

Dr. Chad and Sarah Kurtenbach

MidAmerican Account Number: [REDACTED]

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 E Capitol Ave, State Capitol Building
Pierre, South Dakota, 57501

Dear SD Public Utilities Commission,

This letter is to ask for your help with an issue that has yet to be resolved with MidAmerican Energy. MidAmerican told us we needed to contact the SD Public Utilities Commission as the next step, as it appears there is no one at MidAmerican who is capable of resolving this dispute.

We are disputing the \$872.10 "Miscellaneous-Taxable, Installation of a non-heating gas service line" fee.

This fee was placed on our account because my husband and I decided to make the investment of installing a geo-thermal unit in our new home to have a more energy efficient home.

After spending hours on the phone with seven different employees at MidAmerican (and receiving incorrect and false information from them), we were able to finally get the truth on what this fee is. The \$872.10 fee was a tariff MidAmerican created to "recoup their costs since we won't be using gas as the main heating source of our home."

The reason why my husband and I invested in a geo-unit, is because of the improved energy efficiency, monthly cost savings and Federal tax deductions. In fact, Xcel Energy offered us a lower rate on our electricity for having a geo-unit because they value the importance of energy efficiency.

We believe it is extremely unethical that MidAmerican would punish us for having an efficient renewable heating source by charging us with a \$872.10 cost-recouping "tariff."

Our home has SEVEN gas sources. These sources include:

1. Gas heater for our 3-stall garage,
2. Gas stovetop
3. Three gas fireplaces
4. Outside gas fire pit
5. Outside gas grill

We are paying a bill to MidAmerican every month for these seven gas sources. By building our home, we have created seven new revenue streams for MidAmerican for as long as our home stands.

MidAmerican is a monopoly that is using their power to hinder couples and families who invest heavily in their home to have greener energy sources. If we did not have to work with MidAmerican, we would not. However, we have no choice as there are no other gas companies in Sioux Falls.

For example, if we chose to go with DirecTV over MidContinent for our TV service, MidContinent would not slap us with an \$872.10 fee/tariff because we chose a different method of entertainment in our home.

We know that MidAmerican received an increased budget of \$1.37M in 2014 to support their Energy Efficiency Programs, yet they are penalizing people like us who have truly made our home more efficient. If they received over \$1.37M in their new budget plan, why are they charging consumers with a large fee to "recoup costs"? Also, if state, national and international governments are pushing for higher efficiency and green energy, then why is MidAmerican going against that by penalizing us?

On top of that, we were told by MidAmerican on the phone that they actually "love trailer homes, because they have terrible installation and windows. We can make a lot of money from them."

We are asking for your help to completely get rid of this fee. Not just for us, but for every family and couple who put in a geo-unit. Geo-units are very expensive, and after we personally spent over \$30,000 on a geo-unit to capitalize on tax deductions, higher efficiency and cost savings, imagine our surprise when MidAmerican punished us with a large fee because we chose the best and most efficient method for our home.

We know we are not the first family or builder to dispute this fee or contact the SD Public Utilities Commission, and we will not be the last.

Gas charges should be based on USAGE, not unfairly placed on homeowners who make a large investment to lower energy costs.

We are more than willing to talk to and communicate with whoever the correct contact is in order for this to be resolved.

Thank you in advance for your help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Kurtenbach", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sarah Kurtenbach