

# *Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel*

## *Ohio's Residential Utility Consumer Advocate*



Office of the  
Ohio Consumers' Counsel  
*Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate*

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# Overview

- The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC)
- Governing Board
- Budget
- Departments within the Agency
- About Ohio's Residential Utility Consumers



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# ***OCC: Residential Utility Consumer Advocate***

- Advocate for residential consumers served by investor-owned utilities:
  - Electric
  - Natural gas
  - Telephone
  - Water
  
- Created in 1976



**Bruce Weston**  
*Consumers' Counsel*



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# ***Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel***

## **Mission**

The OCC advocates for Ohio's residential utility consumers through representation and education in a variety of forums.

## **Vision**

Informed consumers able to choose among a variety of affordable, quality utility services with options to control and customize their utility usage.



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# *Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel*

## Forums for OCC's Consumer Advocacy:

- Regulatory
  - State Utility Regulator
  - Federal Utility Regulators
- Judicial
  - Supreme Court of Ohio
- Executive & Legislative
  - Administration and Ohio General Assembly



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# *Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel*

## **Core Values:**

- Respect
- Justice
- Communications
- Excellence
- Integrity



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# ***OCC Budget***

- Not funded through tax money
- Funded through an assessment on utilities and other regulated entities in Ohio
- Entities pay a portion of OCC's budget based on the amount of intrastate gross revenues
- Current budget of \$5.6 million



# *OCC Budget (continued)*

- OCC assessed about 800 entities in Ohio
- Customers may pay less than 2.5 cents for every \$100 paid in utility bills to support OCC.
- OCC's advocacy results in benefits that exceed the cost of the agency's budget.





# *OCC Governing Board*

- Appointed by the Ohio Attorney General
- Confirmed by the Ohio Senate
- 3 representatives from family farmers
- 3 representatives from organized labor
- 3 representatives from residential consumers



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# ***OCC Governing Board (continued)***

- Members serve three-year terms
- Bi-partisan – no more than five members from same political party
- Conducts regular public meetings



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# *OCC Internal Departments*

- Analytical
- Legal
- Operations
- Public Affairs



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# *OCC Analytical Department*

- Conducts accounting, economic, engineering, financial analysis of utility filings
- Prepares and presents expert testimony
- Provides technical expertise for input into legal and policy advocacy



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# *OCC Legal Department*

- OCC is the legal representative of Ohio's residential utility consumers
- Performs discovery, depositions, attends hearings, prepares and presents expert witnesses, cross-examines experts, files briefs and pleadings



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# *OCC Operations Department*

- Administrative
- Fiscal
- Human resources
- Information technology management
- Purchasing



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# ***OCC Public Affairs Department***


- Communications
- Government affairs
- Outreach and education
- Publications and website



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# OCC Public Affairs Department

- Educational Materials
  - Newsletters
  - Fact sheets & brochures
- Speakers Bureau
- Website



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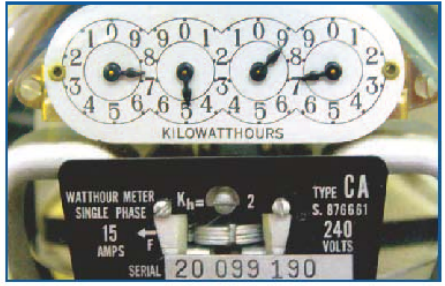
**CONSUMERS'  
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www.pickocc.org

## COMPARING YOUR ELECTRIC CHOICES



The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) provides general information about competitive retail supplier offers for residential customers of Ohio's regulated electric utility companies.

Customers should have their latest monthly bill available to find their price to compare when deciding if they can save money on their electric bill by purchasing electricity from a competitive supplier. The price to compare is the amount a competitive supplier would have to beat in order for a customer to save on their electric bill. This includes the cost of electric generation, transmission and some miscellaneous charges.

The price to compare does not include distribution costs, which customers continue to pay to their utility company even if they choose a competitive supplier. *Customers should remember that the price to compare varies from utility to utility and month to month based on the amount of electricity used. Review previous bills to determine what the average price-to-compare may be*

*and if there are savings by switching to a competitive supplier for the term of the contract being considered.*

**The OCC can help**

When considering an electric choice provider, customers should carefully weigh all of their options, including staying with their regulated utility company. Customers also can visit the OCC's website, [www.pickocc.org](http://www.pickocc.org), to obtain a copy of its *Electric Choice 101* and *Consumer protections in electric choice* fact sheets for more information about electric choice.

**What do these offers mean?**

**Fixed Rate:** This is a fixed price per kilowatt-hour of electricity that will not change for the length of the agreement. Typically, agreement periods range anywhere from six months to three years.

**Variable Rate:** This type of agreement offers a price per kilowatt-hour of electricity that can change over a period of time, based on various conditions. Customers considering entering into a variable rate

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### [Bruce J. Weston](#) [Consumers' Counsel](#)

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts. The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues.

### [General OCC Information](#)

[OCC Governing Board information](#)  
Meeting schedule and minutes are available.

### [Legislative Services](#)

["Making a Difference for Ohio's Residential Utility Consumers"](#) Read our mission, vision, and core values.

[Contact OCC](#): Call the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel toll-free: 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622).

### [Career Opportunities](#)

### [Requests for Proposal](#)

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## Top News

- ▶ [Consumers' Corner Newsletter - Sept / Oct 2012](#)
- ▶ [Krebs elected Chairman of the OCC's Governing Board](#)
- ▶ [OCC joins effort to educate consumers during National Lifeline Awareness Week](#)
- ▶ [PUCO modifies AEP rate proposal; OCC concerned about customer impact](#)
- ▶ [Consumers' Corner Newsletter - July / August 2012](#)
- ▶ [Consumer groups express disappointment at PUCO's approval of FirstEnergy's electric security plan](#)
- ▶ [PUCO sets AEP's capacity charges that consumers may pay](#)
- ▶ [Resources and information available to Ohioans experiencing power outages](#)
- ▶ [Correction - Bill impact of FirstEnergy rate proposal is unknown](#)
- ▶ [Rates to increase for Ohio American Water customers](#)

Would you like to receive our **press releases** and **Consumers' Corner** newsletter via e-mail?

### Electric Choice Information



### Gas Choice Information



**Consumers' Corner**  
**NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP**

Stay informed about utility issues that will affect you.

# ***About Ohio's residential utility consumers***

## **4.5 million Ohio households served by investor-owned utility companies**

- Approximately 22% heat with electric
- Approximately 66% heat with natural gas
- Approximately 12% heat with propane or heating oil and use electric as secondary heating source



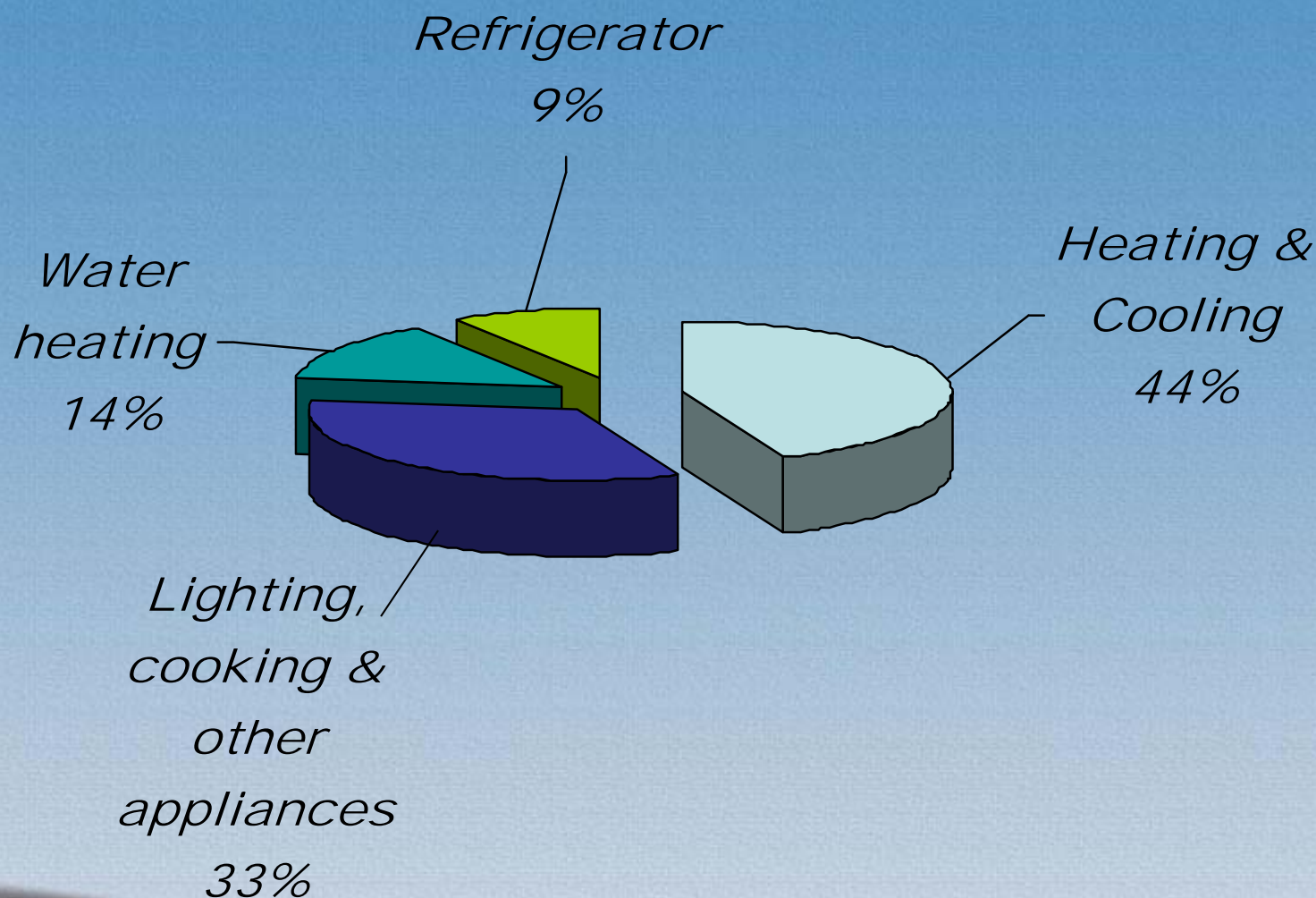


# *Ohio's residential utility consumers* *(continued)*

- Approximately 96% of households subscribe to telephone service (wired, wireless, VOIP)
- Approximately 4% of homes use water supplied from investor-owned water systems



# *How We Use Energy at Home*



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# *Thank you*

# *Questions?*

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