



Tools of Incentivizing Utilities to Inform/Educate the Consumers

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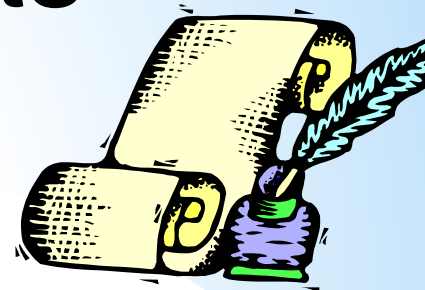
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Consumer Bill of Rights

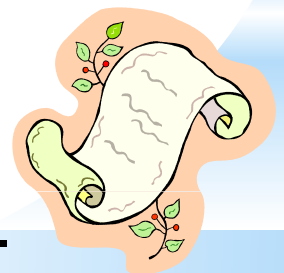


- The Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) will ensure Missourians receive safe and adequate utility service at just and reasonable rates.
- We will provide public information that a consumer can use to make educated utility choices.
- We will provide an efficient regulatory process that is responsive to all consumers queries.
- We will perform duties ethically and professionally when serving all consumers.

Consumer Bill of Rights

Residential customers have the following rights under the provisions of the Commission's Rules and Regulations:

- Right to utility service, if denied, company must provide an explanation for refusal and advise what steps are necessary to receive service.
- Speak to qualified utility personnel during normal business hours.
- Question and dispute all or part of a charge.
- File an informal / formal complaint with PSC.



Consumer Bill of Rights

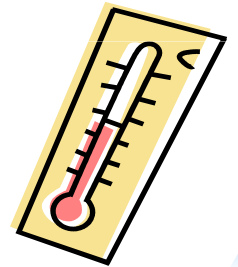
- A disconnection notice from the utility company stating the date on or after which service will be discontinued for non-payment and appropriate action necessary to avoid discontinuance.
- Twenty-one (21) day extension if discontinuance of service will aggravate an existing medical emergency of any resident at the premise where service is rendered.



Consumer Bill of Rights



- Avoid discontinuance of heat related service when the National Weather Service predicts the temperature will drop below 32° Fahrenheit (applies November 1 to March 31 during the Cold Weather Rule period).



- Avoid discontinuance of cooling related service when the National Weather Service predicts the temperature will rise above 95° Fahrenheit or that the heat index shall rise above 105° Fahrenheit (applies June 1 to September 31 during the Hot Weather Rule period).

Consumer Responsibilities

❑ Plan Ahead:

- ✓ While it is not required, consumers should contact the utility company several weeks before moving.

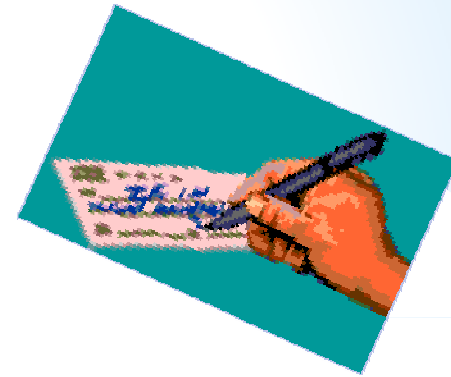
❑ Consumers must cooperate by providing key consumer information to the utility company:

- ✓ Name and proof of identification
- ✓ Service and mailing address
- ✓ Contact information



Consumer Responsibilities

- ☐ Pay a deposit if required.
- ☐ Pay your bill on time.
- ☐ Follow through on payment arrangements.
- ☐ Provide the company access to their equipment.
- ☐ Pay a bill correcting a previous undercharge.



How the Consumer Services Department Benefits the Consumer and Regulator

- * First impression of the Public Service Commission.
- * Capture metrics to identify trends by utility type, service quality, issue or geographical area, to react proactively rather than reactive.
- * Improve inefficient processes to lower cycle time which in turn saves utilities and PSC time and lowers the cost of doing business.
- * Identify educational needs.
- * Legislators, policy makers and constituents learn more about utility rates and issues with easy access to information through the consumer services department.

Complaint Handling

- ❖ Complaint Policy and Procedure
- ❖ Informal vs. Formal
- ❖ Consumer Services Rules and Enforcement
- ❖ Tracking of Consumer Data
- ❖ Alternative Dispute Resolution

Complaint Handling

4 CSR 240-2.070 Complaints

- (1) The commission on its own motion, the commission staff through the general counsel, the office of the public counsel, or any person or public utility who feels aggrieved by a violation of any statute, rule, order or decision within the commission's jurisdiction may file a complaint. The aggrieved party, or complainant, has the option to file either an informal or a formal complaint.

Complaint Handling

4 CSR 240-13.070 Commission Complaint Procedures:

(1) Prior to filing an informal or formal complaint, the customer shall pursue remedies directly with the utility as provided in this chapter. The commission specifically reserves the right to waive this requirement when circumstances so require.

Complaint Handling

Two Types of Consumer Complaints:

- ❖ **Informal Complaint**
 - Consumer Inquiry
 - Informal Complaint
- ❖ **Formal Complaint**

Informal Complaints

Consumer Inquiry:

An issue PSC staff can resolve without contacting the utility company. Inquiries also incorporate EFIS Quick Hits that include “referrals” to other information sources on matters over which the PSC has no jurisdiction (wireless, cable TV billing issues, Internet service providers, satellite service).

Informal Complaint:

An issue typically involving a billing, payment, service quality or safety issue that requires PSC staff to contact the utility company for mediation or resolution. It does not necessarily mean the utility has violated Commission rules and regulations or the company’s tariff.

Informal Complaint

Complainant shall state, either in writing, by telephone or in person at the commission's offices:

- ✓ Name, street address and telephone number of each complainant and, if one (1) person asserts authority to act on behalf of the others, the source of that authority.
- ✓ Address where the utility service was rendered.
- ✓ Utility against whom the complaint is filed.
- ✓ Nature of the complaint and the complainant's interest therein.
- ✓ Relief requested and the measures taken by the complainant to resolve the complaint.

Informal Complaints

Utility Cooperation is Critical:

☐ **Educate Consumers:**

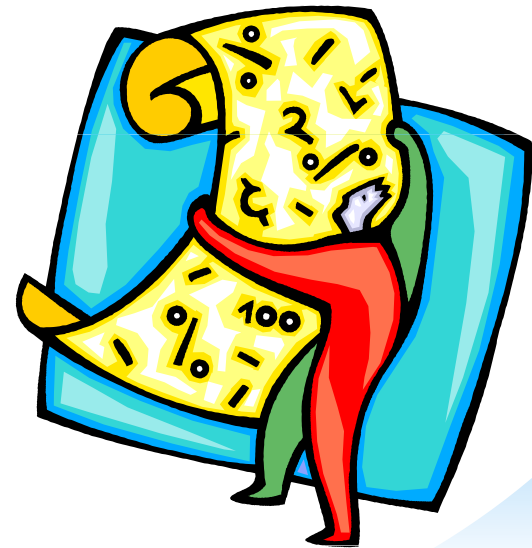
- On such issues as outages, inter-company processes, installation process, billing, assistance programs, etc.

☐ **Timely Response with Complete Information:**

- Respond on disconnects within 1 business day and for all other issues within 3-15 business days.
- Provide as much detail as possible to avoid Consumer Services Staff requesting additional information (Utilities Checklist – see Handout).

Monitoring Utility Activities

EFIS Reports



Monitoring Utility Activities

◆ Open Task Report – (Handout)

- Snapshot view of all current open informal complaints pending resolution
- Can be sorted by tracking number, consumer specialist name handling the complaint, utility company name, and date received.

Monitoring Utility Activities

◆ Constituent Report– (Handout)

Shows a summary of activity by:

- Contact Type (Complaint, Inquiry, Public Comment, etc.)
- Utility Type (Electric, Gas, Water, etc.)
- Number of educational contacts
- Savings by date period

Monitoring Utility Activities

◆ Outage/Incident– (Handout)

Allows outages or incidents to be tracked for up to a five year period by:

- Outage Tracking Number
- Outage Date
- Utility Company
- Location

Monitoring Utility Activities

- ◆ Company Specific Report
- ◆ Complaint Issue Report
- ◆ Resolution Report



Handout - EFIS Screens

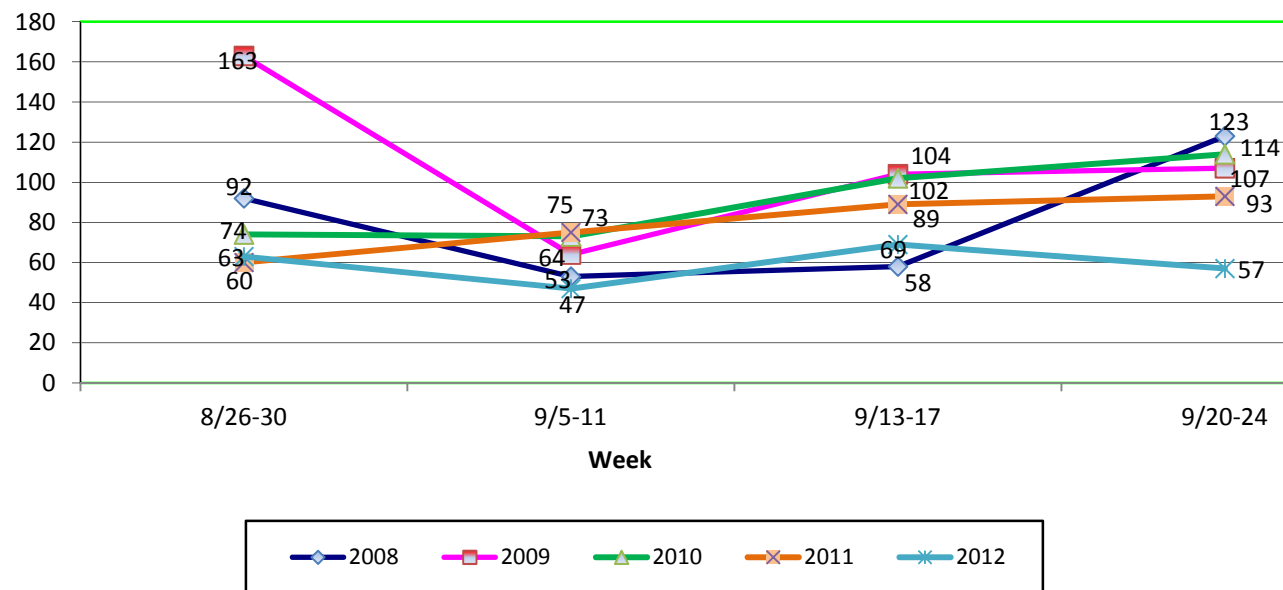
Each of these reports can be generated from the same screen by selecting the criteria required.



Monitoring Utility Activities

Weekly Statistical Report

MPSC Weekly Comparison of Complaints Rec'd 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012



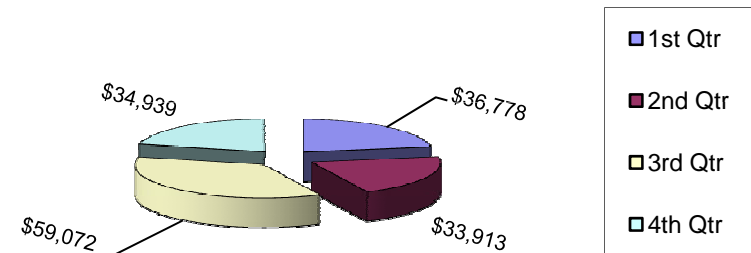
Monitoring Utility Activities

Consumer Savings Report

Specialists report Consumer Savings based on:

- Errors in utility bill calculation found to be in the consumer's favor;
- When utility lowers the amount previously specified for service; and/or
- When utility refunds or credits are issued to the customer account due to account adjustments.

Consumer Savings for FY2012
Total = \$164,702



Complaint Handling Competencies

Receive, investigate and respond to consumer inquiries and informal complaints to ensure compliance with Missouri statutes, Commission rules and utility company tariffs. This involves:

- Enforcing compliance with Chapter 13 - Service & Billing Practices for Residential Customers of Electric, Gas and Water Utilities.
- Enforcing Consumer's Bill of Rights (as identified by each company).
- Enforcing compliance with Commission approved utility tariffs for residential and small commercial customers of Electric, gas, water and sewer.

Complaint Handling Competencies (cont.)

- Assisting in the Development of Proposed Rules and Regulations.
- Educating Consumers.
- Documenting all Facts on any Complaint Dispute or Inquiry.
- Acting as the liaison between Consumer and Utility.
- Providing Professional Analysis (i.e. reviewing facts, bill calculations, verifying application of rules and regulations).
- Mediating a Fair and Reasonable Resolution for both Consumer and Utility.

Any Questions ?

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