

## Company-Reported Performance on Telephone Access

In accordance with *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* (quality of service reporting requirements), the Electric Distribution Companies (EDCs) and the Natural Gas Distribution Companies (NGDCs) reported statistics for 2006 regarding telephone access. The companies reported data by month and included a 12-month average for each of the required measures.

The quality of service reporting requirements for both the EDCs and the NGDCs include telephone access to a company because customers must be able to readily contact their EDC or NGDC to ask questions, lodge complaints, request service, and report service outages or other problems.

In order to produce an accurate picture, the companies must report three separate measures of telephone access: 1) percent of calls answered within 30 seconds, 2) average busy-out rate; and 3) call abandonment rate. Requiring three separate measures averts the possibility of masking problems with telephone access by presenting only one or two parts of the total access picture. For example, a company may report that it answers every call in 30 seconds or less. If only this statistic is available, one might conclude that telephone access to the company is very good. However, if this company has only a few trunk lines into the company's call distribution system, once these trunks are at capacity, other callers receive a busy signal when they attempt to contact the company. Thus, a large percentage of customers cannot get through to the company and telephone access is actually not very good. Therefore, it is important to look at both percent of calls answered within 30 seconds and busy-out rates, to get a clear picture of the telephone access to the EDC or NGDC.

Further, the call abandonment rate indicates how many customers drop out of the queue of customers waiting to talk to a company representative. A high call abandonment rate is most likely an indication that the wait to speak to a company representative is too long. Statistics on call abandonment are often inversely related to statistics measuring calls answered within 30 seconds.

Attempted contacts to a call center initially have one of two results: they are either "received" by the company or they receive a busy signal

and thus are not "received" by the company. Calls used to determine the "busy-out rate" represent those attempted calls that received a busy signal or a message; they were not "received" by the company because the company lines or trunks were at capacity.

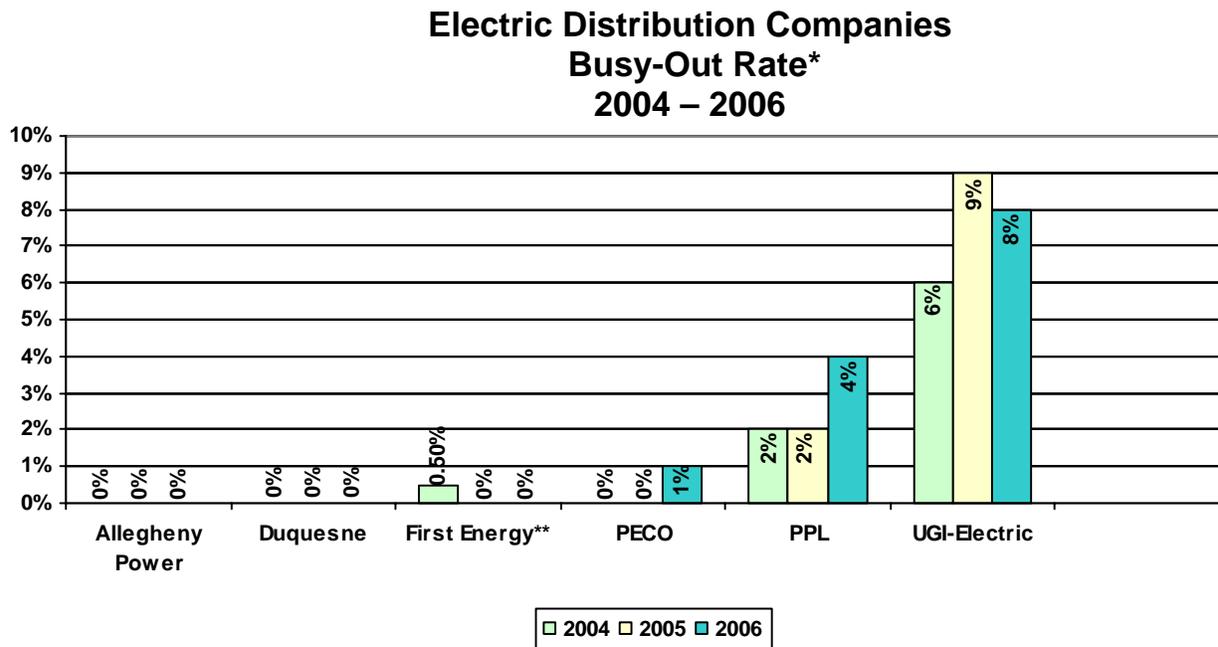
For the calls that are "received" by the company, the caller has several options. One option is to choose to speak to a company representative. When a caller chooses this option, the caller enters a queue to begin a waiting period until a company representative is available to take the call. Once a call enters the queue, it can take one of three routes: it will either be abandoned (the caller chooses not to wait and disconnects the call); it will be answered within 30 seconds; or it will be answered in a time period that is greater than 30 seconds. The companies report to the Commission the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds. The percent that were answered in more than 30 seconds is the inverse of this percent. Thus, if 80 percent were answered within 30 seconds, it took longer than 30 seconds to answer 20 percent of the calls.

The following charts present the EDC and NGDC statistics on telephone access as reported in these three categories:

- Busy-out rate
- Call abandonment rate
- Percent of calls answered within 30 seconds

## 1. Busy-Out Rate

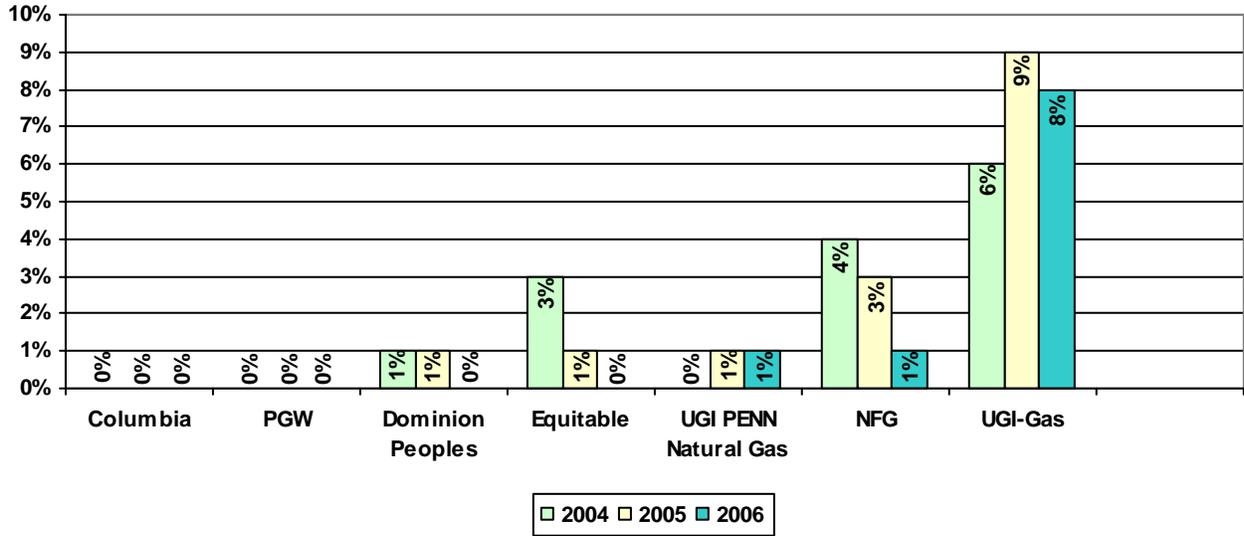
The Commission's Regulations at § 54.153(b)(1)(ii) require that the EDCs report to the Commission the average busy-out rate for each call center or business office, as well as a 12-month cumulative average for the company. Similarly, § 62.33(b)(ii) requires the NGDCs to report the average busy-out rate. Each regulation defines busy-out rate as the number of calls to a call center that receive a busy signal divided by the total number of calls received at a call center. For example, a company with a 10 percent average busy-out rate means that 10 percent of the customers who attempted to call the company received a busy signal (and thus did not gain access) while 90 percent of the customer calls were received by the company. If the company has more than one call center, it is required to supply the busy-out rates for each center as well as a combined statistic for the company as a whole. The chart below presents the combined busy-out rate for each major EDC during 2004, 2005 and 2006. The second chart presents the combined busy-out rate for each major NGDC during 2004, 2005 and 2006.



\* 12-month average

\*\* Met-Ed, Pennelco and Penn Power use the same call center so they appear as one under FirstEnergy

## Natural Gas Distribution Companies Busy-Out Rate\* 2004 - 2006

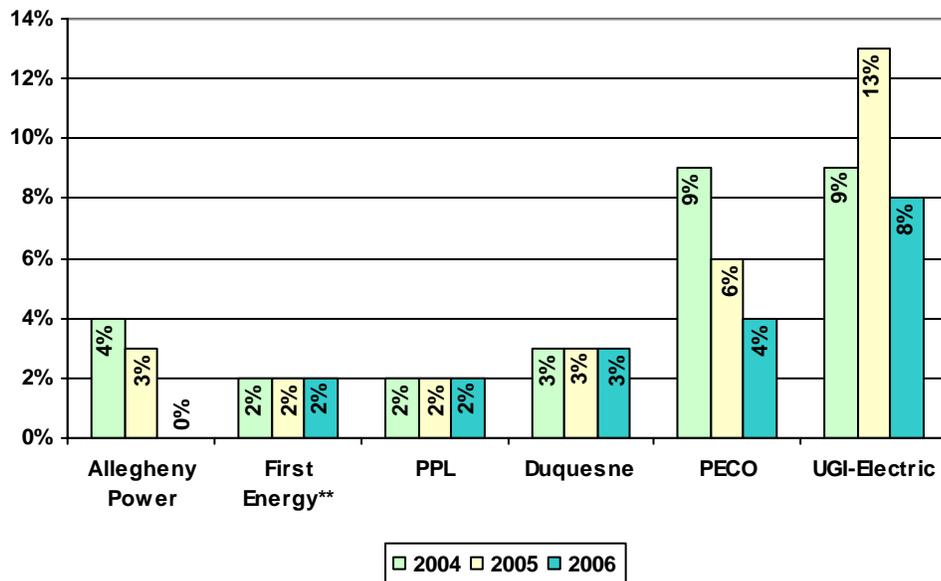


\* 12-month average

## 2. Call Abandonment Rate

Consistent with the regulations, the EDCs and NGDCs are to report to the Commission the average call abandonment rate for each call center, business office, or both. The call abandonment rate is the number of calls to a company's call center that were abandoned, divided by the total number of calls that the company received at its call center or business office (§ 54.152 and § 67.32). For example, an EDC with a 10 percent call abandonment rate means that 10 percent of the calls received were terminated by the customer prior to speaking to an EDC representative. As the time spent "on hold" increases, customers have a greater tendency to hang up, raising the call abandonment rates. If the EDC or NGDC has more than one call center, it is to supply the call abandonment rates for each center as well as a combined statistic for the company as a whole. The next chart presents the combined call abandonment rate for each major EDC during 2004, 2005 and 2006. The chart after that presents the combined call abandonment rate for each major NGDC during 2004, 2005 and 2006.

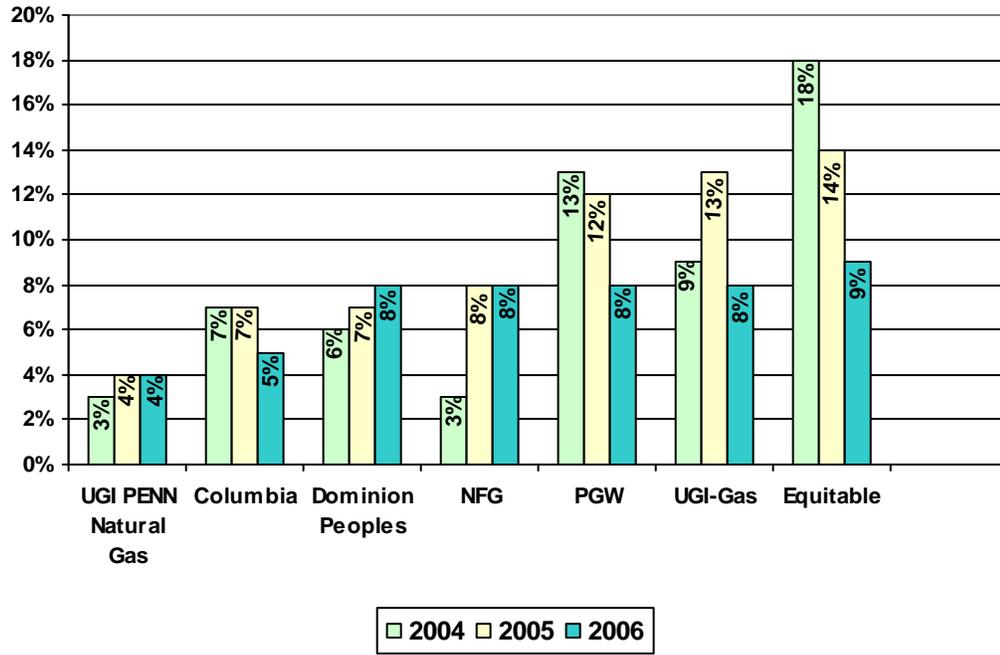
**Electric Distribution Companies  
Call Abandonment Rate\*  
2004-2006**



\* 12-month average

\*\* Met-Ed, Penelec and Penn Power use the same call center so they appear as one under FirstEnergy.

## Natural Gas Distribution Companies Call Abandonment Rate\* 2004 – 2006

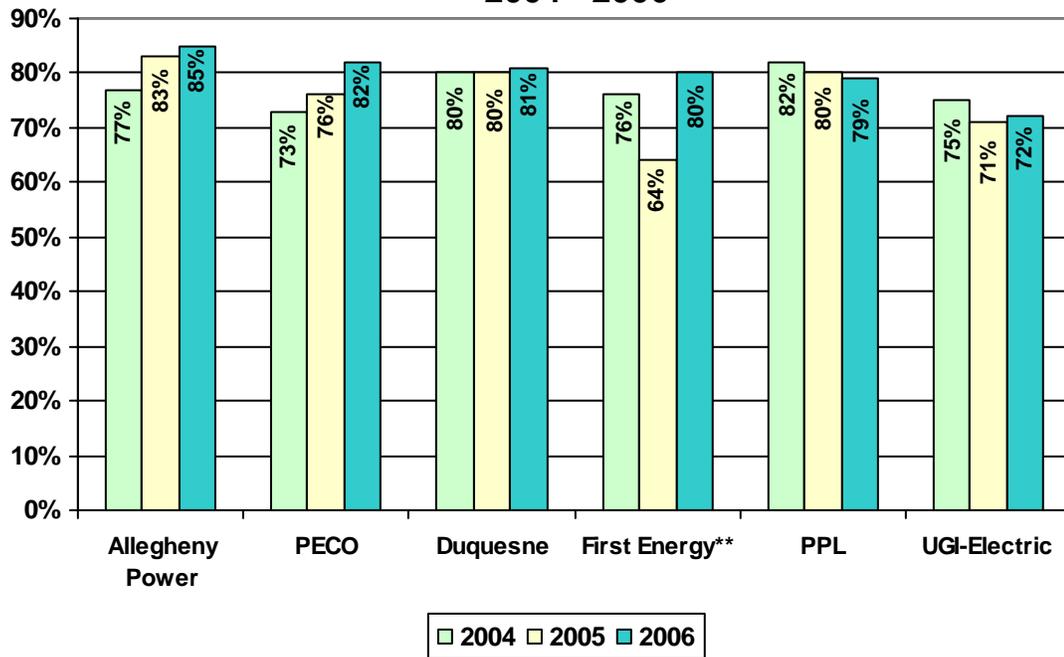


\* 12-month average

### 3. Percent of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds

Pursuant to the quality of service reporting requirements at § 54.153(b) and § 62.33(b), each EDC and major NGDC is to “take measures necessary and keep sufficient records” to report the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds or less at the company’s call center. The section specifies that “answered” means a company representative is ready to render assistance to the caller. An acknowledgement that the consumer is on the line does not constitute an answer. If a company operates more than one call center (a center for handling billing disputes and a separate one for making payment arrangements, for example), the company is to provide separate statistics for each call center and a statistic that combines performance for all the call centers. The next chart presents the combined percent of calls answered within 30 seconds for each of the major EDCs in Pennsylvania during 2004, 2005 and 2006. The chart after that presents the combined percent of calls answered within 30 seconds for each of the major NGDCs in Pennsylvania during 2004, 2005 and 2006.

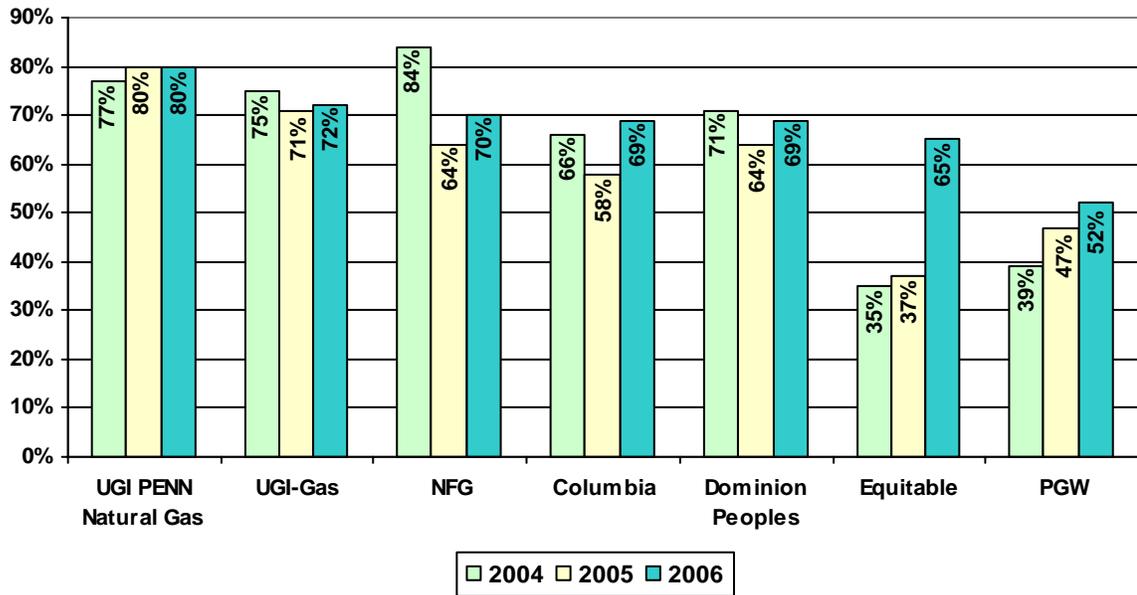
**Electric Distribution Companies  
% of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds\*  
2004 - 2006**



\* 12-month average

\*\* Met-Ed, Penelec and Penn Power use the same call center so they appear as one under FirstEnergy.

### Natural Gas Distribution Companies % of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds\* 2004 - 2006



\* 12-month average

The six previous charts will be included with additional narrative in the 2006 Customer Service Performance Report that will be released later this year.