
Secretary
Energy and Environment Cabinet

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Public Service Commission
211 Sower Blvd.
P.O. Box 615
Frankfort, Kentucky 40602-0615
Telephone: (502) 564-3940
Fax: (502) 564-3460
psc.ky.gov

Kent A. Chandler
Chairman

Amy D. Cabbage
Vice Chairman

COMPLAINT METER TEST REPORT
[Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17 (1)]
ELECTRIC

April 4, 2022

KENTUCKY PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION COMPLAINT # 2022-01641

Utility: Salt River Electric

Customer: Paulette Metcalf

Test Date: March 31, 2022

Testing Facility: Luthan Electric meter Testing

Tester: Sara Redenius

Tester ID: E0929

Meter Information:

Manufacturer: Landis & Gyr

Utility Meter ID #: SR 500016

Meter Serial #: 98423177

Meter Test Amps (TA): 50

Voltage: 240

As Found Reading: 35097

Kh: 12

As Left Reading: 35098

Class: 320

Type: Focus ALF

Form: 2Se

Register Type: Digital

Register Ratio: N/A

Meter Cover Seal: Yes

DISCUSSION: Pursuant to regulation 807 KAR 5:006, Section 19(2), a customer of the utility may request a meter test by the commission upon written application. Mr. Metcalf requested in writing (See Attachment A) for the commission to test the meter in question. On March 31, 2022 commission staff picked up meter # SR 500016 from Salt River Electric's office in Bardstown Kentucky and took the meter to Luthan Electric Meter Testing in Owensboro, Kentucky.

Luthan's staff performed the meter test, results are noted in Attachment B.

COMMENTS:

Complaint tests performed in accordance with KPSC regulation: 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17 (1).

CONCLUSION:

According to the test results meter # SR 500016 met the allowable accuracy requirements of Public Service Commission regulation 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17, (1) of +/- 1%.

- ATTACHMENT(S)
- A. Paulette Metcalf Written Request
 - B. Meter Test Results

ATTACHMENT A



Andy Beshear
Governor

Rebecca W. Goodman
Secretary
Energy and Environment Cabinet

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Public Service Commission
211 Sower Blvd.
P.O. Box 615
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Telephone: (502) 564-3940
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Kent A. Chandler
Chairman

Amy D. Cabbage
Vice Chairman

To: Lindsey Flora

From: Rosemary Tutt *rt*

Date: March 16, 2022

Consumer Service has received a request from Paulette Metcalf to have her meter tested from Salt River. Please find the original complaint along with the letter requesting the meter test.

Metcalfe
131 Tom Ballard Rd
Bardstown, Ky 40004

Attn: Rosemary
investigator

RECEIVED

MAR 16 2022

PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION

Request: Test

my meter!
SALT River Electric
meter

The above is a request
to the commission to:
test my meter thanks

PSC Consumer Inquiry System

3/16/2022

Complaint: 2022-01641	Entry Date: 3/4/2022	Closed Date: 3/8/2022	Contact Type: Hotline
Name: Metcalf, Paulette	Utility: Salt River Electric Cooperative Corp		
Address: 131 Tom Ballard Road Bardstown, KY 40004	Utility Nbr: 2900	Location: Residence	
County: Nelson	Utility Type: Rural Electric		
Home: (502) 827-0969	Reason: Billing (High bill/consumption) (none) ((none))		
Fax:	Work:	Complaint referred by:	
Cell:	CBR Nbr:	Email:	
Contacted Utility? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spoke with: Customer Service		
	Cust Relations: Failed To Correct Problem		
Utility Contact: Phyllis Oliver	Contact's (502) 350-1584		
Preliminary Description: High bill	Other Contacts:		
Processor: CAROLJ			
See File <input type="checkbox"/>	Case Related <input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Referral <input type="checkbox"/>	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>
Info Only <input type="checkbox"/>	Formal Forms <input type="checkbox"/>	Ref to Util <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Customer Satisfied Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input checked="" type="radio"/>

PSC Narratives:

Investigator: CAROLJ

Date: 3/4/2022 1:37:57 PM

This past week Salt River came to her door and told her they would change her meter out to be more efficient. The tech came back to her door and said he didn't know who put on a welder's meter. The welder's meter had more amps than should be on the pole. He asked if her bill was higher than it should be, and she told him it was outrageous. He told her he didn't have a meter to replace it, but promised he would be out with a new meter. He came back yesterday. He told her a welder's meter used 400 amps and she only needed 200 amps.

She said she has been calling for years, and Salt River was rude to her in return. They told her to get an electrician. She has a 2010 mobile home that she bought brand new. She complained her bills were higher than the 50 year old trailer across the road. She said nobody recieved bills higher than she did. Her bills were \$600 for 1000 square feet. She said she begged and pleaded with Salt River and they would do nothing.

Customer wants an adjustment. Since the meter was just changed out yesterday, it doesn't seem she has allowed Salt River time to answer any concerns she had. She didn't allow me an opportunity to ask questions. When I could, I advised customer the utility is required to bill for whatever service goes through the meter. I told her I wasn't familiar with a welder's meter. She interrupted me and said she needed to speak to someone who knew about welders meter. When I could speak again, I advised I would send the inquiry to Salt River for response. Customer got angry and said she was told by Legal Aid she could file a complaint, and she told me again I wasn't the right person. She needed to speak to someone else. Advised our system is a Consumer Inquiry System. Filing an inquiry is the same as filing a complaint.

Customer seized on whatever I said and wanted to argue. She was very rude and kept accusing me of yelling at her. After about the third time, I asked her to stop saying that because at no time did I yell at customer or even raise my voice. I barely spoke since she was doing most of the talking. Customer kept saying I was cutting out and she couldn't hear me. She emphasized everything she said in a very snarly, angry manner.

I advised customer Salt River will be contacting her regarding her complaint. Please send the response in writing to the PSC so that it can be forwarded to customer by way of a letter, as I will not be subjecting myself to anymore of her abuse. Thanks.

Date: 3/16/2022 11:25:07 AM

2022-01641 (Continued)

Response to Complaint 2022-01641

Meter #500016 was changed routinely as we are in the process of changing to all Aclara meters. The meter reader that changed the meter commented that we had installed a 400-amp meter and that normally we would use a 200-amp meter. He mentioned that garages and shops with welders would most likely require a 400-amp meter if they had a 400-amp service. While it is not the norm to install a 400-amp meter in a 200-amp meter base, it is still compatible and works completely fine. That is most likely what the member refers to as a "welder's meter". Our energy adviser had this meter tested and it tested within range at 99.8%. He then reviewed her usage and gave Ms. Metcalfe a call. He tried to explain the higher usage in the winter and that all bills were high when you heat with an electric furnace. He also offered an energy audit, but Ms. Metcalfe declined. He noted that Ms. Metcalfe was very nice, but is convinced that her bill was and has always been high due to the meter not registering correctly since it was installed. We are bound by the PSC to bill for kWhs used when the meter tests within range. Ms. Metcalfe insists we should adjust her bill, but due to the test results, we cannot adjust any amount off her bill. Attached are the meter test results. If you need any further information, please reach out. Regards,
Phyllis Oliver

Date: 3/9/2022 10:29:39 AM

Phyllis provided a picture of the usage. I have retyped it below:

2/9/2022 4306 2/10/2021 3949 2/10/2020 4696
1/10/2022 2565 1/8/2021 3331
12/8/2021 2670 12/9/2020 2546
11/10/2021 713 11/10/2020 1855
10/8/2021 390 10/8/2020 782
9/8/2021 815 9/10/2020 1094
8/10/2021 919 8/10/2020 1418
7/8/2021 935 7/8/2020 1226
6/9/2021 1072 6/10/2020 996
5/10/2021 1208 5/8/2020 1407
4/8/2021 2168 4/8/2020 2775
3/10/2021 3438 3/10/2020 4828

Average 1767 2184

At a monthly average of 1767 kWhs, customer's usage is high only during the really cold months. It is very unlikely nobody receives bills higher than she based on her usage. Her average usage for February is 4317 kWhs. Her usage was more two years ago than what it was this February. Her overall usage is much lower in the past year than it was the year before.

Prev Meter:
 Meter No: 500016
 Serial No: 98423177
 AMR No: 24849172
 Mfr: A
 Test Code: 01

Meter Type: ALF
 Form: 2 S
 Kh: 12
 Volt: 240.0
 Amp: 50.00

Test Start: 03/07/2022 13:06
 Test Stop: 03/07/2022 13:07
 Tester ID: JH
 Test Station: 2679 1

As Found KWH Reading: 35096 As Left KWH Reading: 35096

Trouble Codes Comments:
 00 10 changed to aclara test #1 hold

	Series		Watt Hrs					
	As Found	As Left	A		B		C	
			As Found	As Left	As Found	As Left	As Found	As Left
FL:	99.79	99.79						
PF:	99.81	99.81						
LL:	99.83	99.83						
WA:	99.80	99.80						
Demand:			Balance:					

**Kentucky Public Service Commission (KPSC)
Meter Standards Laboratory
Meter Test Results (Electric)**

Testing Facility Information

Testing Agency:	LUTHAN ELECTRIC METER TESTING	Address:	625 BIRKHEAD AVENUE	Manager:	CHUCK BOOK
Phone Number:	270-683-2474	Email:	SREDENIUS@LUTHANMETER.COM	Fax Number:	270-683-2262
Received By:	SARA REDENIUS	Date Received:	MARCH 31,2022	Test Date:	31-Mar-22

Meter Information

Manufacture:	LANDIS & GYR	Form:	2SE	Multiplier:	1
Meter Number:	SR 500016	Type:	FOCUS ALF	Kh:	12
Serial Number:	98423177	Voltage:	240	Meter Cover Sealed:	YES
Test Amps (TA):	50	Register Type:	DIGITAL	Meter Condition:	GOOD
Class:	320	Register Ratio:	0	Mechanical/Solid State	SOLID STATE

Test Equipment Used

Master Std. Type:	RADIAN 10-06	Working Std. Type:	RADIAN	Test Bench Used:	RADIAN WECCO 4150
Master Std. SN:	508811	Working Std. SN:	301534	Test Bench SN:	7628
Meter Tester Name:	SARA REDENIUS	KPSC ID:	E0929		

Test Bench Information Required

1. Attach copy of the latest certification on master watt-hour standard.
2. Attach copy of the latest comparison test between the working watt-hour standard and master watt-hour standard.

Test Measurements

(complete tests for each of the load conditions specified in the series before repeating additional test series)

DISC REVS (min)	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	5	5	5	5		
TEST AMPS (TA)	0.25	0.50	1	1.5	2.5	3 (LL)	5	10	15	25	30 (FL)	50	30 (0.5 PF)		
SERIES	As Found													As Left	
1	35096	NT	NT	NT	100.02	100.03	100.04	100.04	100.04	100.04	100.04	100.05	100.03	100.03	35097
2	35097	NT	NT	NT	100.05	100.06	100.07	100.07	100.06	100.07	100.07	100.06	100.05	100.04	35098
3	35098	NT	NT	NT	100.07	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.09	100.08	100.07	100.06	100.06	35098
4															
5															
6															
Average	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	100.05	100.06	100.06	100.06	100.06	100.07	100.06	100.06	100.06	100.05	100.04	

Average Meter Error

	Average	+/- 1%	+/- 2%
FL at 0.5 PF	100.04	PASS	PASS
(FL + LL) / 2	100.06	PASS	PASS
(4FL + LL) / 5	100.06	PASS	PASS

807 KAR 5:041, Section 17, Test Procedures and Accuracy Requirements.

Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17(1) - AC Watthour meters and associated devices shall be tested at the loads prescribed below and shall not exceed +/- 1% allowable tolerance:

LL - "Light Load" tests are performed at 10% of rated test current (TA) at unity (1.0) Power Factor (PF)

FL - "Full Load" tests are performed at 100% of rated test current (TA) at unity (1.0) Power Factor (PF)

PF - "Power Factor" tests are performed at 100% of rated test current (TA) at 50% (.5) Power Factor (PF)

Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17(1)(b) - When a meter is tested on complaint or request, additional test runs shall be made and care exercised to insure that any trouble with the meter will be detected. (A minimum of 3 series of tests at various load conditions should be performed. If the meter accuracy for any test condition is greater than +/- 1% additional test series shall be performed to verify the accuracy of the meter.)

Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:041, Section 17(1)(c) - For refund and back billing purposes, accuracy of the meter shall be determined by adding the average registration at LL (10% of test current) and the average registration at full load (100 % of test current) and dividing by 2.

Pursuant to 807 KAR 5:006, Section 11(2)(a) - If test results on a customer's meter show an average meter error greater than 2% fast or slow, or if a customer has been incorrectly billed for another reason, except if a utility has filed a verified complaint with the appropriate law enforcement agency alleging fraud or theft by a customer, the utility shall:

1. Immediately determine the period during which the error has existed;
2. Recompute and adjust the customer's bill to either provide a refund to the customer or collect an additional amount of revenue from the underbilled customer; and
3. Readjust the account based upon the period during which the error is known to have existed.

Paulette Metcalfe
131 Tom Ballard Road
Bardstown, KENTUCKY 40004

*Salt River Electric Cooperative Corp.
111 West Brashear Avenue
P. O. Box 609
Bardstown, KY 40004