

WATRS

Water Redress Scheme

ADJUDICATOR'S FINAL DECISION SUMMARY

Adjudication Reference: WAT/X359

Date of Final Decision: 28 February 2023

Party Details

Customer: XX

Company: XX

Complaint

The customer submits the company has billed her incorrectly. She seeks that the company amend her bills.

Response

The company says it has investigated and found no billing errors. The customer's water meter is working properly and it has charged the customer based on her meter readings in line with its scheme of charges. It denies the claim.

Findings

The evidence shows the company has provided its services to the standard to be reasonably expected.

Outcome

The company does not need to take any action.

The customer must reply by 28 March 2023 to accept or reject this decision.

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Case Outline

The customer's complaint is that:

- She believes the company has billed her incorrectly as her bills are much higher than friends and family.
- The company has checked her meter and reviewed her bills. It found no errors in billing or signs of a leak. It says her usage is in line with that of single occupiers. However, she disputes this.
- She seeks that the company amend her bills.
- In comments on the company's response the customer seeks that WATRS issue a decision promptly.
- The customer did not submit comments on the preliminary decision.

The company's response is that:

- It has charged the customer correctly based on meter readings in line with its scheme of charges.
- In response to the customer's concerns it has investigated.
- It has checked her water meter is connected and working properly. It also carried out a meter calibration test which confirmed this. It has checked her usage and found this consistent with the usage recorded at the meter. It has also checked and found no signs of any leak.
- The customer's usage is in line with what it would expect to see from a single occupier. For reference, the national daily average consumption for a single occupier is between 0.109m³ (for a low user) and 0.397m³ (for a high user). The customer's own consumption falls between a low of 0.147m³ and 0.333m³ per day.
- It denies the claim.

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How is a WATRS decision reached?

In reaching my decision, I have considered two key issues. These are:

1. Whether the company failed to provide its services to the customer to the standard to be reasonably expected by the average person.
2. Whether or not the customer has suffered any financial loss or other disadvantage as a result of a failing by the company.

In order for the customer's claim against the company to succeed, the evidence available to the adjudicator must show on a balance of probabilities that the company has failed to provide its services to the standard one would reasonably expect and that as a result of this failure the customer has suffered some loss or detriment. If no such failure or loss is shown, the company will not be liable.

I have carefully considered all of the evidence provided. If I have not referred to a particular document or matter specifically, this does not mean that I have not considered it in reaching my decision.

How was this decision reached?

1. My role is to consider the evidence available and decide whether it shows, on balance, the company has failed to provide its services to the standard to be reasonably expected.
2. The company is responsible for billing the customer correctly and I note it relies on the customer's meter readings to do so.
3. The customer is concerned as her bills are higher than those of others, however I consider that alone is not evidence her bills are incorrect because usage varies from one person to another.
4. The company has provided account records and work logs that evidence it has checked the customer's meter and found it to be working correctly and recording accurately. Further that it found no signs of a leak at the customer's property. Importantly, it confirms the customer's usage is in line with the average for a single occupier.

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5. I consider the company's evidence shows, on balance, the customer's meter is correctly recording her usage and the company has billed her correctly. Therefore, the company has provided its services to the standard to be reasonably expected.
6. I appreciate the customer may remain concerned about her bills, however she should be reassured that they are in line with expectations.
7. In light of the above, the customer's claim is unable to succeed.

Outcome

The company does not need to take any action.

What happens next?

- This adjudication decision is final and cannot be appealed or amended.
- The customer must reply by 28 March 2023 to accept or reject this decision.
- When you tell WATRS that you accept or reject the decision, the company will be notified of this. The case will then be closed.
- If you do not tell WATRS that you accept or reject the decision, this will be taken to be a rejection of the decision.



J Mensa-Bonsu LLB (Hons) PgDL (BVC)
Adjudicator

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