

Senate Bill No. 1163

CHAPTER 728

An act to amend Section 798.38 of the Civil Code and Section 739.5 of the Public Utilities Code, relating to utilities.

[Approved by Governor September 24, 2004. Filed with Secretary of State September 24, 2004.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1163, Dunn. Utilities.

(1) The existing Mobilehome Residency Law requires the management of a mobilehome park, when the management provides master-meter and submeter service of utilities to a homeowner, to separately state the cost of the charges for the period along with the opening and closing readings of the meter.

This bill would require the management to make specified disclosures if a 3rd-party billing agent prepares utility billing for the park.

(2) Existing law requires that, when gas or electric service is provided by a master-meter customer to users who are tenants of a mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex, the master-meter customer charge each user at the same rate which would be applicable if the user were receiving gas or electricity directly from the gas or electric company. Existing law creates further requirements for master-meter customers and for the corporations which provide service to them.

This bill would require the Public Utilities Commission to accept and respond to complaints concerning the requirements described above through the consumer affairs branch, in addition to any other staff that the commission deems necessary to assist the complainant and, where appropriate, to coordinate with the office of the county sealer to resolve the complaint.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 798.38 of the Civil Code is amended to read:
798.38. (a) Where the management provides both master-meter and submeter service of utilities to a homeowner, for each billing period the cost of the charges for the period shall be separately stated along with the opening and closing readings for his or her meter. The management shall post in a conspicuous place, the prevailing residential utilities rate schedule as published by the serving utility.



(b) If a third-party billing agent or company prepares utility billing for the park, the management shall disclose on each resident's billing, the name, address, and telephone number of the billing agent or company.

SEC. 2. Section 739.5 of the Public Utilities Code is amended to read:

739.5. (a) The commission shall require that, whenever gas or electric service, or both, is provided by a master-meter customer to users who are tenants of a mobilehome park, apartment building, or similar residential complex, the master-meter customer shall charge each user of the service at the same rate which would be applicable if the user were receiving gas or electricity, or both, directly from the gas or electrical corporation. The commission shall require the corporation furnishing service to the master-meter customer to establish uniform rates for master-meter service at a level which will provide a sufficient differential to cover the reasonable average costs to master-meter customers of providing submeter service, except that these costs shall not exceed the average cost that the corporation would have incurred in providing comparable services directly to the users of the service.

(b) Every master-meter customer of a gas or electrical corporation subject to subdivision (a) who, on or after January 1, 1978, receives any rebate from the corporation shall distribute to, or credit to the account of, each current user served by the master-meter customer that portion of the rebate which the amount of gas or electricity, or both, consumed by the user during the last billing period bears to the total amount furnished by the corporation to the master-meter customer during that period.

(c) An electrical or gas corporation furnishing service to a master-meter customer shall furnish to each user of the service within a submetered system every public safety customer service which it provides beyond the meter to its other residential customers. The corporation shall furnish a list of those services to the master-meter customer who shall post the list in a conspicuous place accessible to all users. Every corporation shall provide these public safety customer services to each user of electrical or gas service under a submetered system without additional charge unless the corporation has included the average cost of these services in the rate differential provided to the master-meter customer on January 1, 1984, in which case the commission shall deduct the average cost of providing these public safety customer services when approving rate differentials for master-meter customers.

(d) Every master-meter customer is responsible for maintenance and repair of its submeter facilities beyond the master-meter, and nothing in



this section requires an electrical or gas corporation to make repairs to or perform maintenance on the submeter system.

(e) Every master-meter customer shall provide an itemized billing of charges for electricity or gas, or both, to each individual user generally in accordance with the form and content of bills of the corporation to its residential customers, including, but not limited to, the opening and closing readings for the meter, and the identification of all rates and quantities attributable to each block in the applicable rate structure. The master-meter customer shall also post, in a conspicuous place, the applicable prevailing residential gas or electrical rate schedule, as published by the corporation.

(f) The commission shall require that every electrical and gas corporation shall notify each master-meter customer of its responsibilities to its users under this section.

(g) The commission shall accept and respond to complaints concerning the requirements of this section through the consumer affairs branch, in addition to any other staff that the commission deems necessary to assist the complainant. In responding to the complaint, the commission shall consider the role that the office of the county sealer in the complainant's county of residence may have in helping to resolve the complaint and, where appropriate, coordinate with that office.

