

**BEFORE THE**  
**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Stanley F. Frompovicz :

Docket No. C-2021-3027119

Complainant, :

v. :

PPL Electric Utilities Corporation, :

Respondent, :

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**COMPLAINANT FROMPOVICZ RESPONSE TO RESPONDENT PPL ANSWER**  
**AND NEW MATTER**

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TO THE PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION:

Complainant, Frompovicz, herein replies to the Respondent, PPL's answers filed in this case.

Frompovicz responds as follows:

**RESPONSE**

Para 1 thru 3. No response needed

Para. 4 RESPONSE :

Complainant denies PPL's characterization of their service as being normal and appropriate. Since the filing of the informal complaint, in May 2021, prior to this formal complaint, this Complainant has lost electric service twice. Again, customers on the Jefferson tap were only ones effected. PPL has answered that they are not required to provide constant service, belies the point, they must provide reliable service, in a manner that is consistent with normal operations and protocols and materials available in the 21 st. Century.

The Complainant in this case has offered an economical solution to this recurring outage situation along Jefferson Lane. Frompovicz has offered to perform excavation services necessary to bury portions of the Jefferson tap, underground. PPL would supply and install required cable, appurtenances and labor. Old poles and #6 copper coated steel cable will be removed and remaining line that is not underground will be situated along Jefferson Lane, a paved street, maintained by South Manheim Township .

In response, PPL denies that the poles on subject abandoned RR ROW are at least 80 years old, and are in immediate need of replacement. The Complainant does not make this claim lightly, or as a non informed person. Frompovicz was employed by PPL, as an assistant pole inspector for four months in 1967. While a summer employee, in engineering school. Complainant was trained to inspect, core drill, sample the wood, and determine the integrity of the subject pole. In that 4 months, Complainant inspected aprox. 5,000 poles.....Speaking as an informed person, trained by PPL, the poles on the abandoned ROW, are in immediate need of replacement.

As further proof of that averment, two of the poles, at the East end of the Jefferson tap have been replaced in the last year, as admitted by PPL. All poles on the tap were installed at same time to serve the now defunct Jefferson Grange facility. Therefore, by plain common sense, and numerical probability, the useful life span of the remaining poles has long passed.

Furthermore, on at least two occasions in the past 3 years, PPL subcontract crews have worked to repair two of these poles in question. On one occasion, approx March 2018, Crews from Able Electric spent at least 12 hours, amassing help, off road track vehicles, and gear to get to the damaged pole. The crew had to use personal climbing gear, (spikes) to climb and repair the line in question, in inclement weather, at night. The pole was never changed, a new insulator, and reconnection of the line was only accomplished. It is requested that PPL provide the invoices for this emergency repair.

PPL's averment that they have no idea of the age of the poles is also not factual. The company has a complete record of each pole, location, age, size, class, date of installation, and other pertinent information, while this information had been contained on a card filing system, it is now allegedly contained in a computer data base.

On March 26 th. of this year, again crews from MJ electric were called in from a transmission line construction project to again repair this line in same area. Interestingly, 3 trucks and 6 men responded. The access to the pole, again is very difficult. If This Complainant had not assisted the crew from MJ, they would not have been able to repair the line. The plaintiff used his personal

excavation equipment to clear an area to reach the pole from the adjacent high side of the railroad bank cut. The top of pole literally only clears ground by fifteen feet. The crews, while well equipped with tools, had absolutely no distribution supplies on their truck...they managed to find two thru bolts between 3 trucks. They then literally cut 2 foot off top of pole, which was rotten. They then reinstalled the insulator that was installed by Able two years previously under emergency circumstances, again lowering the line even further. Complainant used his personal equipment to push the all wheel drive truck into the site, and then pull it back out.

The Jefferson tap conductor is still #6 copper clad steel wire, which has not been installed as power conductor for at least 80 years. While PPL makes rosy colored generalizations about striving to provide good customer service, continued inaction in cases as this, belie the fact. Still energizing steel cable is absurd. Frompovicz requests that the invoicing for the MJ repairs be provided

On Friday April 30, 2021, 5 pm, again, power goes off, only on the Jefferson tap. A falling tree took the wire to the ground. Plaintiff, cleared the line, then notified local lineman, William Simmindinger, that line was clear. PPL finally replaced fuse on tap, Saturday morning, May 1. On June 9, 2021, a falling tree on Jefferson, again takes Jefferson tap out. June 14, 2021, again tree limb on deep RR ROW section takes out line.

This Complainant is an electrical engineer, at one time employed as an electric transmission engineer employed by Luzerne Electric division of UGI. At that time, had occasion to study and become familiar with the PUC rules and regulations overseeing electric utilities. While the landscape has changed, much has remained the same. PPL, now only a distribution company, again falls squarely

under the premise, that a customer has no choice but to receive service from PPL, alone.. It is not only their responsibility to provide reliable service, but also to do so, at the most reasonable cost.

PPL 's refusal to take advantage of the offer included herein is unbelievable. Using emergency contractors at all hours of day and night incurs charges that are passed on eventually to all of the customers of the utility.

In answer, PPL avers that it has recently conducted inspections of the poles on the RR ROW. Frompovicz requests all data regarding the supposed pole inspection, averred to in PPL response, including the date, time and person making such inspection, and his qualifications, be provided. As noted, above, the rotted pole top of at least one pole is visible.

Complainant also requests production of all tree trimming costs associated with the Jefferson tap for past three years. Again, off road, tracked equipment is needed to access these poles. While viable, live Hickory trees have been felled, obviously dead Ash trees loom high over the line in question, which WILL fall, and again will incur massive construction costs to repair, probably in middle of night and bad weather.

The Complainant will provide James Setlock, of Orwigsburg, Pa. as an expert witness Mr. Setlock had been employed by PPL since 1969 , as the Southern Schuylkill Region field technician. Mr. Setlock retired from PPL in 2004, thereupon he was employed by various Consultants, performing the same duties as he had done while in the direct employ of PPL. Mr. Setlock completely retired as of June 2021.

Upon return to PPL, in the employ of a private consulting firm, Setlock was engaged in relocating many miles of substandard distribution lines, located in isolated areas, not accessible.

Lines were specifically moved to public roads and streets. The stated policy of PPL at that time was to increase service reliability. This is the exact situation on the Jefferson tap.

PPL denies that there is a lack of engineering or management to examine this problem, or engineer and design and draft the Complainant's proffered solution to the Jefferson tap problem. PPL scoffs at Frompovicz's claim, that "there is no one left to make a decision"..... Frompovicz requests a personnel management flow chart for the Regional engineering department. From Mr. Stamatedes down to the engineering technician level, including names and duties, and length of time in that position, tenure at PPL, person reporting to, and person's in charge of. Including persons now holding such positions, and a list of all currently open positions.

While in it's response, PPL recites a long litany of glowing repairs that they have made over the years, to distant facilities, it is all irrelevant... No matter if it is one customer or an entire city, the end user, .... Is at the end of the line. And the weakest link is the issue. In this case there are 6 customers on the Jefferson tap. The problem has not been the main lines or the redundancy or the cut outs, or breakers or fuses. I am familiar with Utility reliability. When 500 people are out of service, I can understand. I cannot understand why the same five customers are only out of service, consistently, where a simple affordable solution is available.

Since I have filed the informal complaint in May, my service has been interrupted two additional times. The issue is the Jefferson Tap.

It has been PPL policy, for at least 50 years, to place poles along public roads and streets, wherever possible. This upgrade will take 5 poles out of an inaccessible RR ROW and thus the remaining 5 poles

on this tap will be located along the length of the paved Jefferson Lane. Access for tree trimming and normal maintenance would be simplified. Because of the depth of the RR ROW cut thru the hillside, the pole tops are literally lower than the tree bases in this area, no amount of trimming will solve this issue.

PPL's further answer thru counsel recites two full pages of utility operation and circuit operations. This is all irrelevant and should be considered pillow stuffing. Fuses, cut out's interrupters, circuit breakers, are protection for failures backward to the power source. The problem here is lack of upgrade, in ancient poles and cable, and the line location which creates a continuing hazard. An analogy would be buying larger and better fire trucks, instead of removing the frayed extension cord.

The Complainant will provide himself and Mr. Setlock as expert witness's in this matter. The Complainant requests that PPL provide names and job descriptions of experts, if any it plans to provide for this proceeding.

Response 5 thru 10

No response needed

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## RESPONSE TO NEW MATTER

Respondent PPL, relies literally upon a statute of limitations, barring the review of their previous actions or inactions necessary to provide a minimal level of service reliability beyond a three year prior time frame. However, in this case, the past deficiencies are indicative of the continuing deterioration of the infrastructure in this area. While as noted, outages have occurred constantly since building a home in this area, outages can be expected in a rural area, and dealt with in a reasonable manner. In this case the poles are past their useful service life, the wire is beyond discussion. In 1935, the line routing may have been justifiable, however, since that time, multiple residential structures have been erected along Jefferson Lane. The service lines to these homes would now normally be placed along Jefferson Lane, not in an inaccessible narrow cut in a ridge. The three year look back period is not appropriate in this matter. Absent positive actions on the part of PPL, the reliability of this line, will ONLY rapidly deteriorate further and faster, as shown by the past history. Emergency repairs in the dark by costly outside contractors, are not the answer to this problem.

In addition to the lack of reliability, the costs that the Complainant and other similar situated customers of PPL along Jefferson Lane incur are substantial. Of course, everyone must purchase, maintain, repair and operate some sort of generator backup, just to try to live a normal life. In my case, that means a 30 KW diesel generator. While average load over a month, may be a smaller KW number, a

7,000 square foot home, and commercial business in modern times requires peak capacity availability, many times what average load may be. That is the reason we have pooled resources in PUBLIC UTILITIES. Therefore, the Complainant was required to install a 30 KW back up system, which, when operating consumes aprox. 4 gallons of diesel fuel per hour. At the current charge of \$3.61 per gallon, the recent 20 hour outage cost the Complainant \$288.00... The generator must run at a certain RPM, no matter of load, to be able to accommodate appliances and electric heat pumps, which start instantaneously.

In the alternative, if the PUC so finds that the deficient level of service provided by PPL is acceptable, Complainant requests that the Commission order PPL to reimburse the Complainant all costs associated with operation of the backup system, for both residential and commercial accounts.

WHEREFORE, COMPLAINANT, FROMPOVICZ, respectfully requests that the Commission promptly and thoroughly conduct an investigation as to the adequacy and reliability of the Respondent PPL's duty to provide electric service to the public.

Respectfully submitted,



Stanley F. Frompovicz, Complainant

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August 3, 2021

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**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

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**Re: Stanley Frompovicz v. PPL Electric Utilities Corporation**

**Docket No. C-2021-3027119**

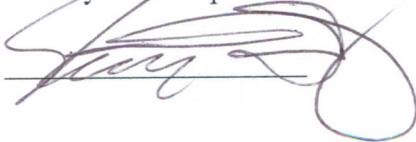
Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

Attached for filing, is the response of Complainant, Stanley Frompovicz, to the Answer and New Matter of PPL Electric Utilities in the above captioned matter.

Copies will be provided as noted on the Certificate of Service, attached.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stanley F. Frompovicz

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stanley F. Frompovicz', written over a horizontal line.

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been served upon the following persons, in the manner indicated, in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 1.54 (relating to service by a participant)

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Date : August 3, 2021



Stanley Frompovicz