

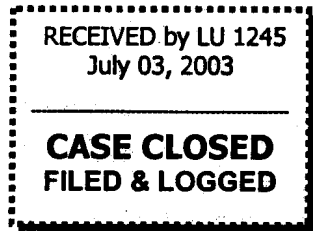


PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY  
2850 SHADELANDS DRIVE, SUITE 100  
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA 94598  
(925) 974-4282

MARGARET A. SHORT, CHAIRMAN

DECISION  
LETTER DECISION  
PRE-REVIEW REFERRAL

## REVIEW COMMITTEE



IBEW



INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF  
ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFL-CIO  
LOCAL UNION 1245, I.B.E.W.  
P.O. BOX 2547  
VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95698  
(707) 452-2700  
SALIM A. TAMIMI, SECRETARY

### Pre-Review Committee No. 14227 Customer Services – Office and Meter Reading Services – Colma

Jesse Sondheimer  
Company Member  
Local Investigating Committee

Bernard Smallwood  
Union Member  
Local Investigating Committee

#### Subject of the Grievance

This case concerns the discharge of a Meter Reader for short dialing.

#### Facts of the Case

The grievant had been a Meter Reader since October 14, 1995 either through the Hiring Hall or in a regular position. He had no active discipline when discharged effective March 11, 2003.

On November 8, 2002 as part of the Load Research Program, a new gas meter was installed at 585 Maple Avenue, San Bruno. The new meter was set at 0000. The grievant read the account on November 14 and entered a read of 0008. He also noted in the EMR (hand-held meter reading device) that there was a meter change. In December another Meter Reader read the account at 0078. On January 15, 2003 the grievant entered a read of 0173.

The customer requested removal from the Load Research Program and on January 16, an M&C Mechanic removed the Gas Load Research equipment from the meter and replaced the meter index. The M&C Mechanic noted on the tag the take-out read of 0174 and the read on the newly installed index as 7209.

On February 13, the grievant again read this route. For the meter at 585 Maple Avenue, he entered a read of 0276.

On February 20, a clerk in Stockton Records was entering the index change for the gas meter and noticed the significant difference between the January 16 and February 13 reads. The records clerk issued a Help Ticket to have the meter read checked, indicating a case of possible 3-dialing. On February 20, the Sr. Meter Reader from Colma verified the read as 7292. On February 21, the Colma Meter Reading supervisor verified the read as 7294. The supervisor also took pictures of the meter to demonstrate that there was nothing obstructing the view of or access to the meter.

When questioned about the February read at this account, the grievant indicated he must have made a mistake, that he was not the type to 3-dial, that he normally completes his routes, and does so faster than most other Meter Readers. The grievant indicated he was aware that discharge is the penalty for curbing or short dialing. The grievant's Class II rebate error rate was within acceptable standard.

Discussion

The parties discussed this case at length on two occasions. Union argued strongly that the grievant was a good employee and Meter Reader with a clean record, that this was only one account and an error.

Company responded that where there has been a meter change or index change, a read that bears a relationship to the prior meter and not to the newly installed meter is clear evidence of curbing or short dialing. Further, there are precedent grievance decisions upholding terminations for curbing or short dialing a single meter. Prior discipline is not required as this is a dischargeable without mitigation offense.

Decision

The PRC agrees the discharge was for just and sufficient cause. This case is closed without adjustment.

*Margaret A. Short*

Margaret A. Short, Chairman  
Review Committee

7/2/03

Date

*Sam Tamimi*

Sam Tamimi, Secretary  
Review Committee

7-2-03

Date