

Consumer Protection

Presentation to the Georgian National Energy
and Water Supply Regulatory Commission

Batumi, Georgia
August 2011

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Kentucky Public Service Commission



CONSUMER SERVICES

Director - Ginny Smith

Four staff investigators

Hours: 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday

Consumers may contact by telephone, e-mail,
website, fax or in person

1-800-PSC-INFO

<http://psc.ky.gov>

Psc.Consumer.Inquiry@ky.gov

Reports: psc.ky.gov/Home/Consumer_Intra

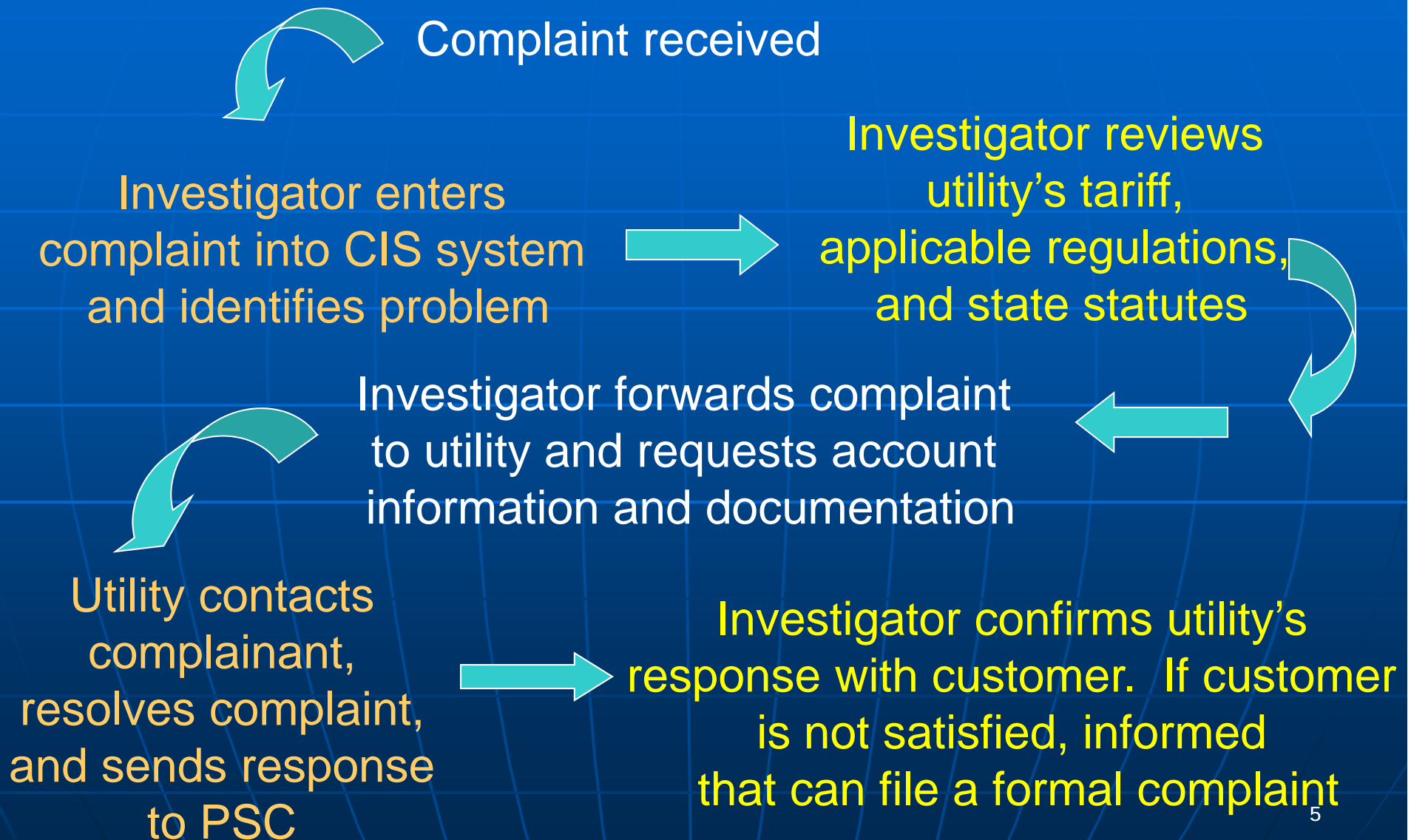
Informal Complaints

- Customer first talks to the utility and attempts to resolve the dispute.
- If unresolved, the utility advises the customer of the opportunity to contact the PSC for review of the dispute.

Informal Complaints

- Customer **contacts the PSC** by telephone, fax, e-mail, letter, or in person. Use of the toll-free number or e-mail allows the complaint to be handled with the greatest speed and efficiency. Most complaints are **handled over the telephone**.
- Commission staff **acts as a mediator**, using information from the customer, the utility, tariffs, laws, Orders, etc. when attempting to resolve the dispute.

COMPLAINT PROCESS



Consumer Services

- Investigators routinely answer more than 2,500 telephone calls each month. Most callers are requesting information regarding regulations, tariffs, and utility company practices.

Consumer Services

- Refunds, savings, and credits to consumers are tracked. In 2010, we helped consumers receive \$167,251. So far in 2011, we have helped consumers receive \$61,544.

TOOLS

- Customer's Bill of Rights
- Utilities' Filed Tariff
- PSC Rules and Regulations
- Kentucky State Statutes
- Past Commission Decisions

Customer Bill of Rights

Purpose:

To educate customers of their rights and of the utility's basic service obligations under Kentucky law and Commission's Administrative Regulations.

Customer Bill of Rights

- Residential customers in Kentucky are guaranteed rights subject to Kentucky Revised Statutes and the provisions of the Kentucky Public Service Commission Administrative Regulations.
- The Customer Bill of Rights is referenced in 807 KAR 5:006 Section 13.

Customer Bill of Rights

- You have the right to service provided you (or a member of your household whose debt was accumulated at your address) are not indebted to the utility. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 5 (2)
- You have the right to inspect and review the utility's rates and tariffed operating procedures during the utility's normal office hours. 807 KAR 5:011, Section 12
- You have the right to be present at any routine utility inspection of your service conditions. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (3)
- You must be provided a separate, distinct disconnect notice alerting you to a possible disconnection of your service if payment is not received. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (5)

Customer Bill of Rights

- You have the right to dispute the reasons for any announced termination of your service. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (5)
- You have the right to negotiate a partial payment plan when your service is threatened by disconnection for non-payment. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (2)
- You have the right to participate in equal, budget payment plans for your natural gas and electric service. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (2)(a)
- You have the right to maintain your utility service for up to thirty (30) days upon presentation of a medical certificate issued by a health official. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 14 (2)(c)

Customer Bill of Rights

- You have the right to prompt (within 24 hours) restoration of your service when the cause for discontinuance of the service has been corrected. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 13 (4)
- If you have not been disconnected, you have the right to maintain your natural gas and electric service for up to thirty (30) days if you present a Certificate of Need issued by the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources between November and the end of March. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 15 (2)

Customer Bill of Rights

- If you have been disconnected due to nonpayment, you have the right to have your natural gas or electric service reconnected between the months of November through March provided you:
 - ❖ Present a Certificate of Need issued by the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources
 - ❖ Pay one third (1/3) of your outstanding bill (\$200 maximum)
 - ❖ Accept referral to the Human Resources' Weatherization Program
 - ❖ Agree to a repayment schedule that will cause your bill to become current by October 15. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 15 (1)
- You have the right to contact the Public Service Commission regarding any dispute that you have been unable to resolve with your utility. Call toll free 1-800-772-4636. 807 KAR 5:006, Section 9

Termination of Utility Service

Utility service may be terminated under some conditions.

Non-Payment of Bill

- Disconnect cannot occur for gas or electric service before 27 days after the original mailing date of the unpaid bill.
- Disconnect cannot occur for water, sewer, or telephone service before 20 days after the original mailing date of the unpaid bill.
- The disconnect notice must be sent 10 days prior to disconnection of electric or gas service and 5 days prior to disconnection of water, sewer, or telephone service.
- Payment plans may be negotiated to keep service from termination.

Termination of Utility Service

- **Violation of Rules**

Disconnection is permitted only **after written notice** of problem and after a grace period to correct situation.

- **Dangerous Situation**

Immediate disconnection is permitted with a follow-up of a written explanation. Action is required by customer before reconnection.

Utility Obligations to the Customer

- Utility must offer service to customers within its service territory.
- Utility must allow customers to review utility's rates and current approved tariff during normal office hours.
- Utility must allow customers to be present when utility is inspecting service conditions.
- Utility must provide a separate, distinct notice prior to disconnection.
- Utility must allow customers to dispute disconnection announcements.

Utility Obligations to the Customer

- Utilities must negotiate partial payment plans when disconnection for nonpayment is threatened.
- Utilities must offer budget payment plans.
- Utilities must accept medical certificates of need provided by health care professionals.
- Utilities must reconnect service within 24 hours when the cause of disconnection has been corrected.

Formal Complaints

Customers have the right to file a formal complaint. This does not necessarily mean that the complaint was not resolved at the informal process. It may mean that the consumer refused to accept the mediation results.

Formal Complaints

- Customer request for a formal investigation of a complaint must be made in writing.
- The complaint is assigned a case number and made part of the Commission's docket of cases.
- Commission issues an Order to the utility to satisfy the complainant's request or to file an answer to the complaint.

Formal Complaints

- Utility and customer may negotiate a settlement to resolve the dispute.
- Settlement Proposal must be submitted to the Commission for review and approval.

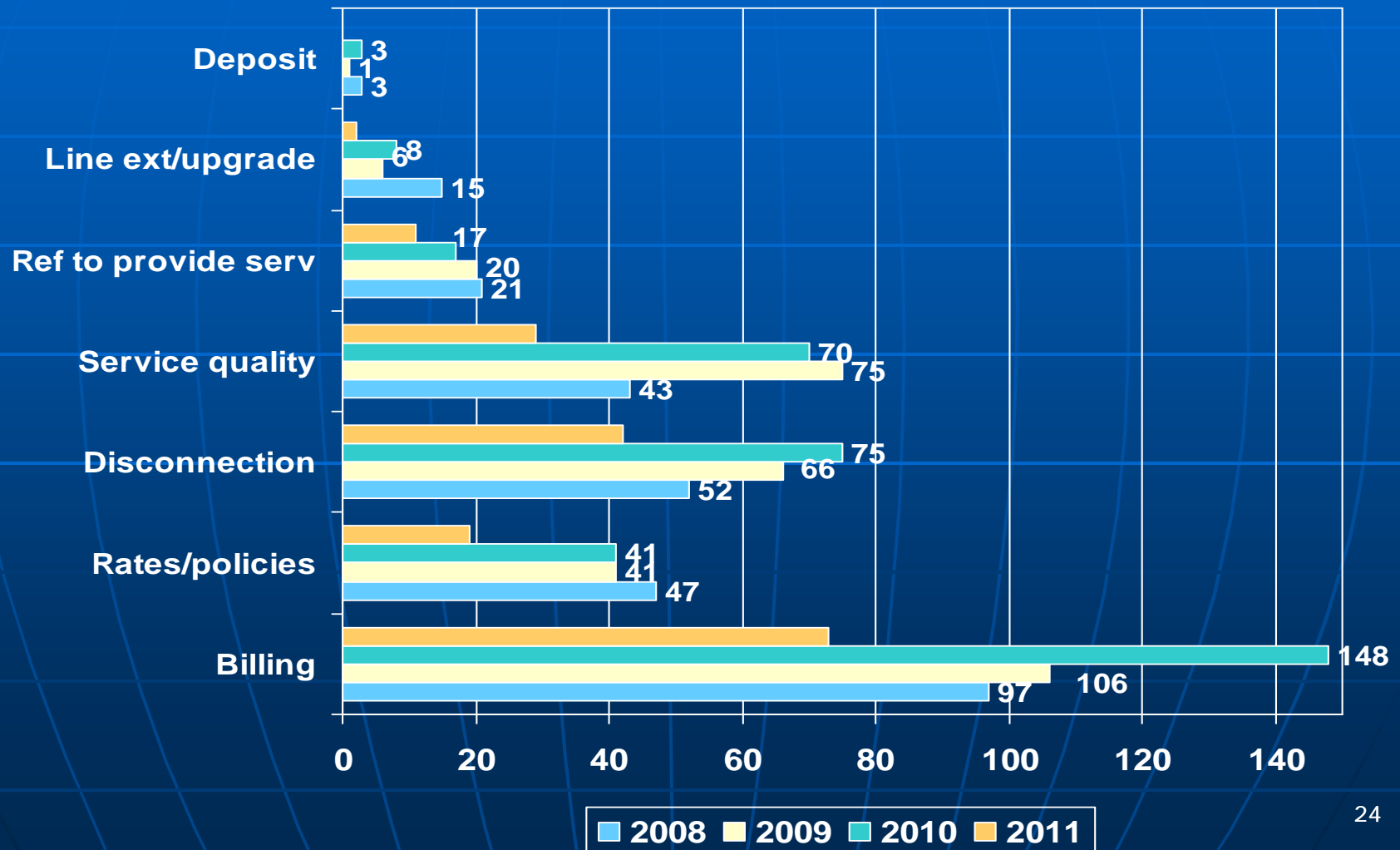
Formal Complaints

- Without a Commission-approved Settlement, the commission holds a hearing at which the utility and complainant present their positions.
- Commission issues an Order with its decision on the case.

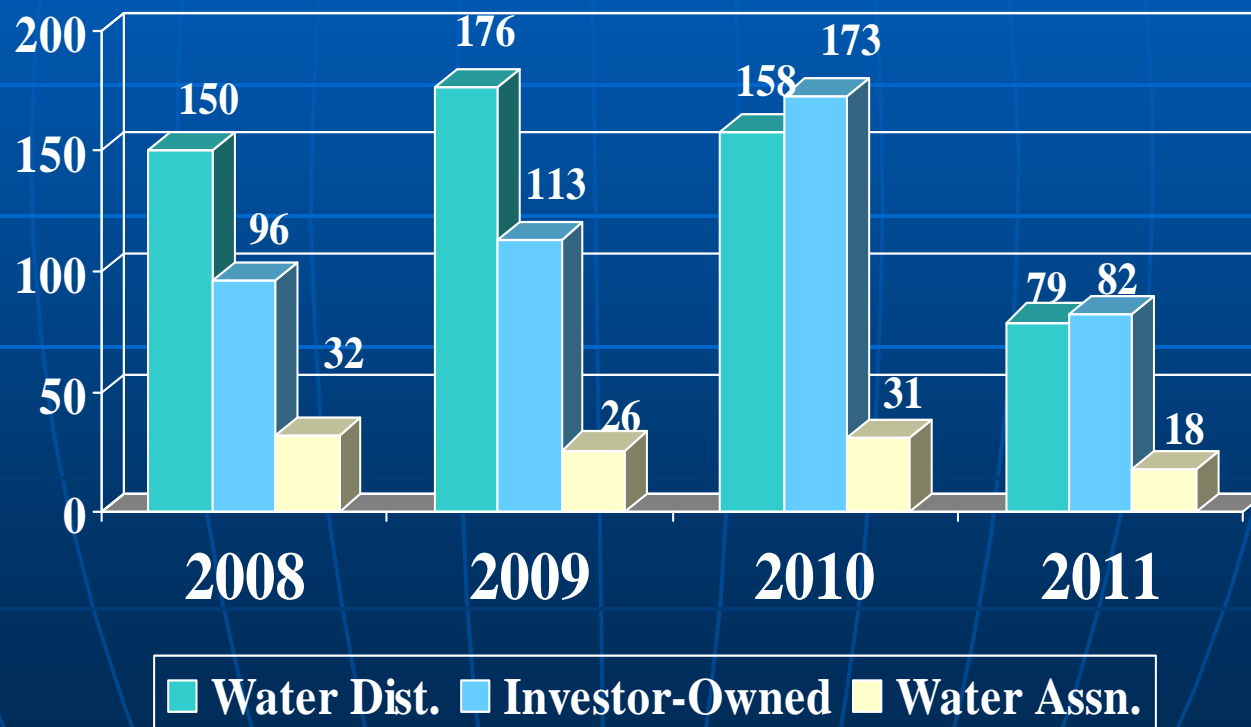
Complaint Activity

- Reports are created in-house on a monthly basis. If you are interested in monthly complaint activity, you can contact Consumer Services.
- Utilities can view quarterly reports related to complaint activity by visiting the following web site:
psc.ky.gov/Home/Consumer_Intra

Water Utility Complaints January through December 2008 to 2011 As of June 30, 2011



**Complaints By Utility Type
January through December
2008 to 2011
As of June 30, 2011**



2011 TOP 5 COMPLAINT REASONS as of June 30,2011

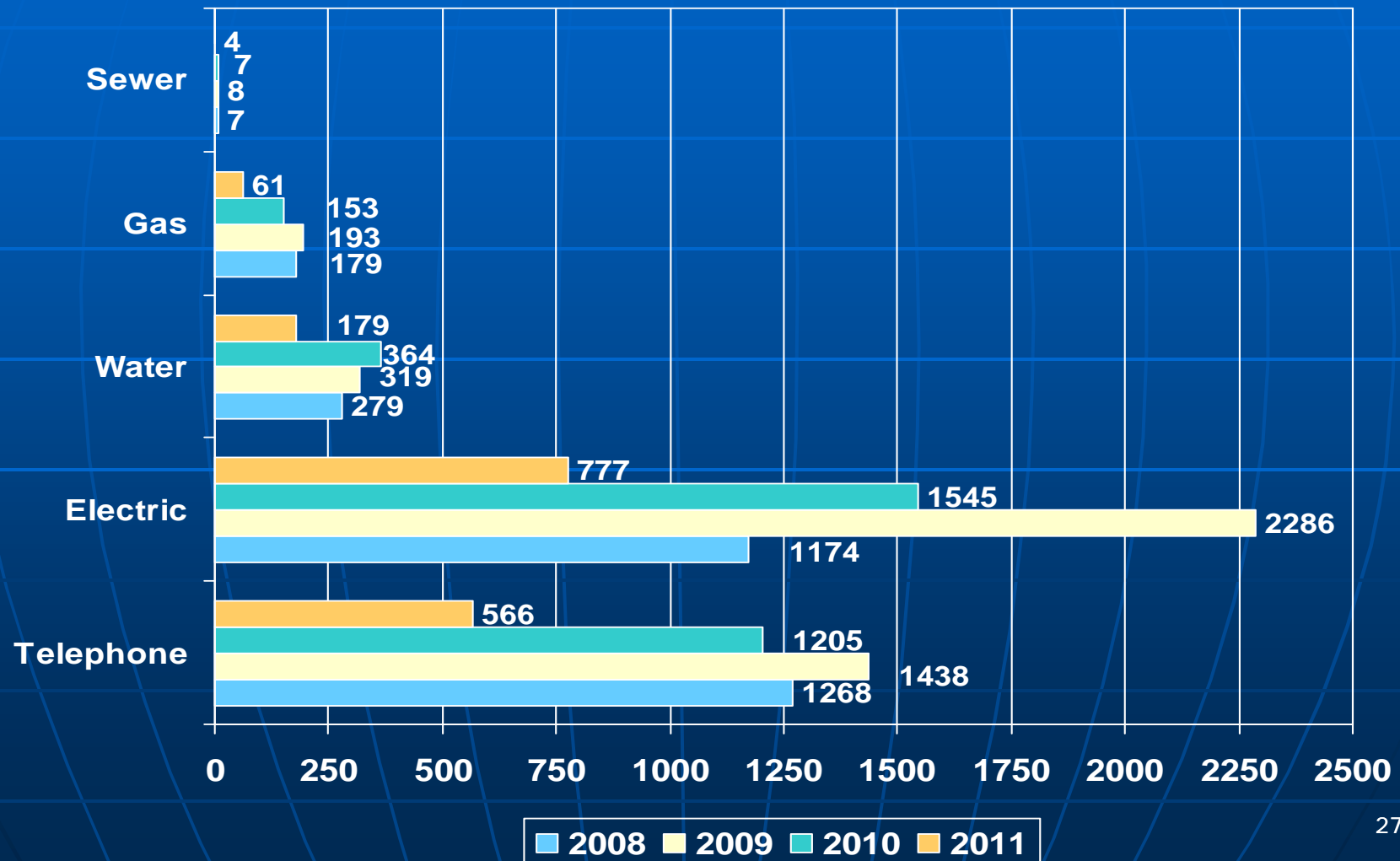
- Billing (73)
- Disconnection (42)
- Service Quality/Repair (29)
- Rates/Policies (19)
- Refusal to provide service (11)

Utility Complaints

January through December

2008 to 2011

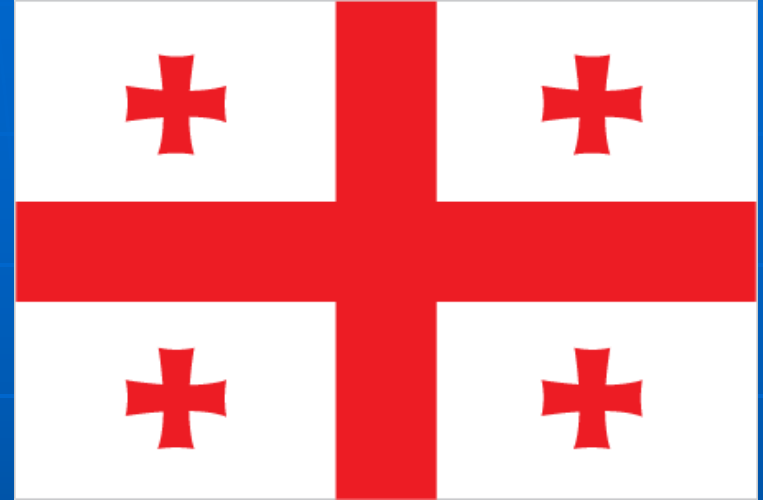
As of June 30, 2011



Utility Complaint Totals
January through December
2008 to 2011
As of June 30, 2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Utility Complaints	2907	4244	3274	1587
Rate Increase Complaints	246	461	6193	556
Total Complaints	3153	4705	9467	2143

QUESTIONS?



Didi madloba

THANK YOU