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COMMISSION
CLERK

January 12, 2003

BY HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Blanca Bayó, Director
Division of Records and Reporting
Room 110, Easley Building
Florida Public Service Commission
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850

Re: Docket 030438-EI - *Petition of Florida Public Utilities Company for an Increase in its Rates and Charges in Their Consolidated Electric Division*

Dear Ms. Bayó:

During the service hearings in Marianna in this docket in December, a customer discussed some problems he had and the company was asked to investigate and report. On December 23, 2003, Mr. Mark Cutshaw provided a response to Mr. Dick Durban by e-mail and a copy of that response is attached to this letter for the Commission file. A copy is also being provided to the parties and Mr. Barker.

Sincerely,


Norman H. Horton, Jr.

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Attachment

cc: Jennifer Brubaker, Esq.
Stephen C. Burgess, Esq.
Ms. Cheryl Martin
Mr. Mark Cutshaw
Mr. Ray Barker

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

00485 JAN 12 03

December 23, 2003

Florida Public Service Commission
Attn: J Richard Durban
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Re: Ray Barker
2363 Highway 73 South
Marianna, Florida 32448

Dear Mr. Durban:

This letter is in response to a consumer complaint filed at the December 4, 2003 Customer Service Hearing in Marianna, Florida during the FPU rate increase proceedings. This complaint was filed by Mr. Ray Barker during comments at the hearing.

After a thorough investigation of our records we found only one inquiry from Mr. Barker on July 17, 2002. Mr. Barker spoke with the Northwest Florida Customer Service Manager and stated that his meter was being read from a neighbor's yard and he felt this was not appropriate. After making this complaint and not receiving the response he felt was required, he called and spoke with a Customer Service Representative located at the FPU Corporate Office located in West Palm Beach who referred him back to the Northwest Florida office. According to FPU records, Mr. Barker has not called concerning poor electric service or deliberately cutting power to his area to restore power to another area.

Meters Readers are equipped with binoculars that are sometimes used to read meters when there is difficulty getting to meter or in order to read them more quickly. This allows meters to be accurately read without getting close to the meter but some time results in concerns from customers that their meters are not being read. Experience has shown that this method of reading meters is very accurate and is therefore acceptable in certain situations. We found no evidence that meter reading errors have occurred at Mr. Barker's residence.

After receiving these comments, FPU began investigating the situation and installed a recording voltmeter at Mr. Barker's residence to determine whether any service problems existed. The voltage recordings show good voltage during starting and running of electrical equipment. According to the voltage recordings, events occurred on Saturday, December 6th at approximately 7 AM and on Monday, December 8th at approximately 4 PM during which instantaneous voltage fluctuations occurred which resulted in voltage levels below normal operating levels. Although the exact cause was not determined, it appears that high winds on these days resulted in tree contact with the distribution line that serves Mr. Barker's residence which caused the voltage fluctuations. The results of the voltage recordings are attached.

DOCUMENT
00485 JAN 12 2004
FPU - COMMISSION CLERK

The area in which Mr. Barker resides is served by the South Street Feeder, OCB #9854, which has seen steady growth for several years. In 1992 the load on this circuit was approximately 7000 KVA and grew to approximately 9450 KVA in 2002. This increase in load has required changes to maintain voltage standards. In 1994, a new circuit breaker with an electronic relay and event recorder was installed on this circuit and in 1996 new voltage regulators were installed on Highway 73 just north of Mr. Barker's residence in order to better regulate the voltage to this area. During 2003, an additional feeder circuit was installed to reduce the total load served by the South Street Feeder and provide better voltage stability and improved reliability.

During the meeting, Mr. Barker commented that during 1995, probably during Hurricane Opal, he overheard radio transmissions by FPU personnel stating that his area was disconnected to divert power to the Highway 71 area. Based on the fact that these two areas are served from different substations and distribution facilities are not in place to allow this to occur, this did not happen. It is likely that power was disconnected due to damage to the distribution feeder serving his area in order to allow power to be restored safely. Repairs associated with this storm took four days to complete. Due to the presence of critical customers such as gas stations, hotels and restaurants located on Highway 71, this area was restored prior to Mr. Barker's area in order to address critical customers as outlined in our Emergency Restoration Guidelines.

Based on the facts of this situation, we feel that Mr. Barker has been provided with acceptable service. No records exist to indicate that Mr. Barker has contacted our offices concerning service problems. Service to his area is important and improvements are occurring to ensure acceptable service to this area. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact me by phone at (850) 526-6811 or by email at mcutshaw@fpuc.com.

Sincerely,

P. Mark Cutshaw, Director
Northwest Florida

cc: Chuck Stein
Norman Horton
Cheryl Martin