

**BEFORE THE CONSUMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL FORUM
MADHYA GUJARAT VIJ CO LIMITED
CORPORATE OFFICE, 5TH FLOOR SP VIDYUT BHAVAN,
RACECOURSE, VADODARA 390 007**

Subject	Consumer Grievances Complaint No.MG-III-72-2012.13
Complainant	Irfanhusain M Shaikh and others, Finav Bhagol, Sheikhoni Masjid, Tal: Mahudha Dist. Kheda.
Respondent	Shri A D Makwana, Dy. Engineer of Mahudha s/dn of MGVCL.
Date of hearing	21.12.2012 at Circle Office, Anand.

QUORUM	NAME
Chairperson	Shri P J Patel, Gandhinagar
Independent Member	Shri M J Vaidya, Vadodara
Technical Member	Shri Y B Sukhadia, MGVCL

The complaint dated 29.10.2012 regarding abnormal energy bill.

On 21.12.2012, the case of the Complainant Grievance was heard before Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum wherein Irfanhusain M Shaikh and others appeared themselves whereas Shri A D Makwana, Dy. Engineer of Mahudha s/dn appeared as respondent on behalf of MGVCL before the Forum. Both the parties were heard.

The brief details of the case are:

1. Group of complainant have represented regarding high energy bills of their residential meter.
2. It was represented that the energy meters installed in their area are moving very fast and also giving erratic recording of consumption resulting in to very high energy bill, ranging from 3 times to 10 times more than that of normal bill.

The Respondent contended that some of the meters under question are replaced by new meters. These meters got tested in laboratory and reported as working correctly.

The Forum Members present at the hearing considered contention of both the parties and perused the records and observed that though meter is found OK during Lab inspection, the same may be got tested in High Tech laboratory with specific instruction to test these meters at different parameter condition, especially with variable load and voltages. The report of the High Tech Lab indicates that out of 82 numbers of consumers who complained for high amount of electricity bill, randomly 50 meters of consumers were replaced and got tested in the division lab which were reported working correctly. Out of these lot, 5 numbers of SARAF make meter and 5 numbers of L&T make meter were tested in High Tech Lab which were found OK as per the requirement of variable load and voltages.

Billing datas of year 2011 for corresponding billing cycles are compared with that of year 2012, in order to identify billing discrepancies / meter working behaviour for all 82 numbers of consumer. Such a comparison is made for billing of Dec to Sept for year 2011 and 2012.

Further, it was observed that bill for the month of August-Sept billed in October 2012, the consumption of consumers under question is found very high i.e. abnormal and hence consumers have complained for high consumption for bill served in October 2012. Looking to the last billing data of these consumers it is observed that high consumption reflected in the bill of October 2012 is a result of accumulation of reading. This phenomena has taken place due to random / improper billing carried out during April-May, June-July 2012. Also, it is being realized that when correct billing was made in Sept 2012, the hidden consumption which was to be reflected in earlier two billing cycles has got accumulated in the billing of Aug Sept billed in October 2012.

The concerned Deputy Engineer of MGVCL contended that reason for the mistake in billing was due to – (1) provided static meters in February-March 2012 and (2) Senior Assistant (Billing) was on leave for three months before retiring on 30.04.2012 due to eye problem. There was only two Meter Readers in sub-division and hence billing was carried out by out sources and employees of Nadiad Testing Lab.

Due to above mentioned reasons, billing of these 82 nos of consumers may be made on lower average basis for billing period Apr to July 2012.

The respondent also contended that meters tested in the lab were found OK

The Forum members were present at the hearing and perused the records. It brought out to believe that high consumption in October 2012 may be caused due to improper meter reading in previous months. It is also observed based on past records that this is the main reason due to which abnormally high consumption is suddenly reflected in these 82 number of consumers for bill served in October 2012, As a test check, 5 nos of SARAF make and 5 nos of L,&T make meters were specifically tested under variable load and voltages, also MRI test of meters were taken at Hightech Lab, Vadodara. Except one meter, all other meters were found OK. In order to regularize their billing for the period under question and as this being a case of accumulation of reading, MGVCL should bifurcate reading from the month of replacement of static meters i.e. Feb March 2012 and recalculate as per tariff slabs. However, in case of consumer Shri A G Shaikh, having consumer No.04901/02054/4, whose meter shown erratic and abnormal parameters during Hi-tech laboratory analysis may be considered to revise billing on average basis as per prevailing company's norms for bill served in October 2012.

ORDER

The forum directs the Madhya Gujarat Vij Company Limited to revise bill by bifurcating the meter reading of the complainants from date of replacement of static meter and tariff slabs. The forum also directs the complainant Irfanhusain M Shaikh and others, Filav Bhagol, Sheikhoni Masjid, Tal: Mahudha Dist. Kheda, to make payment after revision of bill by Madhya Gujarat Vij Company Limited after considering units slab benefit.

For the consumer Shri A G Shaikh, having consumer No.04901/02054/4, MGVL shall revise the bill served in October 2012 on average basis as per prevailing company's norms for bill served in October 2012.

(Y B Sukhadia)
Technical Member

(M J Vaidya)
Independent Member

(P J Patel)
Chairperson

PS :

If the complainant is not satisfied with the order of this Forum, the complainant may approach The Staff Officer, Office of the Electricity Ombudsman, Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission, Barrack No.3, Polytechnic Compound, Ambawadi, Ahmedabad 380 015 in accordance with Chapter-5, Clause No.13 of GERC Notification No.4 of 2005.

Procedure to make representations before Ombudsman***

1. Representation should be in writing duly signed by the complainant with his name and address.
2. Representation should be supported with affidavit.
3. True copy of order of Forum and original complaint made before Forum should be attached. Enclosed documents should be certified copies of the original documents.
4. The representation before Ombudsman should be submitted within 30 days from the date of order of Forum.
5. Copy of representation should be submitted at the office of Ombudsman. Copy of representation should be submitted to all respondents.
6. If the complainant is required to pay any amount according to the order of Forum, one-third of such amount should be deposited by complainant and proofs should be attached along with the representation.
7. The matter should not be pending before the competent Forum or any other court, tribunal, arbitrator or any other authority.
8. All representations should be with a sufficient cause, reasonable diligence causing the consumer prima facie loss and damages / inconvenience.
9. Representation may be submitted in English or Gujarati language

*** <http://www.gercin.org/docs/Cosumer%20Grievances/Procedure/Procedure.pdf>