

**Warren Woodward
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October 19, 2014

Arizona Corporation Commissioner (ACC)
Docket Control Center
1200 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Re: Docket # E-00000C-11-0328

Commissioners;

Enclosed is an email I received from your “Manager of Consumer Services”, Connie Walczak. It is in response to my September 2nd, 2014 letter to you (docketed here: <http://images.edocket.azcc.gov/docketpdf/0000155747.pdf>) concerning information I received about thousands of APS's “smart” meters being replaced due to heat induced failure of the remote disconnect switch and LCD display. I'll remind you that the “smart” meter remote disconnect switch has been the cause of many “smart” meter related fires and subsequent “smart” meter recalls in the U.S. and Canada.

Ms. Walczak's email raises several concerns.

The first is that it is shocking to learn that here in Arizona we have our first “smart” meter related house fire lawsuit against APS and the “smart” meter manufacturer, Elster. The suit really should also name each of you for carelessly and negligently allowing “smart” meter installations despite repeated warnings from myself and others.

Back in 2012 for example, I sent all ACC commissioners a 21 page compilation of reports from the US, Australia and Canada about fires, explosions and burned out appliances due to “smart” meter installations. That list is at the following link and is, of course, longer now because the problem has not gone away: <http://emfsafetynetwork.org/smart-meters/smart-meter-fires-and-explosions/>.

The second concern is that your “investigation” of this very serious “smart” meter issue consisted of asking APS questions without placing APS under oath. When will you learn that this company cannot be trusted to give honest answers? Several times in the past I have pointed out the futility of asking APS anything unless they are under oath. When are you going to wake up?

One of the latest incidents of APS lying to you was their response to questions submitted to them by commissioner Brenda Burns. In my YouTube video, [APS Caught Lying Again](#), I

proved that some of the answers APS gave commissioner Brenda Burns were lies. Typically, you did nothing about it.

It is very alarming to learn that there have been other fires in Arizona that APS has been able to blame on “broken or loose meter clips.”

APS: “There have been some fires within the APS service territory that were initially alleged to be caused by Elster meters. However, in these instances, a root cause external to the meter itself, such as broken or loose meter clips or defective wiring at the location, was determined to be the cause of the fire.”

“*Some fires*”? How many is “some”? Isn't the ACC at least curious? Are “smart” meter related fires so commonplace they are met with a yawn now? Just the 'price of progress'? Or is the ACC uninterested because meter clips are on the customer's side of the meter?

I called attention to the absurdity of APS's 'meter clip defense' three years ago in an email sent to all ACC commissioners on September 10th, 2011. I was commenting on APS's lame excuse made two days previous at an ACC “workshop” meeting when APS was asked about the “smart” meter fire issue. I wrote:

“I could not believe you accepted the APS response about meters causing fires. Their response was on a par with “*The dog ate the homework*”. To refresh your memory, APS said if there is a fire it is probably because the old meter has not been changed for 40 years and the jaws that grip the new meter are corroded away. Think about that. What they are saying is the installer saw something was wrong but went ahead with installation anyway!”

The kicker is that, as you should well know, APS can legally deny responsibility for anything on the homeowner's side of the meter, which includes meter clips – clips that worked fine for God knows how many years until APS came along and messed with them by yanking out a perfectly good meter and replacing it with an expensive microwave radiation emitting fire hazard. What an absolutely sickening scenario, and APS gets to blame the victims! When was the last time you checked your meter clips?

The problem of a bad connection at the clips is known as a “hot socket”. Tesco, self-described as “the trusted source for electric meter testing equipment and metering accessories for over 100 years”, has determined through testing that, “**Electromechanical meters withstand hot sockets better than solid state meters.**” In other words, analog meters withstand imperfect meter clips better than “smart” meters.

I have enclosed an article written by K.T. Weaver that explains the whole hot socket issue and includes slides from a Tesco presentation on same. Weaver's impressive bio includes a B.S. in Engineering Physics, an M.S. in Nuclear Engineering with a specialty in radiation protection, and employment in the nuclear division at a leading electric utility for over 25 years. (Article is online here: <http://smartgridawareness.org/2014/10/16/analog-meters-withstand-hot-sockets->

[better-than-smart-meters/](#))

Ms. Walczak's conclusion is typical of the ACC: “Staff’s review found no issue with APS’s response. If you feel this is not the case, you may file a formal complaint with Docket Control.”

Staff's review found no issue with APS's response?

OK, here's *my* review: 1) “Smart” meter related fires are occurring in Arizona but APS gets to blame the victims so you don't care. 2) We aren't told how many of these fires have occurred or what the damage was. 3) We have our first Arizona “smart” meter house fire lawsuit. 4) Once again, the gullible (or is it corrupt?) ACC takes APS at their word. 5) If I don't like any of this I get to do the ACC's regulatory work for them once more by filing a formal complaint.

I already have one formal complaint pending against APS. I don't think I can take on more of your neglected work for free at this time.

As regulators you people are a sad joke.

Sincerely,

Warren Woodward

PS – Commissioner Gary Pierce, at a political event in early 2013 I heard you try to assuage a constituent's anxiety over “smart” meter related fires by telling her that we have not had any “smart” meter related fires in Arizona. What would your response be now that you know there in fact have been fires in Arizona? Tough luck for people who don't check their meter clips? Tough luck for people whose wiring worked fine until the “smart” meter came? The “smart” grid is so fantastic it's worth the risk of people's lives and property? What, Gary?

And one other thing: APS wrote, “APS is aware, through various media reports, that utilities in several jurisdictions have replaced advanced meters manufactured by Sensus Corporation after allegations that those meters were related to house fires.”

To clarify, “smart” meter fires that are the result of actual meter malfunction (as opposed to hot socket, etc.) are not confined to the Sensus brand. For example, after a number of Sensus fires in Pennsylvania, PECO Energy switched to Landis & Gyr “smart” meters then still had another “smart” meter fire in which 16 apartments were damaged and 30 people were displaced in Bensalem, PA on February 6th, 2014.

ACC Email:

Remote Disconnect Switch Failure Investigation

- [Connie Waleczak](#)
- Oct 17 at 4:05 PM

Dear Mr. Woodward,

This email is being provided as a response to your September 2, 2014 letter to the Commissioners, docketed September 5, 2014. In that letter you requested that the Commission investigate APS regarding faulty “smart” meters that required replacement due to heat induced failure of the remote disconnect switch. You questioned recalls in states where house fires occurred due to remote disconnect switch failures.

Staff presented the following questions to APS in response to your request. APS’s response is below each question.

1. Has APS removed any meters installed as part of APS’s AMI system in the past year due to heat induced failure of the remote disconnect switch or LCD display? If so, how many?

APS has not removed any of the Company’s AMI meters in the past year due to heat induced failure of the remote disconnect switch or LCD display.

APS did replace 32,000 AMI meters (roughly 3%) in 2014 from January 1st through August 31st. Approximately half of these meters were replaced by the meter manufacturer due to a problem with the soldering of a circuit board within the meter. The other meter replacements were for various reasons with the most common failures attributed to blank LCD displays and non-communicating radio modules. Those meters still under warranty were also replaced by the meter manufacturer. Again, none of these replacements were associated with heat induced failures.

2. Is APS aware of other utilities in the country that have replaced or recalled meters of the types installed as part of APS’s AMI system as a result of disconnect switch or LCD display failure? If so, please provide the name of the utility(ies) and all information you may have about these replacements including meter manufacturer(s).

APS is not aware of any Elster (manufacturer of the AMI meters in use at APS) meters that have been replaced or recalled by another utility company as a result of remote disconnect failures or LCD display failures associated with heat induced failures. As noted above, LCD failures have occurred in some meters for other reasons.

3. Has APS experienced any house fires that are attributable to failures or flaws in meters installed as part of APS's AMI system? If so, please provide details.

No. There have been some fires within the APS service territory that were initially alleged to be caused by Elster meters. However, in these instances, a root cause external to the meter itself, such as broken or loose meter clips or defective wiring at the location, was determined to be the cause of the fire.

4. Finally, an insurance company otherwise responsible for paying a claim on a house fire, has filed a lawsuit against APS and Elster, claiming that the Elster meter was the cause of the fire. Elster, APS, and their internal and external investigators, disagree with the insurance company's claim. To date, the insurance company's claim remains unsupported by any expert testimony.

Interestingly enough, the very same insurance company has alleged that a second house fire was caused by an Elster meter. However, no lawsuit has been filed, and no evidence has been provided to support the allegation. It is APS's understanding that the insurance company is now focusing its investigation on an attic fan as the potential source of the second house fire.

5. Is APS aware of other utilities in the country that have experienced house fires that are directly attributable to failures or flaws in the types of meters installed as part of APS's AMI system? If so, please provide the name of the utility(ies) and all information you may have about these incidents.

APS is not aware of any Elster meters that have been implicated in house fires.

APS is aware, through various media reports, that utilities in several jurisdictions have replaced advanced meters manufactured by Sensus Corporation after allegations that those meters were related to house fires.

Hopefully, the above information will provide the answers you are looking for. Staff's review found no issue with APS's response. If you feel this is not the case, you may file a formal complaint with Docket Control.

Best Regards,

Connie Walczak

Manager Consumer Services

Utilities Division

Arizona Corporation Commission

602-542-0291