



Office of Communications

Tom Charles
Manager of Communications





Who We Are

- Tom Charles,
Manager of Communications
- thcharles@state.pa.us
- 10-member Communications staff
 - 9 in Harrisburg, 1 in Philadelphia
 - Media Relations
 - Public Outreach
 - Employee Communications
- Since August 2001



Public Perception of the PUC



- Focus Groups revealed the PUC's image as a consumer-information agency is low. PUC not linked to consumers.
- Focus Groups said PUC "holds hearings" and is "place to complain"



Building the Office of Communications

- One of the Biggest
- The Best



Building the Office of Communications, cont.

- Improvements since 2001
 - Graphics
 - Publications
 - Campaigns
 - Web Site
 - Video Camera
 - Interview Backdrop
 - Mission Statement
 - PUC Logo



Mission Statement and Logo



Mission Statement - The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ensures safe, reliable and reasonably priced electric, natural gas, water, telephone and transportation service for Pennsylvania consumers, by regulating public utilities and by serving as responsible stewards of competition.



3 Major Responsibilities



- Media Relations
- Public Outreach
- Employee Communications



Media Relations



- Press Releases
- Media Interviews



Media Relations, cont.



- Press Conferences
- Editorial Boards
- Briefings
- Speeches/Talking Points
- Clips



Media Relations, cont.



- Defense and Offense
- One Voice?
- Balance
- “Seat at the Table”



Media Relations, cont.



Defense



Media Relations, cont.



Defense, cont.

- Responsiveness



Media Relations, cont.



Offense



Media Relations, cont.



Five Voices
~~One Voice~~



Media Relations, cont.



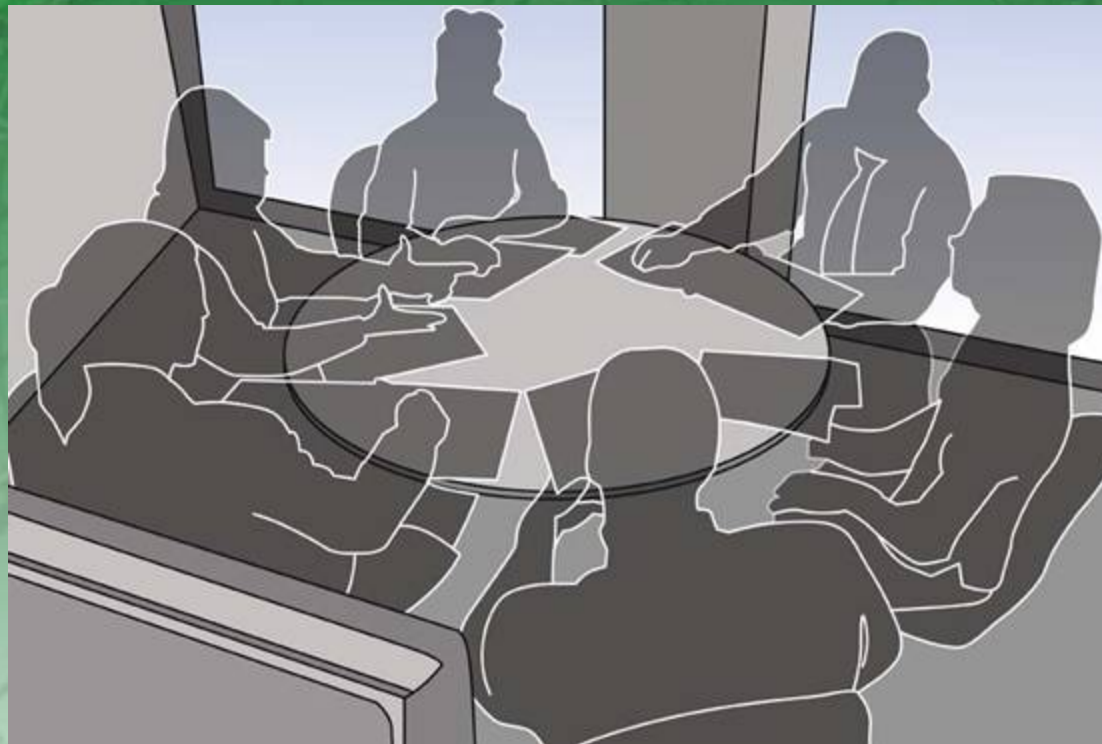
Balance



Media Relations, cont.



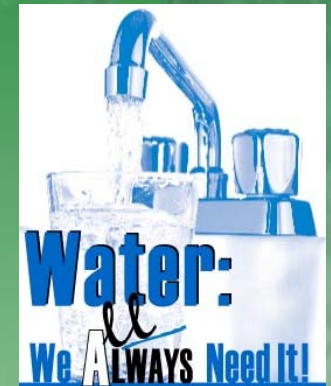
“Seat at the Table”



Public Outreach



- Educational Material
- Workshops, Roundtables
- Help Read Utility Bills
- Low Income
- All Communities
- Fact Sheets
- Award-Winning Special Campaigns



Public Outreach, cont.



Responsible Utility Customer Protection Act

The General Assembly passed and the Governor signed Senate Bill 477, which became Act 207 of 2006, known as the "Responsible Utility Customer Protection Act." New Chapter 14 of the Public Utility Code. The new law changed rules that apply to cash deposits, resumption of service, termination of service, payment arrangements, and the filing of termination complaints by customers for electric, gas and water. Under the new law, a customer can only establish payment arrangements with either the utility company or the PUC. The utility company has the discretion to offer more than one payment arrangement to the customer. The Public Utility Commission is actively working with all parties to implement this new law, as well as to protect the health and safety of all customers.

The Act is intended to protect responsible bill-paying customers from new business unworkable as the unpredictable actions of customers that can afford to pay their bills, but choose not to pay.

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with very important information regarding how the new Act affects you and your utility service.

Your utility company can **SHUT OFF** your service if you **DO** the following:

- REFUSE BILL
- FAIL TO PAY (OR MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAYMENT, IF REQUIRED)
- ALLOW THE COMPANY ACCESS TO ITS EQUIPMENT

Before your service is shut off, your utility company will take the following steps:

- Send you a 10-Day Notice. Once you get the notice, the utility company has up to 10 days to shut off your service.
- Attempt to contact you three days prior to your shut-off date.
- During winter months (December 1 through March 31), if the utility company cannot reach you at the time of termination, they will leave a 48-hour notice at your residence.

Student Certification
Your utility service will not be shut off if you or someone living in your home is certified as seriously ill by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner. The utility company will require you to provide a letter from a licensed physician, stating that shutting off your utility service will harm the ill person in the home. The initial medical certification can be up to 30 days, with renewals possible for up to a total of 90 days.

You are still responsible to pay your bill even if there is a medical certification for someone in your home.

The utility company can **SHUT OFF** your service for the following reasons:

- FINAL BILL UTILITY SERVICE
- SHUTTING SERVICE THROUGH POWER TAPPING WITH YOUR METER
- SHUTTING SERVICE THROUGH POWER TAPPING AND OBJECTS STOP TAPPING

Your utility service can be shut off any weekend, including Friday, as long as the utility company accepts payment on Saturday.

If your service is shut off, the utility company will leave a notice telling you what you need to do to get your service restored.

Water Termination
Your utility service can be shut off during the winter months (December 1 through March 31) **without the PUC's approval**. If you fail to pay a reasonable utility company, and provided that your household's income was not 250 percent of the federal poverty level, the **commissioner of the Philadelphia, Pa. water, the water company can shut off the water service**. The utility company will give you notice first and allow you the opportunity to contact them to make arrangements to avoid termination.



InfoMAP – Frequently Asked Questions

Overview

The following questions were submitted by Public Utility Commission employees and external stakeholders during information sessions. This document and the answers to these questions are submitted in response to and to further the ongoing education of all parties about the Information Management and Access Project. To learn more, see <http://www.puc.state.pa.us/general/infomap.aspx>.

Timing

Q. What is timetable for this project? When will we transition from DOCS to a new software? When will Bridge be replaced? When will electronic filings be possible? When will the project be completed? Will some aspects of InfoMAP, such as e-payments, be implemented after the "go-live" date?

A. The project is designed to be implemented in three phases over two years. It is anticipated that the project will begin by January 1, 2006, with a completion date of December 31, 2007. The first stage will involve the development of a new database and the transfer of the data in the current case management system to the new database. Additionally, the existing DOCS information will be converted to the new application. Finally, workflows will be automated under Phase I. In Phase II, imaging capability will be developed as well as e-filing. Phase III will implement e-commerce functionality. It is anticipated that these systems will come online as they are completed and tested.

Will it be available

BE PREPARED FOR SUMMER HEAT WAVES

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has launched its Summer Heat Wave Awareness Campaign to inform Pennsylvanians about what they can do to reduce their energy consumption while staying cool and healthy. It's a matter of energy conservation, but more importantly, it's a matter of health and safety.

10 EASY WAYS TO STAY COOL AND CONSERVE ENERGY

- In hot, humid summer months set your thermostat at 78 degrees when you are home and 85 degrees or off when you are gone.
- Feed clothes dried and shades down. The amount of energy required to cool your home will be considerably less.
- Elective fans monthly for maximum benefit and check air and return vents on a regular basis to keep circulation air paths clear.
- Sealed or "home energy audit" from your local utility to identify any areas where energy is being lost and to find out what to do on your heating and cooling bills.
- Clothes dryers and dishwashers produce a lot of heat. Use them in the early morning or late evening, not in the heat of the day.
- Use only lights and appliances you really need. Even a loose light bulb can add heat to a room.
- Use a microwave oven instead of a conventional range or oven.
- Wash full loads of clothes in cold water whenever possible and avoid overdrying.
- Raise in rooms that do not receive direct sunlight or stay on the lowest floor of your home.
- Air leaks waste energy all year-round. Cooling and weather stripping will help lower cool air in.



Water: We ALWAYS Need It!

- Ensuring safe, reliable water at reasonable rates
- Enforcing compliance with state and federal laws and regulations
- Encouraging regionalization to enhance viability for small water systems
- Educating water customers and promoting wise water usage

PREPARE NOW for higher gas prices

BEAT THE HEAT NOW

www.utilitychoice.org
1-888-PUC-FACT

The Facts About Choosing a Natural Gas Supplier

Pennsylvania Utility Choice 911

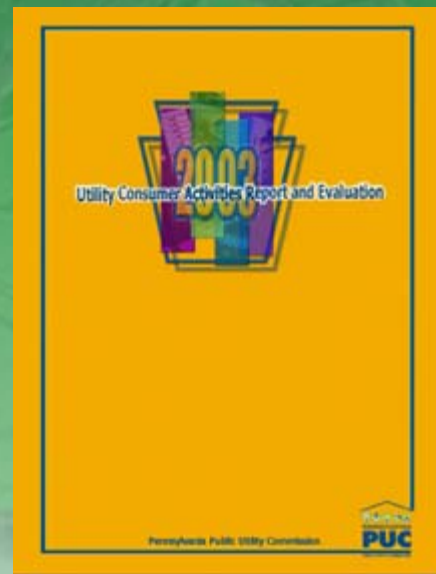
Brought to you by the Council for Utility Choice and the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

The Council for Utility Choice is a not-for-profit organization created by the PUC to oversee the Utility Choice Program.



Public Outreach, cont.

Special Reports and Publications



Employee Communications



- Monthly Employee Newsletter
- PUC Annual, Quarterly Reports
- New Web Site
- Messages from the Chairman
- Video Camera
- Overview Training
- Bulletin Boards



New Web site – www.puc.state.pa.us



New Web site – Search



Search - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by PA Public Utility Commission

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Media

Address <http://www.puc.state.pa.us/general/search.aspx> Go Links

Google Search Web 11248 blocked PUC Options

PUC Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Electricity Natural Gas Telecommunications Water Transportation/Safety

Home Site Map Contact Us Search

General Navigation Search the PUC Website

Home Search

Search For Public Documents

The Public Documents Search contains public meeting orders, motions and statements, administrative law judge decisions, secretarial letters, etc. Documents from mid-2000 are available. Other filed documents, such as testimony, formal complaints and petitions for reconsideration, are not available electronically at this time. Please contact the Secretary's Bureau at (717) 787-1013 to obtain these documents.

If you are not sure of the exact name of the document you are looking for, try using % before and after your search words.
Example: %search words%


Feel free to [email](#) us your comments, compliments or suggestions for this page.

Company Name:

Docket Number:

Document Type:

Utility Type:

Public Meeting Date: (MM/DD/YYYY)  c-click to view calendar

General PUC Website Search



New Web site – Press Releases



Press Releases - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by PA Public Utility Commission

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address http://www.puc.state.pa.us/general/press_releases/press_releases.aspx?ShowUtil=EL

Google Search Web 11248 blocked AutoFill Options

PUC Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

Electricity Natural Gas Telecommunications Water Transportation/Safety

Home Site Map Contact Us Search

General Navigation

- Search for Documents
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- Meet Commissioners
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- Press Releases
- File Complaints
- Obtain File Information
- Public Meeting Calendar
- Daily Actions & Hearings
- Online Forms
- Publications & Reports
- Consumer Education
- Regulatory Information
- Career Opportunities
- Utility Choice
- InfoMAP

Press Releases

Home \ Press Releases

Press Releases

- Electric
- Gas
- Telecommunications
- Transportation and Safety
- Water and Wastewater

Electric Press Releases:

2005	Jan	Feb	Apr	May	Jun	Jul								
2004	Jan	Feb	Mar	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec			
2003	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
2002	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
2001	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		

Jul 2005

PUC Encourages Utilities to Continue to Protect Consumers from Identity Theft (7/14/2005)

PA PUC Public Meeting Agenda for July 14, 2005 (7/13/2005)

Jun 2005

PUC Offers Summer Heat Wave Tips to Help Consumers (6/29/2005)

PUC Announces Appointments to Consumer Advisory Council (6/23/2005)

PUC Elects Commissioner James H. Cawley as Vice Chairman (6/23/2005)

InfoMAP



InfoMAP - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by PA Public Utility Commission

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Address <http://www.puc.state.pa.us/general/infomap.aspx>

Google Search Web

1248 blocked

Options

Information Management & Access Project (InfoMAP)

Home > InfoMAP

Overview

The Information Management & Access Project, known as InfoMAP, will overhaul the PUC's existing case management system to improve electronic workflow capability. It will also provide for more efficient access by consumers, utilities and practitioners through the implementation of electronic filing and e-commerce initiatives.

To ensure that stakeholders have had ample opportunity to provide input into the process, the Commission held sessions in May 2005 to gather feedback as to their expectations for improved electronic access to documents filed with and produced by the PUC. Generally, the stakeholders identified a desire to make electronic filings, electronically access documents filed with the Commission, and have the ability to track the status of pending filings. The particular requirements associated with electronic filing, proprietary documents, search capabilities and

In terms of electronic access by users of the system, the PUC should be on par with other agencies and utility regulatory agencies in other states.

Information

- Fact Sheet - A fact sheet on InfoMAP, the PUC's case-management system to provide 21st century services and electronic filing. Dated April 2005.
- Presentation - A presentation given to stakeholders to explain InfoMAP.
- Stakeholders Letter - A letter announcing two input sessions that will provide the opportunity for parties to offer their suggestions for InfoMAP. Dated April 27, 2005.

General Navigation

- Search for Documents
- Announcements
- Meet Commissioners
- Staff Directory
- Press Releases
- File Complaints
- Obtain/File Information
- Public Meeting Calendar
- Daily Actions & Hearings
- Online Forms
- Publications & Reports
- Consumer Education
- Regulatory Information
- Career Opportunities
- Utility Choice
- InfoMAP

April 2005

Information Management and Access Project (InfoMAP)
"Providing Consumers and Utilities with 21st Century Services and Electronic Filing"

Introduction

- The Pennsylvania PUC is dealing with complex 21st century utility issues and markets, but our case-management technology remains in the 20th century while other agencies continue to advance. We need the General Assembly's approval of funding for upgrading systems to continue to serve the public interest efficiently and effectively.
- The PUC's case-management system includes mainframe-based COBOL applications developed internally in 1978 and is very difficult to support due to the declining number of technicians for such applications.

The Proposal

- The Pennsylvania PUC's 2005-06 budget request includes \$3.65 million for a \$5.6 million two-year Information Management and Access Project (InfoMAP), which was originally proposed last year. With the current level of funding approved under the 2004-05 budget (\$500,000), InfoMAP would be funded over 10 years. In order to move forward as planned, the PUC needs funding over a two-year period.

InfoMAP would provide a single point of entry, through **Internet utility service**, for utilities, the end consumers to submit and access information, initiate transactions, and conduct business. It would provide electronic filing of documents and provide electronic access to filings.

InfoMAP would bring savings in time and money; greater efficiency; easier access to the Commission by attorneys and utilities; and a greater return on state investment.

InfoMAP is focused on rates, reliability and choice to protect the public interest, promote economic growth and preserve the environment. InfoMAP would help us to do this by enhancing our efficiency and saving us the ability to receive and share documents electronically.

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Training

Q. Will training be offered? Also, what type of training is being considered? Will it be available to both internal and external users?

A. Training by the vendor on the use of all features available as a result of InfoMAP is part of the RFP to be issued for this project. It is yet to be determined whether training will be classroom based or online, how long the session will be, or where and when the training will be offered. These types of questions will be answered based on the vendor's recommendations and will be communicated in a timely manner.



Other Unique Responsibilities



- Council for Utility Choice
- Consumer Advisory Council
- International Delegations
- PA Relay Service Advisory Board
- Commissioner Briefing Book



Future Goals



- Sound Quality in Hearing Rooms
- Identity Theft
- New Campaigns?
 - Demand Side Response
 - PA One Call
 - Chapter 14

