

**From:** "Sue Shelley" <dallassue@msn.com> on 09/30/2007 02:00:02 PM

**Subject:** Truth in Lending

I experienced a couple of problems with major credit card companies a few years ago. The jist of both of them was that, in the smallest print known to man, they changed my interest rate for no reason that they could explain to me, other than "we have the right to do that at any time". I really don't consider the accompanying fine print "notice", nor the arrogant invitation upon calling them; "if you don't like it just pay it off. So did you want to do that now?"

My most recent problem is with a secured card through Orchard Bank (HSCB). Last year, and this year they waited until my charges on my \$200 limit were almost at limit (I pay it in full every month) and then added the annual \$30.00 fee which prompts an over-the-limit fee. In both cases they receded the OTLF but only because of my ceaseless diligence to that end. I asked them last year and again this year to send me a notice when the time the yearly "dues" are drawing near; it's not like I write it down. I feel sure they will do it again this year.

Another interesting little trick they pull, is that if you go on their website to pay, it's free if it is a normal payment. If a "rush payment" defined as two days, there is a \$14.95 charge. It is still received in time but they put you in the position to either pay the "rush fee of \$14.95" or if you go the "normal payment" path, taking a chance of not having it reach them in TEN DAYS and owing \$30.00.

Now I can get an envelope from Dallas to Tokyo in less than ten days, but then, the consumer is left with the credit card company (the one who has everything to gain) to share, accurately, when they received it.

To add insult to injury, when you are about 4-5 days from the deadline, 70% of the time, the "normal payment" option on their website is not functional, but "rush payment" always works just fine.

Funny how that works. Sue Shelley

Sue Shelley is a multi-published freelance writer based in Dallas, with articles appearing in major newspapers throughout the United States.