

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

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RALPH J. MORTON, |  
v. |  
THE PEOPLES NATURAL GAS |  
COMPANY

Docket No.: C-20031233

**DOCUMENT**

State Office Building  
300 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Wednesday, April 14, 2004  
Commencing at 10:18 a.m.

BEFORE:

James D. Porterfield, Administrative Law Judge

APPEARANCES:

**DOCKETED**

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APR - 8 2004

RALPH J. MORTON  
4 West Drive  
Apt. F-7  
Greensburg, PA 15601  
Pro Se

PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
SECRETARY'S BUREAU

HORACE P. PAYNE, JR., Esquire  
The Peoples Natural Gas Company  
d/b/a Dominion Peoples  
625 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
For the Respondent

REPORTER: TONI DINARDO

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

JUDGE JAMES D. PORTERFIELD:

Good morning. I'm Administrative Law Judge James D. Porterfield, the presiding officer assigned by the Office of Administrative Law Judge for the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission to hear the matter captioned Ralph J. Morton versus The Peoples Natural Gas Company, trading as Dominion Peoples, at Docket C-20031233. Being Wednesday, April the 14th, 2004, now at about 10:20 a.m., it's the date and approximately the time set pursuant to notice to the parties dated December the 22nd, 2003, the initial evidentiary hearing in the foregoing captioned matter.

The subject complaint was filed on September the 9th, 2003, and basically complains that a bill was received, for February 2003, in the amount of about \$631, compared with a bill for January in the amount of \$172.78, and the complaint says that --- states that this couldn't be correct. An Answer was filed on October 14th, 2003 and indicated that, although there was an outstanding BCS decision, the Complainant was no longer a rate payor of record.

This morning Horace P. Payne, Jr., Esquire, has entered an appearance on behalf of

1 Peoples Natural Gas Company and Ralph J. Morton has  
2 entered an appearance in his own behalf. Before going  
3 on the record, Peoples --- it was through discussion  
4 it became evident that the account existed for about a  
5 year, and that the Complainant didn't have control  
6 over Peoples' access to an inside meter.  
7 Consequently, there was no history on which to  
8 estimate readings and there was an actual meter  
9 reading when the account was opened, and another  
10 actual --- well, there was an actual meter reading  
11 then following that on September 24, 2002, and not  
12 another actual meter reading until February 26, 2003.  
13 And as the prospective witness for Peoples explained  
14 to Mr. Morton, this \$631 actually reflected  
15 consumption that occurred sometime between September  
16 24, 2002, and February 26, 2003. And it appears that  
17 Mr. Morton understands that one, he didn't have  
18 control over whether Peoples had access, and two that  
19 estimates are necessarily just that, especially when  
20 there's no history on the account by the Complainant  
21 to make the estimates. And as a result of the  
22 discussion and explanation, before going on the  
23 record, Mr. Morton has indicated that he's willing to  
24 withdraw his complaint on the record. Mr. Morton, you  
25 are Ralph J. Morton, the Complainant in this

1 proceeding; is that correct?

2 MR. MORTON:

3 Yes, I am.

4 JUDGE PORTERFIELD:

5 Okay. And based on the explanation and  
6 now your understanding of how the billing and the  
7 meter readings occurred, are you willing to withdraw  
8 your complaint this morning?

9 MR. MORTON:

10 Yes, I am.

11 JUDGE PORTERFIELD:

12 Well, I thank you very much, Mr. Morton,  
13 for your cooperation, and best wishes to you and good  
14 luck in the future. Mr. Payne, thank you for your  
15 help in resolving this matter, along with Ms. Gardner.  
16 Is there anything else this morning, Mr. Payne, that  
17 you would like to put on the record?

18 ATTORNEY PAYNE:

19 Nothing further, other than to wish Mr.  
20 Morton good luck in the future, and if he ever comes  
21 back to Peoples Gas, we'd be happy to have him.

22 MR. MORTON:

23 Okay.

24 JUDGE PORTERFIELD:

25 And Mr. Morton, anything additional you

1 wish to add this morning?

2 MR. MORTON:

3 Not necessarily. This could have been  
4 prevented, the landlord. I never knew that, you know,  
5 before I moved in there and the lady owned the  
6 property.

7 JUDGE PORTERFIELD:

8 Okay. Well, thank you, Mr. Morton, and  
9 with that we'll conclude this morning's hearing.  
10 Good day, all.

11 MR. MORTON:

12 Thank you. Bye bye.

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HEARING CONCLUDED AT 10:22 A.M.

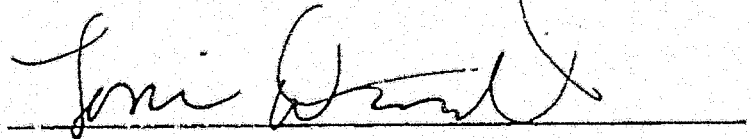
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING PROCEEDINGS  
WERE REPORTED STENOGRAPHICALLY BY ME AND THEREAFTER  
REDUCED TO TYPEWRITING AND THAT THIS TRANSCRIPT  
IS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD THEREOF.

SARGENT'S COURT REPORTING SERVICE, INC.



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