

Reflections About My Complaint Process

When you file a formal complaint with the Public Utility Commission (PUC) against a utility you are initiating a formal legal process to adjudicate that complaint. It is essentially a judicial process. Several observations about it:

If you are an individual customer you do not have to have a lawyer. You can represent yourself. They term you a “pro se” complainant. If you are a business you have to be represented by a lawyer.

If your complaint is against a major utility like Aqua, American Water or PECO, you will be opposed by professional, highly skilled utility lawyers. They will be knowledgeable about every aspect of utility law and applicable case law.

Reflecting on my complaints, it was a case of an amateur versus seasoned professionals.

Aqua cited a number of statutes and case law supporting their contention that my complaints should be thrown out. I provided no citations.

The Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) has the responsibility of correctly applying the law. The fact that I did not cite specific references does not diminish that responsibility.

I feel that Aqua raised a number of irrelevant issues that diverted attention away from my complaints and confused the key issues.

In the end, I really do not believe that the ALJ really understood the key issues for the consumption volume complaint.

The PUC people I dealt with were generally helpful and cordial.