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Utility Consumer Activities Report and Evaluation

**Electric, Gas, Water
and Telephone Utilities**



Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission



(Left to right) Commissioner Terrance J. Fitzpatrick, Vice Chairman Robert K. Bloom, Chairman Glen R. Thomas and Commissioner Aaron Wilson, Jr.

Table of Contents

Letter of Introduction

1. Consumer Contacts to the BCS	1
<i>Charts and Tables</i>	
Consumer Rating of the BCS' Service	3
Total Volume of Consumer Complaints and Payment Arrangement Requests to the BCS in 2000	4
Consumer Complaints By Industry 1999-2000.....	5
Payment Arrangement Requests By Industry 1999-2000	7
Categories of 2000 Inquiries	9
Calls to the PUC's Competition Hotline	10
Residential Consumer Complaints Not Included in Industry Chapters.....	11
Informal Compliance Process & Infractions	17
2. Performance Measures	19
Consumer Complaint Rate	19
Justified Consumer Complaint Rate	19
Response Time to Consumer Complaints.....	20
Payment Arrangement Request Rate	21
Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate.....	21
Response Time to Payment Arrangement Requests	22
Infraction Rate	23
Termination Rate	24
BCS Performance Measures & Industry Chapters.....	24
3. Electric Industry	25
Consumer Complaints.....	25
Payment Arrangement Requests	30
Termination of Service	33
Compliance ..	34
4. Gas Industry	36
Consumer Complaints.....	36
Payment Arrangement Requests	42
Termination of Service	45
Compliance ..	46

5. Water Industry ..	47
Consumer Complaints.....	48
Payment Arrangement Requests	52
Compliance ..	56
6. Telephone Industry	57
Consumer Complaints.....	57
Payment Arrangement Requests	63
Termination of Service	67
Compliance ..	68
7. Utility Universal Service and Energy Conservation Programs	70
Electric, Gas & Water Programs	
Customer Assistance Programs (CAPs)	72
A Helping Hand.....	74
Low-Income Rate	74
CARES Programs	75
Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP).....	75
Utility Hardship Fund Programs.....	77
Telephone Universal Service Programs	
Link-Up	80
Lifeline Service.....	81
Lifeline 150.....	81
Universal Telephone Assistance Program (UTAP)	82
8. Other Consumer Activities of the Commission.....	83
Office of Communications/Consumer Education	83
The PUC Consumer Advisory Council	90
Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board.....	93
Glossary of Terms .	98

Appendices

A.	2000 Residential Consumer Complaints	
	Non-Major Companies.....	102
B.	Classification of Complaints	
	1. Electric, Gas & Water	103
	2. Telephone.....	105
C.	Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000	
	Table 1 - Major Electric	107
	Table 2 - Major Gas	108
	Table 3 - Major Water.....	109
	Table 4 - Major Telephone	110
D.	1999-2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Statistics	
	Table 1 - Major Electric	111
	Table 2 - Major Gas	112
	Table 3 - Major Water.....	113
	Table 4 - Major Telephone	114
E.	1999-2000 Response Time: Consumer Complaints	115
F.	1999-2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Statistics	
	Table 1 - Major Electric	116
	Table 2 - Major Gas	117
	Table 3 - Major Water.....	118
	Table 4 - Major Telephone	119
G.	1999-2000 Response Time: BCS Payment Arrangement Requests	120
H.	1999-2000 Infraction Statistics	
	Table 1 - Major Electric	121
	Table 2 - Major Gas	122
	Table 3 - Major Water.....	123
	Table 4 - Chapter 64 - Major Telephone	124
	Table 5 - Chapter 63 - Major Telephone	125
I.	Universal Service Programs	
	Table 1 - 1999-2002 Universal Service Funding Levels	126
	Table 2 - 2001-2004 Estimated CAP Enrollment	127
	Table 3 – NGDC Universal Service Funding and Enrollment	128
J.	CARES Programs	129
K.	LIURP Spending	130
L.	LIURP Production Levels	131
M.	Utility Hardship Funds	132
N.	PUC Consumer Advisory Council Members.....	133
O.	Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board Members	134
	Consumer Access to the PUC.....	Inside Back Cover

To Our Readers:

The Commission is pleased to present the 2000 *Utility Consumer Activities Report and Evaluation: Electric, Gas, Water and Telephone Utilities* prepared by the Bureau of Consumer Services. As in past years, this comprehensive report presents data about the electric, gas and telephone industries. The report meets the goal of the Commission and BCS: to meet the statutory reporting requirement of 66 Pa. Code Section 308(d) and to communicate to the public and the utility industry how utilities under our jurisdiction performed in consumer activities in 2000.

In summary, the year 2000 proved another challenging year for the Commission as it continued with the restructuring of the electric and gas industries in Pennsylvania. As the Commission moves forward with the restructuring of local telephone service, we expect that lessons learned in electric and natural gas can be applied to the telecommunications industry. In 2001, the Commission will begin the process by establishing collaborative working groups to discuss and recommend strategies to make customer choice in telecommunications the success it has been in electric and natural gas supply.

A new section has been added to this report to include information concerning customers who sought Commission intervention in dealing with the Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW). PGW came under the Commission's jurisdiction on July 1, 2000. PGW data is presented with overall data in Chapter 1 and in the introduction to Chapter 4. Throughout the coming year, BCS and the Commission's staff will continue to closely monitor PGW's ongoing efforts to improve complaint handling and customer service.

Finally, please note that the Commission has continued its own efforts to improve our complaint handling services. We continue to contract for a call center to answer consumer calls to the Termination Hotline and to provide information about utility universal service programs. In addition, BCS has modified its procedures so as to direct all consumer complaints directly to investigators. These measures have dramatically improved our telephone access statistics and increased the level and quality of service the Commission provides to the public.

We trust that you will find this year's report informative and valuable.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glen Thomas".

Glen R. Thomas, Chairman
Mitch Miller, BCS Director
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

1. Consumer Contacts to the BCS

The Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) was mandated under Act 216 of 1976 to provide responsive, efficient and accountable management of consumer contacts. Its responsibilities were clarified under Act 114 of 1986 in regard to reporting and deciding customer complaints. In order to fulfill its mandates, the Bureau began investigating utility consumer complaints and writing decisions on service termination cases in April 1977. Since then the Bureau has investigated 737,181 cases (consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests) and has received an additional 549,715 opinions and requests for information (inquiries). The Bureau received 85,872 utility customer contacts that required investigation in 2000. It is important to note that 44% of these customer complaints had been appropriately handled by the subject utilities before the customers brought them to the Bureau. In these instances, the Commission has upheld the utility's actions.

The Staff of the Bureau of Consumer Services



Case Handling

The handling of utility complaint cases is the foundation for a number of Bureau programs. The case handling process provides an avenue through which consumers can gain redress for errors and responses to inquiries. However, customers are required by Commission regulations to attempt to resolve problems directly with their utilities prior to filing a complaint or requesting a payment arrangement with the Commission. Although exceptions are permitted under extenuating circumstances, the BCS generally handles those cases in which the utility and customer could not find a mutually satisfactory resolution to the problem.

Once a customer contacts the Bureau of Consumer Services with a complaint or payment arrangement request (PAR), the Bureau notifies the utility that a complaint or PAR has been filed. (The vast majority of consumers contact the BCS by telephone using the Bureau's toll free numbers. In 2000, more than 97% of informal complaints were filed by telephone.) The utility sends the BCS all records concerning the complaint including records of its contacts with the customer regarding the complaint. The BCS investigator reviews the records, renders a decision and closes the case. The BCS policy unit then examines the case and, among other things, classifies the complaint into one of seven major problem areas as well as one of nearly 200 specific problem categories. This case information is entered into the Consumer Services Information System database. The analysis from case information is used by the BCS to generate reports to the Commission, utilities, legislators and the public. The reports may present information regarding utility performance, industry trends, investigations, new policy issues and the impact of utility or Commission policy.

Consumer Feedback Survey

In order to monitor its own service to consumers, the Bureau of Consumer Services surveys those customers who have contacted the Bureau with a utility-related problem or payment arrangement request. The purpose of the survey is to collect information from the consumer's perspective about the quality of the Bureau's complaint handling service. The BCS mails a written survey form to a sample of consumers who have been served by the BCS field services staff.

The results of the survey for fiscal year 2000-2001 show that 85% of consumers reported that they would contact the PUC again if they were to have another problem with a utility that they could not settle by talking with the company. Over 79% rated the service they received from the PUC as "good" or "excellent".

Consumer Rating of the BCS' Service

How would you rate the service you received from the PUC (BCS)?	1999-00 Fiscal Year	2000-01 Fiscal Year
Excellent	61%	53%
Good	23%	26%
Fair	11%	13%
Poor	6%	8%

Overall, 76% of consumers felt the BCS handled their complaint either very quickly or fairly quickly. In addition, 88% of consumers said that the information that the PUC gave them about the outcome of the problem was either “very easy to understand” or “fairly easy to understand”. Further, 94% of consumers indicated that the BCS staff person who took their call was either “very” or “fairly polite” and 92% described the BCS contact person as “very” or “fairly interested” in helping with the problem.¹

The BCS management frequently reviews the findings of the consumer feedback survey and promptly investigates any negative trends to improve staff performance.

Data Bases

To manage and use its complaint data, the Bureau maintains a computer based Consumer Services Information System (CSIS) through a contract with the Pennsylvania State University. This system enables the Bureau to aggregate and analyze complaints from the thousands of complaints that are reported to the Commission each year. In this way the BCS can address generic as well as individual problems.

The bulk of the data presented in this report is from the Bureau's CSIS. In addition, this report includes statistics from the Bureau's Collections Reporting System (CRS), Local Exchange Carrier Reporting System (LECRS) and Compliance Tracking System (CTS). The CRS provides a valuable resource for measuring changes in company collection performance including the number of residential service terminations, while the CTS maintains data on the number and type of apparent infractions attributable to the major utilities.

¹ Consumer Feedback results as of April 2001.

Distinctions Between Cases

A number of cases were segregated from the analyses that appear later in this report because they did not fairly represent company behavior. One treatment of the data involved the removal of complaints about problems over which the Commission has no jurisdiction, information requests that did not require investigation and most cases where the customers indicated that they had not contacted the company prior to complaining to the Commission. Commercial customer contacts were also excluded from the database. Although the Bureau's regulatory authority is largely confined to residential accounts, the Bureau handled 2,981 cases from commercial customers in 2000. Of these cases, 614 were related to loss of utility service and 2,367 were consumer complaints. Due to its limited jurisdiction, the Bureau does not issue decisions regarding commercial disputes. Rather, the Bureau gives the customer information regarding the company's position or attempts to mediate a mutually acceptable agreement regarding the disputed matter. All 2000 cases that involved commercial accounts were deleted from the analyses in this report. The table below illustrates that the vast majority of cases handled by the BCS in 2000 involved residential utility service.

Total Volume of Consumer Complaints and Payment Arrangement Requests to the BCS in 2000

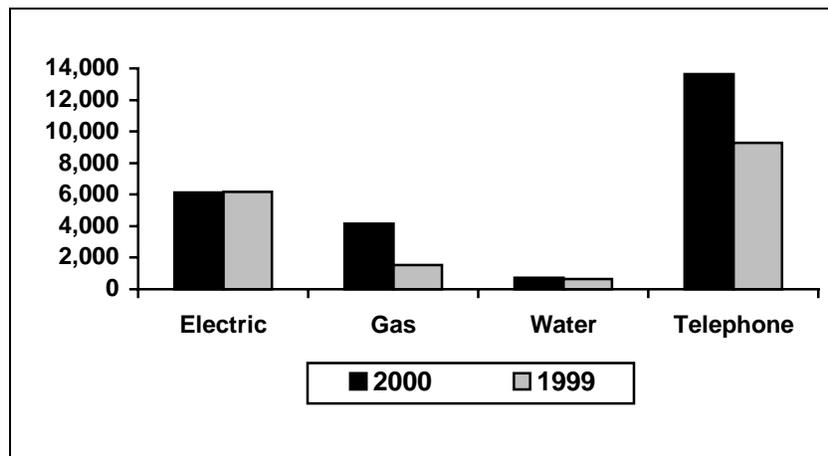
Industry	Consumer Complaints		Payment Arrangement Requests	
	Residential	Commercial	Residential	Commercial
Electric	5,406	741	31,810	401
Gas	3,859	286	20,062	138
Water	679	63	2,766	19
Telephone	12,363	1,273	5,927	56
Other	11	4	8	0
TOTAL	22,318	2,367	60,573	614

Generally, customer contacts to the Bureau fall into three basic categories: 1) consumer complaints; 2) requests for payment arrangements; and 3) inquiries. The Bureau classifies contacts regarding complaints about utilities' actions related to billing, service delivery, repairs, etc., as *consumer complaints* and contacts involving payment negotiations for unpaid utility service as *payment arrangement requests*. Consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests are often collectively referred to as informal complaints. *Inquiries* include information requests and opinions from consumers, most of which do not require investigation on the part of the Bureau.

Consumer Complaints

Most of the consumer complaints regarding the electric, gas, water, sewer and steam heat industries deal with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code, Chapter 56 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service*. For the telephone industry, most of the cases found in the consumer complaint category deal with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code, Chapter 64 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Telephone Service* and Chapter 63 *Quality of Service Standards for Telephone*. For the most part, consumer complaints represent customer appeals to the Commission resulting from the inability of the utility and the customer to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to a dispute.

Consumer Complaints By Industry 1999-2000



The Bureau investigated 24,685 consumer complaints in 2000. Overall, the volume of consumer complaints to the Bureau increased by 40% from 1999 to 2000. Consumer complaints about electric, gas, water, sewer and steam heat increased by 32% from 1999 to 2000. The gas increase was largely a result of the significant volume of complaints against Philadelphia Gas Works, which appear in this report for the first time. Meanwhile, consumer complaints about the telephone industry increased by 47% from 1999 to 2000. A portion of this increase continues to be due to the growth in competition among telecommunications providers. However, a significant portion of these consumer complaints can be attributed to more customers complaining about service problems and problems related to local service installations and repairs. During 2000, electric and gas utilities accounted for 25% and 17%, respectively, of all consumer complaints investigated by the Bureau. Water utilities accounted for 3% of consumer complaints and the telephone utilities were the subject of 55% of all consumer complaints.

Justified Consumer Complaints

Once a BCS investigator finishes the investigation of a consumer's complaint and makes a decision regarding the complaint, the BCS reviews the utility's records to determine if the utility took appropriate action when handling the customer's contact and uses these records to determine the outcome of the case. There are three possible case outcome classifications: justified, inconclusive and unjustified. This approach focuses strictly on the regulatory aspect of the complaint and evaluates utilities negatively only where, in the judgment of the BCS, appropriate complaint handling procedures were not followed or the regulations were violated. Specifically, a case is considered "justified" in the appeal to the BCS if it is found that, prior to the BCS intervention, the company did not comply with PUC orders, regulations, reports, Secretarial Letters, tariffs, etc. "Unjustified" complaints are those cases in which the company demonstrates that correct procedures were followed prior to the BCS intervention. "Inconclusive" complaints are those in which incomplete records, equivocal findings or uncertain regulatory interpretations make it difficult to determine whether or not the customer was justified in the appeal to the Commission.

Classification of Consumer Complaints

After a BCS investigator closes a case from a utility customer, the BCS policy unit reviews the information on the case and translates it into a format so that it can be added to the Bureau's information system (CSIS). One part of this process is that the research staff categorizes each complaint into a specific problem category and enters it into the computerized system. The BCS data system then aggregates the data from all complaints to produce meaningful reports for analysis by and for the Bureau, for the Commission or for the utilities.

The BCS has categorized the 2000 residential consumer complaints into 13 categories for each of the electric, gas, water and telephone utilities. Tables showing the percent of complaints in each category in 2000 appear in each industry chapter. The percentages shown in the tables are for all the cases that consumers filed with BCS, not just cases determined to be justified in coming to the Bureau. The Bureau analyzes the categories that generate complaints or problems for customers, even if the utility records indicate that the utility followed PUC procedures and guidelines in handling the complaint. The BCS often discusses its findings with individual utilities who can use the information to review their complaint-handling procedures in categories that seem to produce large numbers of consumer complaints to the Commission. The four tables in Appendix C show the actual number of cases that fell into each category in 2000.

Payment Arrangement Requests

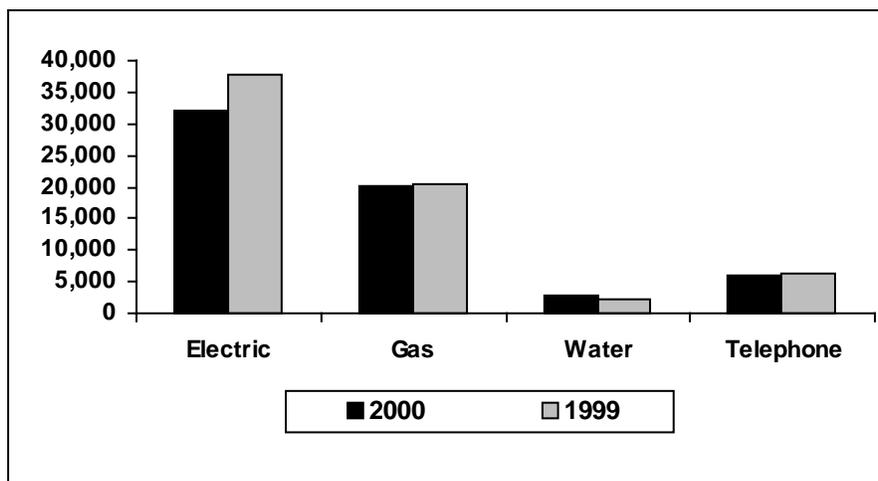
Payment arrangement requests (PARs) principally include contacts to the BCS or to utilities involving requests for payment terms in one of the following situations:

- ✓ suspension/termination of service is pending,
- ✓ service has been terminated and the customer needs payment terms to have service restored, or
- ✓ the customer wants to retire an arrearage.

All of the measures pertaining to PARs are based on assessments of contacts to the Bureau of Consumer Services by individual customers. As with consumer complaints, almost all customers had already contacted the utility prior to their contact to the BCS.

During 2000, the BCS handled 61,187 requests for payment arrangements from customers of the utilities under the Commission's jurisdiction. In approximately 22% of these cases, the customers had previously sought Commission help in establishing an arrangement to pay what they owe to the utility. Customers typically seek further assistance from the BCS if their incomes decrease or their financial circumstances change. These customers find that they are unable to maintain the payment terms that the BCS prescribed in response to their previous contact. The BCS reviews the customer's situation and may issue a new payment arrangement if it is warranted.

Payment Arrangement Requests By Industry 1999-2000



Payment arrangement requests for electric, gas, water, sewer and steam heat decreased 9%, from 60,417 in 1999 to 55,204 in 2000. For the telephone industry, the volume of payment arrangement requests decreased by 7%. There were 6,446 requests in 1999 compared to 5,983 in 2000. As in past years, the majority of requests for payment arrangements in 2000 involved electric or gas companies. Fifty-three percent of the PARs (32,211 cases) were from electric customers and 33% (20,200 cases) were from gas customers. Meanwhile, 5% of the PARs (2,785 cases) stemmed from customers of various water utilities.

Inquiries and Opinions

During 2000, the Bureau of Consumer Services and an independent call center received 80,571 customer contacts that, for the most part, required no follow-up investigation beyond the initial contact. The Bureau classified these contacts as “inquiries”. The 2000 inquiries include contacts to the Competition Hotline as well as contacts to the Bureau using other telephone numbers, mail service and e-mail communication. Further discussion of the Competition Hotline appears later in this chapter.

In large part, the inquiries in 2000 involved requests for information that staff handled at the time of the initial contact, referrals to utility companies for initial action and referrals to other agencies. The Bureau also classifies certain requests for payment arrangements as inquiries. For example, the Bureau does not issue payment decisions on requests to restore or avoid suspension/termination of toll or nonbasic telephone service. When consumers call with these problems, the BCS classifies these requests as inquiries. Similarly, if a customer has recently been through the BCS payment arrangement process and calls again with a new request regarding the same account, the Bureau does not open a new payment arrangement request case. In these instances, the BCS classifies the customer’s contact as an inquiry.

As in past years, the Bureau has also shifted some contacts that originated as consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests into the inquiry category because it was not appropriate to count these contacts as informal complaints. Examples of these contacts include complaints that were found to be duplicates, informal complaints filed against the wrong company, informal complaints that the BCS handled in spite of the fact that the customers had not previously contacted their companies about their problems and cases that the investigators verbally dismissed. In all, these cases accounted for approximately 1% of inquiries in 2000.

Until 1997, the Bureau of Consumer Services classified and reported inquiries by categories based on either the consumer's reason for contact or the Bureau's response to the contact. In May 1998, the Bureau upgraded its information system and, among other things, changed the way in which it categorizes consumer contacts. The Bureau now records the customer's reason for contact as well as the action the BCS staff person took in response to the contact. In addition, the BCS is now able to expand its list of reasons for contact as customers' reasons grow and change. Currently, the list includes more than 60 reasons for contact from consumers. Possible actions by the BCS intake staff include recording the consumer's opinion, giving information to the consumer, referring the consumer to a utility company, and referring the consumer to an agency or organization outside the PUC. If the contact requires further action, the intake staff refers the contact to a Bureau investigator and thus the contact becomes a consumer complaint or a payment arrangement request. The following table shows the various reasons for contact for the 2000 inquiries.

Categories of 2000 Inquiries

Reason for Contact	Number	Percent
Termination or suspension of service	34,715	43%
Competition issues and requests for information	19,506	24%
Request for general information	8,585	11%
Billing dispute	7,562	9%
Service (company facilities)	2,261	3%
PUC has no jurisdiction	1,941	2%
People-delivered company service	1,548	2%
Slamming	709	1%
Applicant/deposit issue	592	1%
Rate complaint	423	1%
Rate protest	371	1%
Weather outage	67	0%
Cramming	45	0%
Other miscellaneous reasons	1,997	2%
Reason for contact is not available	249	0%
TOTAL	80,571	100%

Calls to the PUC's Competition Hotline

In May 1997, the Public Utility Commission opened a toll free telephone hotline to answer consumers' questions about electric competition in the utility environment. At that time, the hotline was part of the Bureau of Consumer Services. In July 1998, an independent call center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania began handling calls to the Competition Hotline. The call center employees use the BCS computerized information system to record information from the consumer contacts about electric and gas competition. In 2000, 94% of calls to the Competition Hotline were related to the restructuring of the electric industry and 6% concerned the gas industry.

In 2000, the call center recorded information from 21,076 consumer contacts. Many calls came from consumers who called about various issues associated with the choice programs of the electric distribution companies (EDCs) and the Natural Gas Distribution Companies (NGDCs). As electric and gas competition progressed in 2000, consumers called to request competition-related brochures and to seek information about competition in general.

In most instances, the BCS classified the contacts to the Competition Hotline as inquiries because they required no investigation or follow-up. The BCS or call center staff person took care of the consumer's request or question at the initial contact. However, some consumer contacts required further investigation and possibly action to resolve the consumers' concerns. In these cases, the BCS more appropriately classified the contacts as consumer complaints and BCS staff investigated the consumer's problem. For example, the BCS investigated consumer contacts in 2000 in which consumers alleged they were assigned to an electric generation supply company without their consent or knowledge (slamming). In most cases, these contacts were classified as consumer complaints. Appendix B-1 explains the types of competition complaints that the BCS handles.

During the early phases of electric and gas competition, the BCS expected that it would receive consumer complaints associated with the transition to customer choice. As expected, many customers did experience a variety of problems as they began choosing their electric and gas suppliers. The BCS found that after investigating these complaints, it was often difficult to determine who was at fault in causing the complaint. Thus, the BCS decided that it would be unfair to include competition complaints with consumer complaints about other issues when it calculates the performance measures it uses to evaluate and compare companies within the electric industry. Therefore, the BCS excluded 65 competition-related complaints from the data set used to prepare the tables in the electric industry chapter and seven such complaints in the gas industry chapter.

Residential Consumer Complaints Not Included in Industry Chapters

With the introduction of competition into the electric, gas and telephone industries, the Bureau witnessed a tremendous growth in residential consumer complaints in 2000. More customers than ever before sought the Bureau's assistance in solving problems they had, not only with their incumbent service providers, but also with the many new providers of utility service. Traditionally, the primary focus of the Bureau's review of utilities' complaint handling has been on the performance of the major electric, gas, water and telephone utilities. In past reports, the Bureau did not include complaint statistics for the non-major utilities or for other providers of utility services in its annual assessment and evaluation of the electric, gas, water and telephone industries. However, the Bureau does maintain a limited amount of complaint data for the non-major utilities and the other service providers in its comprehensive database. This section presents information about the residential consumer complaints that are not included in the industry chapters that follow. Appendix A lists non-major companies having ten or more residential consumer complaints in 2000. The table shows the company name and its number of residential consumer complaints for the year.

In 2000, Bureau staff investigated a number of consumer complaints about problems related to billing and service that involved the non-major utility companies and other utility service providers. In addition, the BCS investigated complaints related to competition issues such as complaints about having been dropped from a company's choice program, savings delays, slamming, and cramming.

With respect to slamming, the Commission has stated clearly, up front and for the record that it "...will have zero tolerance for slamming by any means and in any form." Customer slamming is viewed as among the most serious violations of consumer regulations. Future reports will describe Commission efforts to address this problem, including a review of action taken and any penalties imposed.

During the transition to customer choice in the electric and gas industries and with the many emerging choices in the telephone industry, the Bureau uncovered a variety of new problems facing utility consumers. Given the complex nature of these problems and the difficulty in determining who is at fault (the incumbent provider or the new provider), the Bureau decided to exclude many of these complaints from its evaluation of the major utilities in the industry chapters that follow. Nevertheless, in order to present a clearer picture of the types of issues that are currently facing Pennsylvania's utility consumers, the Bureau believes that it is worthwhile to present the following information about the other residential complaints it handled in 2000. A brief discussion of the complaints filed against small water companies appears in the water industry chapter.

The tables below present a summary of the complaints that the BCS handled in 2000 that are not included in the tables and charts in the three industry chapters of this report. It is important to note that these tables include both complaints that were “filed” about a major utility company, those filed about smaller electric, gas or telephone companies such as Citizens Electric, T.W. Phillips or North Pittsburgh Telephone Company, and those complaints lodged against various other entities such as electric generation suppliers, long distance service providers, resellers and competitive local exchange carriers, and others in today’s market. For the first time, the gas table that follows includes complaints filed against Philadelphia Gas Works. Each of the following tables shows the number of customer complaints by “reason for call” within each of the three industries. Since it began tracking “reason for call”, the Bureau has used this variable to identify early in the complaint process why consumers are calling the BCS. The variable “reason for call” attempts to capture, from the consumer’s perspective, the problem or issue that the customer raises in the initial contact to the Bureau. Because reason for call is entered into the computer database at the time of the consumer’s initial contact to the Bureau, this variable allows the BCS to do a preliminary analysis of emerging problems based on these initial customer contacts.

**2000 Residential Consumer Complaints
Electric Generation Suppliers***

Company	Number of Complaints
ACN Energy (EGS)	102
Columbia Energy (EGS)	176
Conectiv Energy (EGS)	92
DTE Edison America, Inc (EGS)	12
ECONergy PA (EGS)	17
Edison Source (EGS)	18
Electric America (EGS)	61
Energy Cooperative Association of Phila (EGS)	28
Exelon (EGS)	117
Green Mountain Energy Resources (EGS)	80
PennPower Energy (EGS)	22
PG Energy Power Plus (EGS)	10
Power Choice (Pepco Services) (EGS)	145
Total Gas & Electric Inc (EGS)	81
Utility.com (EGS)	30
TOTAL**	991

*Listing shows companies having 10 or more complaints in 2000.

**The total in this table does not equal the industry total in the following table because this table excludes other non-major electric companies with less than 10 complaints.

**2000 Consumer Complaints Not Included
in the Electric Industry Chapter
Presented by Customer's Reason for Call**

Reason for Call	Number of Consumer Complaints
Slamming	438
Billing dispute	273
Deceptive advertising	136
Delay in savings from participation in competition	86
Terms and conditions of supplier contracts	57
Various other competition issues	50
Delay in receiving competition bill	46
Other problems not related to competition or reason for call not available	53
Total	1,139

**2000 Residential Consumer Complaints
Natural Gas Suppliers and Philadelphia Gas Works***

Company	Number of Complaints
Philadelphia Gas Works (NGDC)	2,011
Titan Energy (NGS)	173
Total**	2,184

*Listing shows companies having 10 or more complaints in 2000.

**The total in this table does not equal the industry total in the following table because this table excludes non-major NGDCs with 10 or more complaints and other non-major gas companies with less than 10 complaints.

**2000 Consumer Complaints Not Included
in the Gas Industry Chapter
Presented by Customer's Reason for Call**

Reason for Call	Number of Consumer Complaints*
Billing dispute	1,326
People-delivered service	437
Credit/collection issues	182
Service (company facilities)	113
Terms and conditions of supplier contracts	102
Applicant/security deposit	92
Slamming	57
Various other competition issues	28
Deceptive advertising	11
Other problems not related to competition	17
Total	2,365

*Includes cases filed against Philadelphia Gas Works

**2000 Residential Consumer Complaints
Interexchange Carriers and Competitive Local Exchange Carriers***

Company	Number of Complaints
AOL Long Distance	12
AT&T (IXC)	938
AT&T Local	172
Broadview Networks, Inc.	19
CAT Communications, Inc.	12
COCOT	11
Conectiv Communications, Inc.	51
CTSI	45
Essential.com, Inc.	184
Excel Telecommunications	43
Federal Transtel, Inc.	15
ILD Telecommunications, Inc.	10
Integretal (Billing Service)	11
MCI Local	88
Metro Teleconnect	44
Metropolitan Telecommunications	11
Ntegrity Telecontent Service	10

Quest Telecommunications	10
Qwest Communications	48
RCN Telecom Services of PA	118
Servisense.com	22
Sprint (IXC)	164
Talk.com Holding Corp	51
Telecom USA	13
Telephone Billing Services (TBS)	11
US Billing, Inc.	28
Vartec Telecom, Inc.	10
Worldcom, Inc.	338
Z Tel Communications	424
Zero Plus Dialing	34
Total**	2,947

*Listing shows companies having 10 or more complaints in 2000.

**The total in this table does not equal the industry total in the following table because this table excludes other non-major LECs and other non-major telephone companies.

**2000 Residential Telephone Consumer Complaints
Not Included in the Telephone Industry Chapter
By Customer's Reason for Call**

Reason for Call	Number of Consumer Complaints
Billing dispute	1,577
Local slamming	433
Slamming	391
Service (company facilities)	390
People-delivered service	372
Cramming	87
Suspension related disputes	74
Application deposits	24
Rates	17
Payphone conversions	16
Deceptive advertising sales	16
Various other competition issues	8
Other problems not related to competition	29
Total	3,434

As noted earlier, the number of complaints to the BCS about entities other than the major EDCs, gas utilities or local telephone companies is growing. Appendix A lists the non-major companies having ten or more residential consumer complaints in 2000.

Informal Compliance Process & Infractions

The Bureau's primary compliance effort remains its informal compliance process. This process gives each utility specific examples of apparent infractions of Chapter 56, 63 and 64. The utilities can use the information to pinpoint and voluntarily correct deficiencies in their customer service operations. The informal compliance process uses consumer complaints to identify, document, and notify utilities of apparent deficiencies. The process begins by the BCS notifying a utility of an alleged infraction. A utility that receives notification of an allegation has an opportunity to affirm or deny the information. If the information about the allegation is accurate, the utility indicates the cause of the problem (i.e., employee error, procedures, a computer program, etc.). In addition, the utility informs the BCS of the date and action it took to correct this problem.

Corrective actions may entail modifying a computer program; revising the text of a notice, bill, letter or company procedures; or providing additional staff training to ensure the proper use of a procedure. If the utility states that the information is inaccurate, the utility provides specific details and supporting data to disprove the allegation. The BCS always provides a final determination to the utility regarding the alleged infraction. For example, if the utility provides supporting data indicating that the information about the allegation is inaccurate, the BCS after reviewing all the information, would inform the utility that, in this instance, the facts do not reflect an infraction of the regulations. On the other hand, if the company agrees that the information forming the basis of the allegation is accurate and indicates the cause of the problem to be other than an employee error, or if the BCS does not find that the data supports the utility's position that the information is inaccurate, the BCS would inform the company that the facts reflect an infraction of a particular section of the regulations. The notification process allows utilities to receive written clarifications of Chapter 56, 63 or 64 provisions and Commission and BCS policies.

The significance of apparent infractions identified by the informal compliance process is frequently emphasized by the fact that some represent systematic errors that are widespread and affect many utility customers. Since the BCS receives only a small portion of the complaints that customers have with their utility companies, limited opportunities exist to identify such errors. Therefore, the informal compliance process is specifically designed to help utilities identify systematic errors. One example of a systematic error is a termination notice with text that does not comply with the requirements of Chapter 56. Each recipient of the notice is affected by this error. When such an error is discovered, the BCS encourages utilities to investigate the scope of the

problem and take corrective action. Some utilities have developed their own information systems to identify problems by reviewing complaints before they come to the Commission's attention. The BCS encourages utilities to continue this activity and share their findings with Bureau staff.

2. Performance Measures

For the most part, the Bureau of Consumer Services uses the complaints it receives from customers of the major electric, gas, water and telephone utilities to assess utilities' complaint handling performance. In nearly every case, the customer had already contacted the company about the problem prior to contacting the BCS. The BCS reviews the utility's record as to how the utility handled the complaint when the customer contacted the company. The review includes several classifications and assessments that form the basis of all the performance measures presented in this and the next four chapters, with the exception of the number of terminations and termination rate. The termination statistics for the electric and gas companies are drawn from reports required by Chapter 56.231(8) while telephone termination statistics are drawn from reports required by Chapter 64.201(7).

The sections that follow explain the various measures that the BCS employs to assess utility performance.

Consumer Complaint Rate

The calculation of consumer complaint rate (consumer complaints per one thousand residential customers) permits the reader to make comparisons among utilities of various sizes. The BCS has found that high consumer complaint rates and extreme changes in consumer complaint rates from one year to the next are often indicative of patterns and trends that it should investigate. However, many of the complaints in the consumer complaint rate are not "justified". The "justified consumer complaint rate" (justified consumer complaints per one thousand residential customers) is a truer indication of a utility's complaint handling performance.

Justified Consumer Complaint Rate

The Bureau of Consumer Services uses case evaluation to identify whether or not correct procedures were followed by the utility in responding to the customer's complaint prior to the intervention of the Bureau. In other words, case evaluation is used to determine whether a case is "justified." A customer's case is considered "justified" if it is found that, prior to BCS intervention, the company did not comply with PUC orders or policies, regulations, reports, Secretarial Letters or tariffs in reaching its final position. In the judgment of the BCS, a case that is "justified" is a clear indication that the company did not handle a dispute properly or effectively, or in handling the dispute, the company violated a rule, regulation or law. There are two additional complaint resolution categories. "Unjustified" complaints are those cases in which the company demonstrates

that correct procedures were followed prior to BCS intervention. “Inconclusive” complaints are those in which insufficient records or equivocal findings make it difficult to determine whether or not the customer was justified in the appeal to the Bureau. The majority of cases fall into either the “justified” or “unjustified” category.

The performance measure called “justified consumer complaint rate” reflects both volume of complaints and percent of consumer complaints found justified. Justified consumer complaint rate is the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers. By using this ratio, the reader can use the “justified” rate to compare utilities’ performance within an industry and across time. The BCS perceives the justified consumer complaint rate to be a bottom line measure of performance that evaluates how effectively a company handles complaints from its customers.

The Bureau of Consumer Services monitors the complaint rates and justified rates of the major utilities, paying particular attention to the number of justified complaints that customers file with the Commission. Justified complaints indicate that the subject utilities did not follow the PUC’s rules, procedures or regulations when they dealt with their customers. Justified complaints may indicate areas where the BCS should discuss complaint-handling procedures with a utility so that its customers receive fair and equitable treatment when they deal with the utility. When the BCS encounters company case handling performance (justified consumer complaint rate) that is significantly worse than average, there is reason to suspect that many customers who contact the utility are at risk of improper dispute handling by the utility. As part of the monitoring process, the BCS compares the “justified” rates of individual utilities and industries over time and investigates significant changes when they occur. In the chapters that follow, the BCS compares the consumer complaint rates and the justified consumer complaint rates of the major utilities within the electric, gas, water and telephone industries.

Response Time to Consumer Complaints

Once a customer contacts the BCS with a complaint about a utility, the Bureau notifies the utility. The utility then sends the BCS records of its contact with the customer regarding the complaint. Response time is the time span in days from the date of the Bureau of Consumer Services’ first contact with the utility regarding a complaint, to the date on which the utility provides the BCS with all of the information needed to resolve the complaint. Response time quantifies the speed of a utility’s response to BCS informal complaints. In the following chapters and in Appendix E, response time is presented as the average number of days that each utility took to supply the BCS with complete complaint information.

Payment Arrangement Request Rate

The Bureau of Consumer Services normally intervenes at the customer's request only after direct payment negotiations between the customer and the company failed. The volume of payment arrangement requests (PARs) from a utility's customers may fluctuate from year to year or even from month to month depending upon the utility's collection strategy as well as economic factors. The calculation of the payment arrangement request rate (payment arrangement requests per 1,000 residential customers) permits the reader to make comparisons among utilities with differing numbers of residential customers. Nevertheless, unusually high or low rates and sizable changes in rates from one year to the next may reflect changes in company policies or bill collection philosophies, as stated earlier, or they may be indicative of problems. The BCS views such variations as potential areas for investigation. Clearly, improved access to the Bureau of Consumer Services has impacted the number of consumers who are able to contact the BCS about payment arrangements. In addition, as utilities have become more aggressive in seeking to collect outstanding bills, the number of PARs to the BCS continues to increase. Many of the payment arrangement requests in the PAR rates are not "justified". The "justified payment arrangement request rate" (justified payment arrangement requests per one thousand residential customers) is a truer indication of a utility's payment negotiation performance.

Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate

Just as with consumer complaints, once a customer contacts the Bureau with a payment arrangement request, the Bureau notifies the utility. The company sends a report to the BCS that details the customer payments, usage and payment negotiation history. A BCS investigator considers the customer's record and makes a decision regarding the amortization of the amount owed and notifies the company and the customer of the decision. The BCS policy unit reviews the record to determine if the utility negotiated properly with the customer and uses this record to determine the outcome of the case. There are three possible case outcome classifications: "justified", "inconclusive" and "unjustified". This approach evaluates companies negatively only where, in the judgment of the BCS, appropriate payment negotiation procedures were not followed or where the regulations have been violated. Specifically, a case is considered "justified" in the appeal to BCS if it is found that, prior to BCS intervention, the company did not comply with PUC regulations, reports, Secretarial Letters, tariffs, or guidelines. "Unjustified" payment arrangement requests are those in which the company demonstrates correct procedures were followed prior to BCS intervention. "Inconclusive" PARs are those in which incomplete records or equivocal accounts make it difficult to determine whether or not the customer was justified in the appeal to the Bureau.

Changes in company policy can influence not only the volume of PARs to the Commission but also the effectiveness of a utility's payment negotiations. The Bureau uses the "justified payment arrangement request rate" to measure a utility's performance at handling payment arrangement requests from customers. The justified payment arrangement request rate is the ratio of the number of justified PARs for each 1,000 residential customers. The Bureau of Consumer Services monitors the justified PAR rates of the major utilities. For example, the BCS compares the "justified" rates of individual utilities and industries over time and investigates significant changes when they occur. In the chapters that follow, the BCS compares the PAR rates and the justified PAR rates of the major utilities within the electric, gas, water and telephone industries. Because the BCS receives a very large volume of requests for payment terms, it reviews a random sample of cases for the companies with the largest number of PARs. For these companies, justified payment arrangement request rate and response time are based on a subset of the cases that came to the BCS.

Response Time to Payment Arrangement Requests

Once a customer contacts the BCS with a payment arrangement request (PAR), the Bureau notifies the utility. The utility then sends the BCS records that include the customer's payment history, the amount owed, prior payment arrangements, and the results of the most recent payment negotiation with the customer. Response time is the number of days from the date the BCS first contacts the utility regarding a PAR to the date on which the utility provides the BCS with all of the information it needs to issue payment terms, resolve any other issues raised by the customer and determine whether or not the customer was justified in seeking a payment arrangement through the BCS. Response time quantifies the speed of a utility's response to BCS payment arrangement requests. In the following chapters and in Appendix G, response time is presented as the average number of days that each utility took to supply the BCS with the necessary information.

In 2000, the BCS made changes in the case processing of certain payment arrangement requests. These procedural changes made it necessary for the Bureau to revise its method of calculating response time to PARs for the electric, gas and water industries. Beginning in 1999, the Bureau calculates response time for the major electric, gas and water companies using only their responses to payment arrangement requests from customers 1) whose service has been terminated, 2) who have a dispute with the company, or 3) who have previously had a BCS payment arrangement on the amount that they owe.

Response time to PARs for the telephone companies is calculated in the same manner as it had been in prior years. Thus, in Chapter 6 and in Appendix G, response time for the major local exchange carriers is the average number of days that each telephone company took to supply the BCS with all the information it needed for all categories of payment arrangement requests.

The Commission continues to work on a project to transfer data electronically from utilities to the BCS. When this project is successfully completed, utility response time may decrease.

Infraction Rate

During 2000, the BCS continued its informal compliance notification process to improve utility compliance with applicable statutes and regulations relating to the treatment of residential accounts. In order to compare utilities of various sizes within an industry, the Bureau has calculated a measure called “infraction rate”. The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions for each 1,000 residential customers. Although the BCS has reported a compliance rate for the major telephone companies since 1989, it introduced “infraction rates” for the electric, gas and water utilities in its 1997 report.

Several considerations are important to keep in mind when viewing the infraction rate charts in the chapters that follow. First, the data does not consider the causes of the individual infractions. Secondly, some infractions may be more serious than others because of their systemic nature, and therefore may show ongoing or repetitive occurrences. Still other infractions may be more serious because they involve threats to the health and safety of utility customers.

The value of the infraction rate is to depict industry trends over time. The trend for 2000 is calculated using the BCS’ Compliance Tracking System’s (CTS) data as of June 2001. The 2000 trends may change if the total number of infractions increases. This would occur if new infractions are discovered from customer complaints that originated in 2000 but were still under investigation by the Bureau when the data was retrieved from the CTS. Often, the total number of infractions for the year will be greater than the number cited in this report. The Bureau will update the number of infractions found on 1999 cases in the report on 2001 complaint activity. Infraction rates for each major electric, gas, water and telephone company are shown for 1998, 1999 and 2000 in the chapters that follow. Appendix H shows additional 1998-2000 infraction statistics.

Termination Rate

Payment over time through a mutually acceptable payment arrangement is one possible outcome when a customer owes an outstanding balance to a utility company. Termination of the utility service is another. The Bureau of Consumer Services views termination of utility service as a utility's last resort when customers fail to meet their payment obligations. The calculation of termination rate allows the reader to compare the termination activity of utilities with differing numbers of residential customers. Termination rate is the number of service terminations for each 1,000 residential customers. Any significant increase in termination rate would indicate a trend or pattern that the Commission may need to investigate. Water utilities do not report service termination statistics to the Commission; thus the water industry chapter does not include termination rate information.

BCS Performance Measures & Industry Chapters

The industry chapters that follow present charts that depict the performance of each of the major electric, gas, water and telephone utilities. Each chapter includes charts that show the consumer complaint rate and the justified consumer complaint rate of each major utility. Also included in the industry chapters are charts that show the 2000 payment arrangement request rates and the justified payment arrangement request rates for each of the major utilities. The charts also show the average of the rates of the major utilities within the industry for each of these measures. In addition, each industry chapter presents charts and tables that show infraction rates for the major utilities, response time to both consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests, and termination rates for the major electric, gas, and telephone utilities.

It is important to note that the industry chapters present only data from those utilities that have more than 100,000 residential customers. In the Water Industry Chapter, data for the 11 Class A water utilities that have less than 100,000 residential customers are presented together as a whole. The BCS has found that the inclusion of scores for the smaller utilities can skew the average of industry scores in ways that do not fairly represent industry performance. For this reason, the BCS has excluded the statistics involving smaller utilities when it calculated the 2000 averages of industry scores. In the future, the Commission may undertake a project in which it calculates and reports performance measure statistics for the smaller utilities and other utility service providers.

3. Electric Industry

In 2000, the Commission had jurisdiction over 16 electric distribution companies. However, the majority of the consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests involving the electric industry were from residential customers of the six largest electric distribution companies (EDCs): Allegheny Power, Duquesne Light Company, GPU Energy, PECO Energy, Pennsylvania Power Company and PPL Utilities, Inc. This chapter will focus exclusively on those six companies. Most of the complaints and payment arrangement requests dealt with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code, Chapter 56 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service*. For the most part, these consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests represent customer appeals to the Commission resulting from the inability of the company and the customer to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to a dispute or payment negotiation.

The tables and charts on the pages that follow depict the performance of each of the six largest EDCs in 2000. The tables in the appendices also include UGI-Electric, a major EDC with fewer than 100,000 residential customers. The Bureau investigated complaints in 2000 that were generated as a result of the electric choice programs that allowed customers to choose an electric generation supply company. However, as mentioned in the first chapter, the BCS removed these complaints from the database it used to prepare the tables and charts on consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests. Appendices C through H present the actual statistics that the Bureau used to produce the charts in this chapter.

Consumer Complaints

During 2000, the BCS handled 4,341 consumer complaints from residential customers of the various electric distribution companies (EDCs). Of these residential complaints, 99% (4,291) were from customers of the six largest EDCs. For the analysis in this chapter, the BCS excluded a total of 65 consumer complaints that involved competition issues.

Consumer Complaint Categories

After a BCS investigator closes a consumer complaint, the BCS policy unit reviews the complaint, categorizes it into a specific problem category and enters it into the Bureau's computerized information system. The BCS data system then aggregates the data from all complaints. The following table shows the percentage of 2000 complaints from residential customers of the six largest EDCs in each of the 13 categories used by the BCS policy unit to categorize consumer complaints about electric, gas and water utilities. The number of billing and metering related complaints increased in 2000. Appendix C, Table 1 provides the actual number of cases that fell into each category in 2000.

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000 Major Electric Distribution Companies

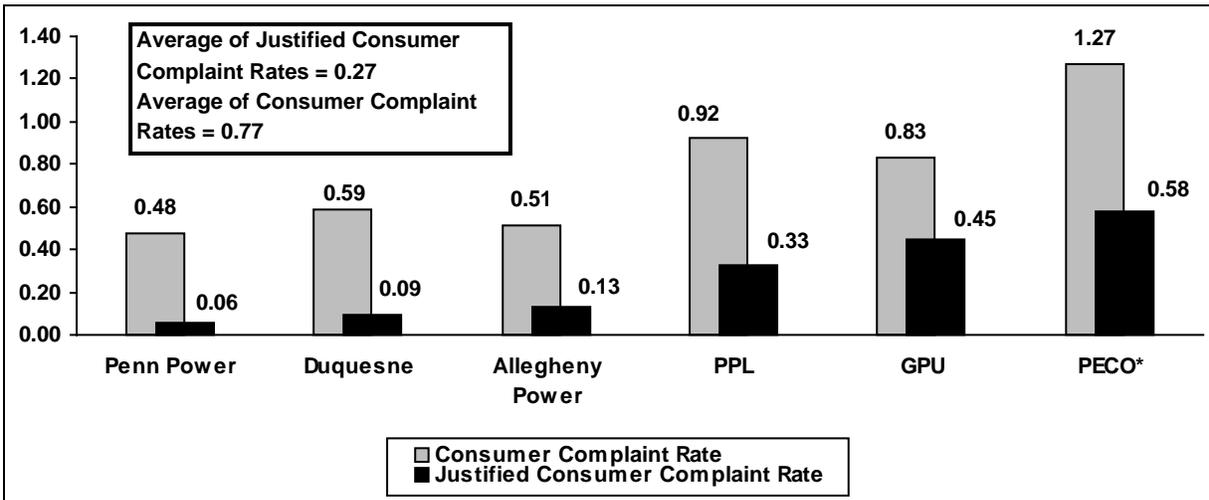
Categories	Allegheny Power	Duquesne	GPU	PECO*	Penn Power	PPL Utilities	Electric Majors
Billing Disputes	16%	19%	34%	21%	17%	42%	29%
Metering	15%	7%	17%	18%	0%	18%	16%
Discontinuance/ Transfer	10%	11%	6%	17%	2%	13%	13%
Service Interruptions	12%	13%	15%	4%	55%	3%	8%
Service Quality	7%	8%	3%	7%	9%	3%	5%
Personnel Problems	5%	8%	3%	7%	2%	2%	5%
Other Payment Issues	1%	6%	3%	4%	0%	8%	5%
Service Extensions	11%	3%	5%	5%	4%	2%	4%
Damages	10%	7%	3%	4%	2%	2%	4%
Scheduling Delays	3%	5%	4%	3%	0%	1%	3%
Credit & Deposits	1%	4%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%
Rates	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
All Other Problems	8%	7%	4%	8%	5%	4%	6%
TOTAL-Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL-Number**	231	225	616	1,110	47	818	3,047

*PECO statistics include electric and gas

**Based on residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001.

- Categories are for residential complaints filed with BCS: justified, inconclusive and unjustified. See Appendix B-1 for an explanation of complaint categories and Appendix C-1 for the number of cases in each category.
- In 2000, billing disputes accounted for 29% of the consumer complaints about the major electric distribution companies. Meanwhile, the proportion of complaints about metering and discontinuance/transfer increased by 2% and 3%, respectively, from 1999 to 2000.

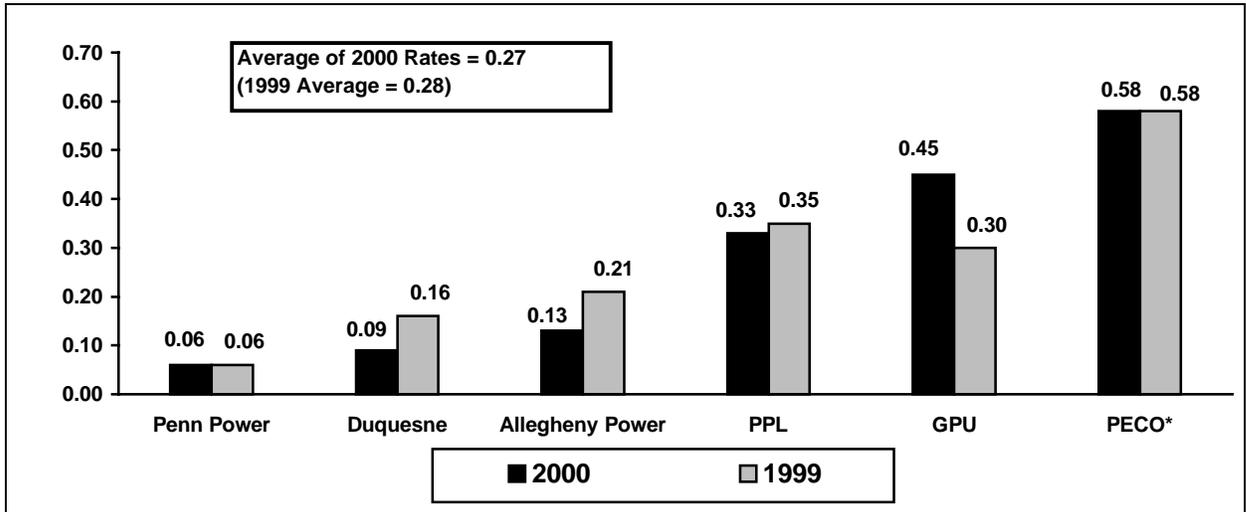
2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Rates/ Justified Consumer Complaint Rates Major Electric Distribution Companies



*PECO statistics include electric and gas

- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers. The consumer complaint rate equals the number of consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- For the major EDCs, the average of the consumer complaint rates is almost three times greater than the average of the justified consumer complaint rates.
- Appendix D, Table 1 presents the number of consumer complaints and justified consumer complaints for each major EDC in 2000.

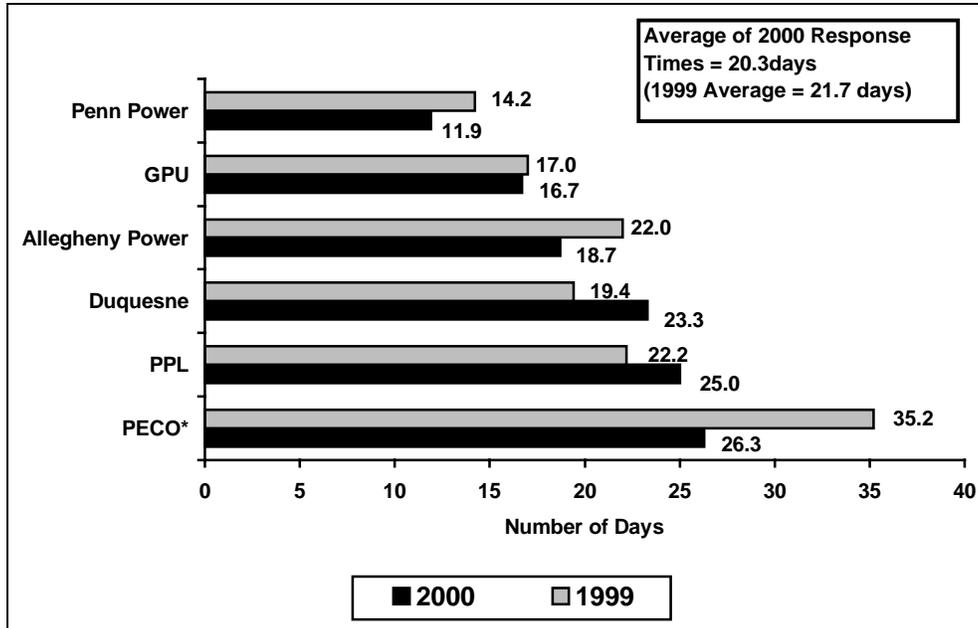
1999-2000 Justified Residential Consumer Complaint Rates Major Electric Distribution Companies



*PECO statistics include electric and gas

- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the justified consumer complaint rates for the major electric distribution companies decreased slightly from 1999 to 2000. The justified rate for only one of the six major EDCs increased from 1999 to 2000.
- Appendix D, Table 1 presents the number of justified consumer complaints for each major EDC in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Consumer Complaints Major Electric Distribution Companies



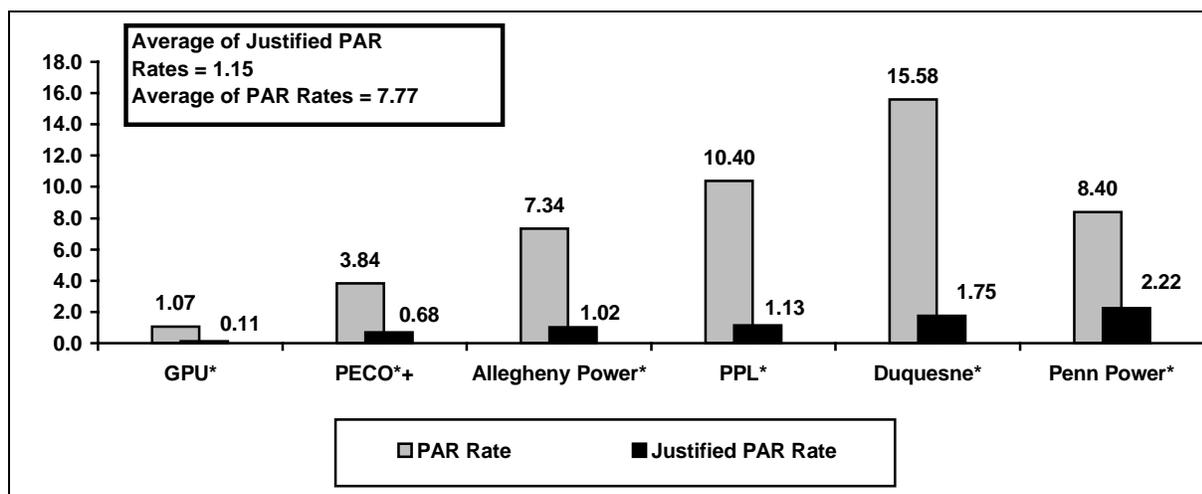
*PECO statistics include electric and gas

- Overall, the average response time decreased by 1.4 days from 1999 to 2000. In 2000, the average response time to consumer complaints decreased for four of the six major EDCs.
- Appendix E shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to consumer complaints for each of the major EDCs as well as for the major gas, water and telephone utilities.

Payment Arrangement Requests

In 2000, the Bureau of Consumer Services handled 31,810 payment arrangement requests (PARs) from residential customers of the electric industry. Ninety-nine percent (31,489) of the residential PARs were from customers of the six largest EDCs. In 2000, the BCS reviewed a representative sample of the PARs for case outcome for each of the six largest EDCs: Allegheny Power, Duquesne, GPU, PECO, Penn Power and PPL Utilities. Thus, the calculations for justified payment arrangement request rate and response time that appear in the pages that follow are based on a subset of cases that the BCS received from customers of these utilities. The BCS believes that the size of the samples gives a reasonable indication of the performance of these companies. Appendix F, Table 1 provides additional statistics regarding the payment arrangement requests from residential customers of the major EDCs.

2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates/ Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Electric Distribution Companies



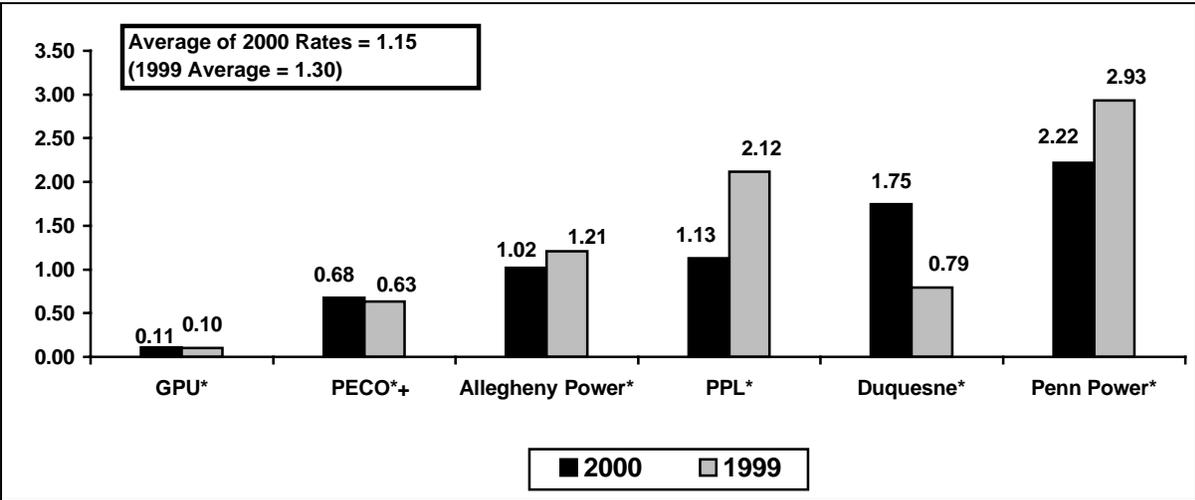
* Justified PAR Rates based on a probability sample of cases

+PECO statistics include electric and gas

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers. The payment arrangement request rate equals the number of payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.

- On average, there were nearly eight payment arrangement requests to the BCS for each 1,000 residential customers of the major EDCs in 2000. However, there was slightly more than one justified PAR for each 1,000 residential customers.
- Appendix F, Table 1 presents the number of payment arrangement requests and justified payment arrangement requests for each major EDC in 2000.

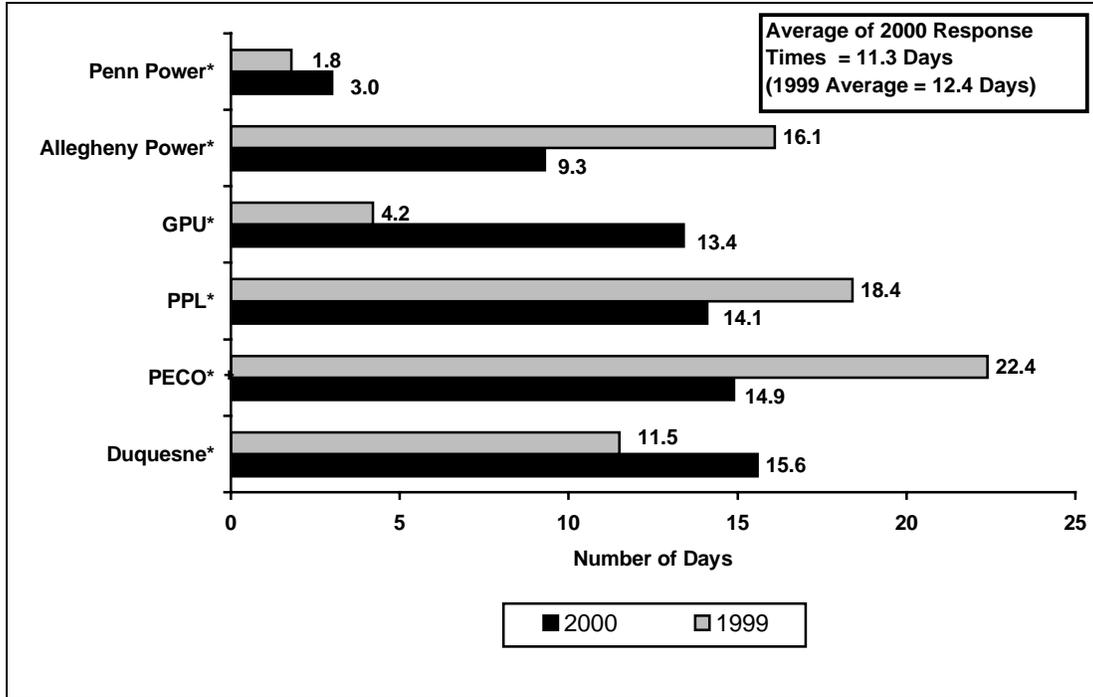
**1999-2000 Justified Residential
Payment Arrangement Request Rates
Major Electric Distribution Companies**



*Based on a probability sample of cases
+PECO statistics include electric and gas

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the justified PAR rates for the six major EDCs decreased by 12% from 1999 to 2000. The justified PAR rates for three of the six major electric distribution companies decreased from 1999 to 2000.
- Appendix F, Table 1 presents the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each major EDC in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Payment Arrangement Requests Major Electric Distribution Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases
+PECO statistics include electric and gas

- From 1999 to 2000, the average response time for the six major EDCs decreased by slightly more than one day.
- Three of the major EDCs reduced their response times to PARs in 2000 compared to 1999 while the other three increased their response times.
- Appendix G shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to payment arrangement requests for each of the major EDCs as well as for the major gas, water and telephone companies.

Termination of Service

Each month the electric companies report to the Commission the number of residential accounts that they terminated during the previous month. Some EDCs have maintained a fairly consistent pattern of termination behavior while others fluctuate from year to year. The table below indicates the annual number of residential accounts each of the six largest EDCs terminated in 1998, 1999 and 2000. The table also presents the termination rates for each of these companies.

Residential Service Terminations/Termination Rates Major Electric Distribution Companies

Company Name	Residential Service Terminations				Termination Rates		
	1998	1999	2000	% Change in # 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
Allegheny Power	6,614	5,186	7,887	52%	11.38	8.86	13.39
Duquesne	11,721	9,358	4,764	-49%	22.75	18.14	9.11
GPU	8,643	2,263	4,635	105%	9.43	2.44	4.95
PECO*	34,009	28,460	32,403	14%	25.20	20.94	23.62
Penn Power	1,480	1,326	1,423	7%	11.46	10.16	10.78
PPL Utilities	9,649	5,222	7,117	36%	8.80	4.75	6.36
Major Electric	72,116	51,815	58,229	12%			
Average of Rates					14.84	10.88	11.37

*PECO statistics include electric and gas

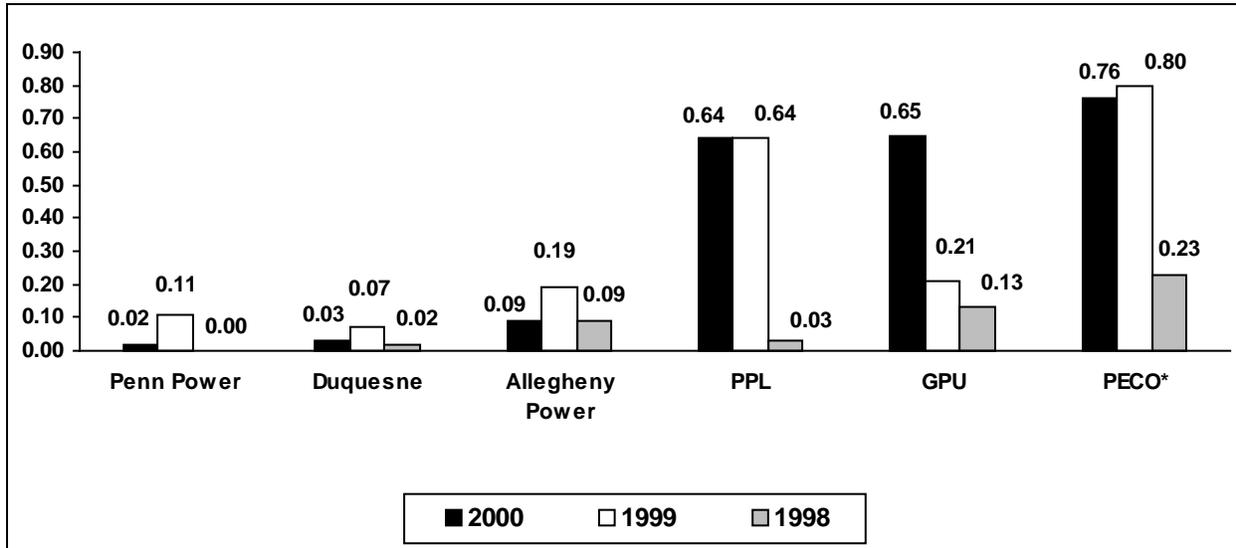
- Termination rate is the number of service terminations for each 1,000 residential customers.
- Overall, the six major EDCs terminated 13% more residential accounts in 2000 than in 1999. Only one company terminated fewer residential accounts.

Compliance

The use of “infraction rate” in this report is intended to help the Commission monitor the duty of electric distribution companies at 66 Pa. C.S. §2807(d) to, at a minimum, maintain customer services under retail competition at the same level of quality. In subsequent activity reports, the calculation of “infraction rate” for the electric generation suppliers, the new entrants into electric retail competition, will also help the Commission, pursuant to 66 Pa. C.S. §2809(e), monitor and regulate the service of electric generation suppliers. Electric generation suppliers are required at 66 Pa. C.S. §2809(e) and (f) to both comply with Chapter 56 and to implement practices which prevent deterioration of the present quality of service provided by the electric distribution companies.

During 1998, 1999 and 2000, the Bureau determined that the six major EDCs together logged 5,142 infractions of regulations. The chart that follows and the infraction statistics in Appendix H, Table 1 are drawn from all informal complaints that residential consumers filed with the BCS from 1998 through 2000. Infractions identified on complaints involving competition issues are included in the infraction statistics.

PUC Infraction Rates Major Electric Distribution Companies



*PECO statistics include electric and gas

- The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers.
- Overall, the number of informally verified infractions attributed to the major EDCs increased in 2000.
- Appendix H, Table 1 presents the actual number of infractions for each major EDC in 1998, 1999 and 2000.

4. Natural Gas Industry

In 2000, the Commission had jurisdiction over 35 gas utilities. However, the majority of the consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests involving the gas industry came from residential customers of the six major gas utilities: Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Dominion Peoples, Equitable Gas, National Fuel Gas Distribution Corporation, PG Energy and UGI-Gas. This chapter will focus exclusively on those six utilities. As with the electric industry, most of the complaints and payment arrangement requests dealt with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code, Chapter 56 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service*. These consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests, for the most part, represent customer appeals to the Commission resulting from the inability of the company and the customer to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to a dispute or payment negotiation.

Philadelphia Gas Works - BCS Staff engaged in numerous activities in preparation for assuming regulatory responsibility over the Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) on July 1, 2000. BCS staff continues to monitor the company's efforts to improve complaint handling and customer services in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed July 18, 2000. The Bureau has reviewed the company's winter collection program and has provided comments to PGW. The staff worked with the Bureau of Audits to provide input on customer service issues for the PGW Management Audit. The BCS has also been heavily involved in resolving several problems, such as telephone access and discontinuance of service, that have been identified through consumer complaints. BCS Staff has monitored access by reviewing PGW reports that document call center performance. In addition, on-site observations of customer/company contacts and meetings with call center managers have taken place on a regular basis. As a result of these efforts, PGW has increased the centers hours of operation, increased the call center staff, which in turn has increased the number of customer calls handled by the company on a monthly basis. PGW also plans to take additional steps to reduce telephone call wait times to more acceptable levels in the near future.

The tables and charts on the pages that follow depict the performance of each of the six major gas utilities in 2000 exclusive of Philadelphia Gas Works. Appendices C through H present the actual statistics that the Bureau used to produce the charts in this chapter.

Consumer Complaints

During 2000, the BCS handled 3,620 consumer complaints from residential customers of the various natural gas distribution companies (NGDCs). Of these

residential complaints, 41% (1,501) were from customers of the six largest NGDCs and 56% (2,011) were from customers of the Philadelphia Gas Works. For the analysis of the six major gas companies that appears in this chapter, the BCS excluded a total of 7 consumer complaints that involved competition issues.

Consumer Complaint Categories

After a BCS investigator closes a consumer complaint, the BCS policy unit reviews the complaint, categorizes it into a specific problem category and enters it into the Bureau's computerized information system. The BCS data system then aggregates the data from all complaints. The following table shows the percentage of 2000 complaints from residential customers of the six major gas utilities in each of the 13 categories used by the BCS policy unit to categorize consumer complaints about electric, gas and water utilities. The percentages shown in the table are for all the cases residential customers of the major gas utilities filed with BCS, not just cases determined to be justified in coming to the Bureau. Appendix D, Table 2 provides the actual number of cases that fell into each category in 2000.

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000
Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

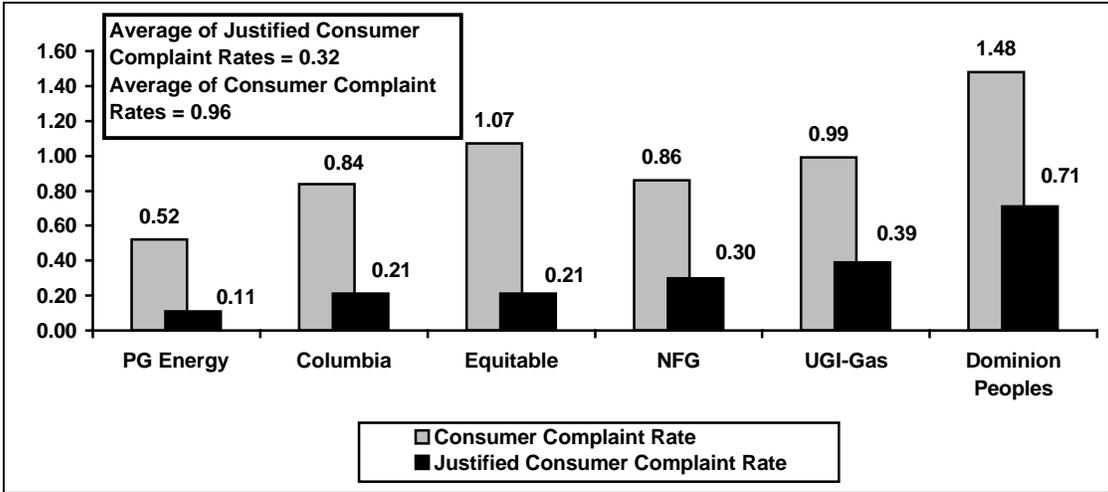
Categories	Columbia	Dominion Peoples	Equitable	NFG	PG Energy	UGI-Gas	Gas Majors
Metering	28%	22%	18%	18%	19%	26%	22%
Billing Disputes	12%	20%	24%	17%	19%	14%	18%
Discontinuance/ Transfer	13%	10%	13%	17%	11%	25%	14%
Personnel Problems	8%	5%	12%	10%	5%	7%	8%
Service Extensions	10%	7%	3%	5%	11%	5%	6%
Other Payment Issues	2%	10%	5%	4%	5%	2%	6%
Service Quality	9%	2%	2%	6%	9%	5%	5%
Damages	6%	5%	6%	2%	3%	2%	4%
Credit & Deposits	1%	4%	4%	2%	5%	4%	4%
Scheduling delays	4%	6%	1%	1%	0%	3%	3%
Rates	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%
Service Interruptions	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	1%
All Other Problems	5%	6%	9%	16%	11%	7%	8%
TOTAL-Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL-Number*	199	177	126	57	368	184	1,111

*Based on residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001.

- Categories are for all residential complaints filed with BCS: justified, inconclusive and unjustified. See Appendix B-1 for an explanation of complaint categories and Appendix C-2 for the number of cases in each category.
- In 2000, billing disputes generated 18% of the complaints about the major gas utilities. This was the second straight significant annual decline. Since 1998, billing disputes have decreased from 40%.

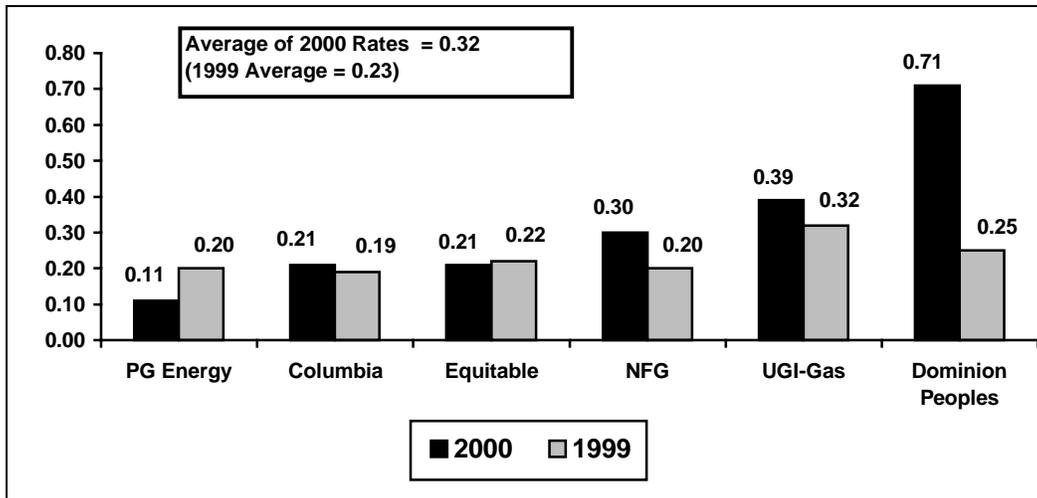
- The percentage of complaints about metering were the largest consumer complaint category in the industry in 2000, despite a slight reduction from 23% in 1999 to 22% in 2000.

**2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Rates/
Justified Consumer Complaint Rates
Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies**



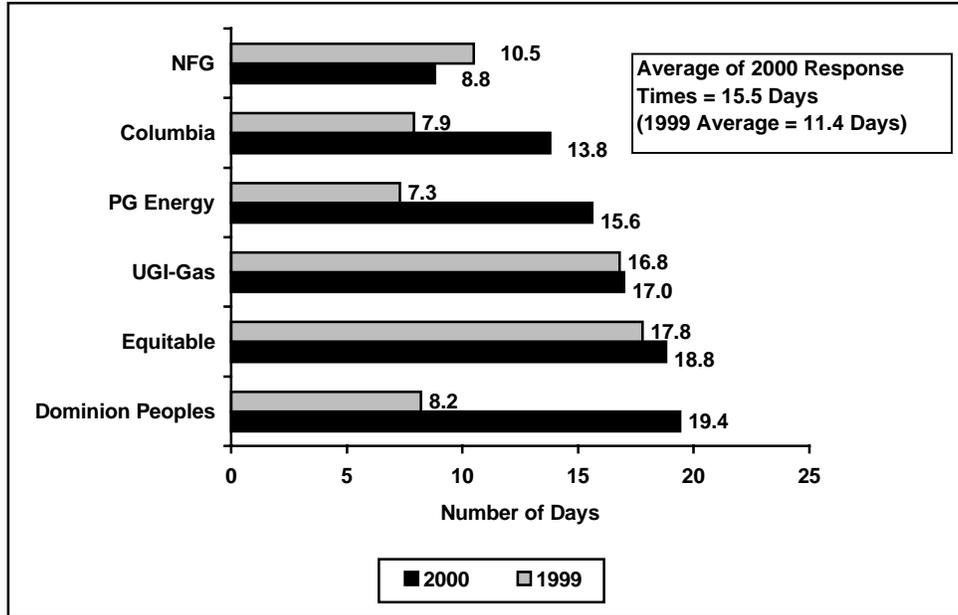
- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers. The consumer complaint rate equals the number of consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- For the major gas companies, the average of the consumer complaint rates is 3 times greater than the average of the justified rates.
- Appendix D, Table 2 presents the number of consumer complaints and justified consumer complaints for each major gas company in 2000.

1999-2000 Justified Residential Consumer Complaint Rates Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies



- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the justified consumer complaint rates of the major gas companies increased from 0.23 in 1999 to 0.32 in 2000. This is the second annual increase in a row for the gas companies. The average justified complaint rate increased for four of the six major gas companies in 2000.
- Appendix D, Table 2 shows the number of justified consumer complaints for each major gas company in 1999 and 2000.

**1999-2000 Response Time to BCS
Residential Consumer Complaints
Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies**

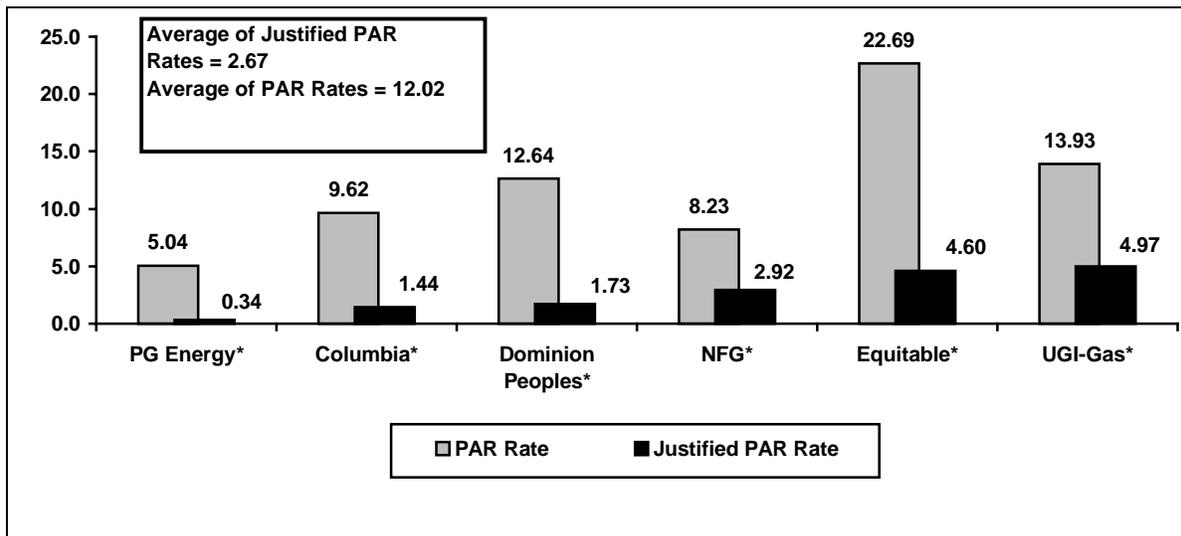


- The average response time for the major gas companies increased by 4.1 days from 1999 to 2000. Five of the six major gas companies increased response time to consumer complaints in 2000.
- Appendix E shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to consumer complaints for each of the major gas companies as well as for the major electric, water and telephone utilities.

Payment Arrangement Requests

In 2000, the Bureau of Consumer Services handled 20,062 payment arrangement requests (PARs) from residential customers of the gas industry. Ninety-one percent (18,296) of the residential PARs were from customers of the six major natural gas distribution companies. In 2000, the BCS reviewed a representative sample of the PARs for case outcome for the following gas companies: Columbia, Equitable, NFG, Dominion Peoples, PG Energy and UGI-Gas. Thus, the calculation for justified payment arrangement request rate and response time that appear in the pages that follow are based on a subset of cases that the BCS received from customers of these utilities. The BCS believes that the size of the samples gives an adequate indication of the performance of these companies. Appendix F, Table 2 provides additional statistics regarding the payment arrangement requests from residential customers of the major natural gas distribution companies.

2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates/ Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

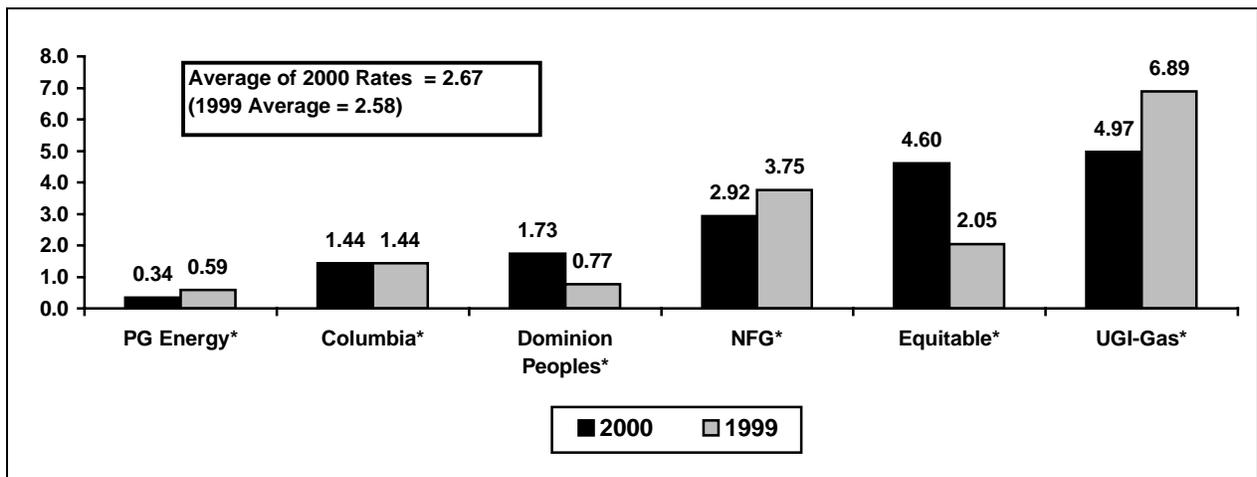


* Justified PAR rates based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers. The payment arrangement request rate equals the number of payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.

- In 2000, the average of the PAR rates is more than 4 times the average of the justified rates.
- Appendix F, Table 2 presents the number of payment arrangement requests and justified payment arrangement requests for each major gas company in 2000.

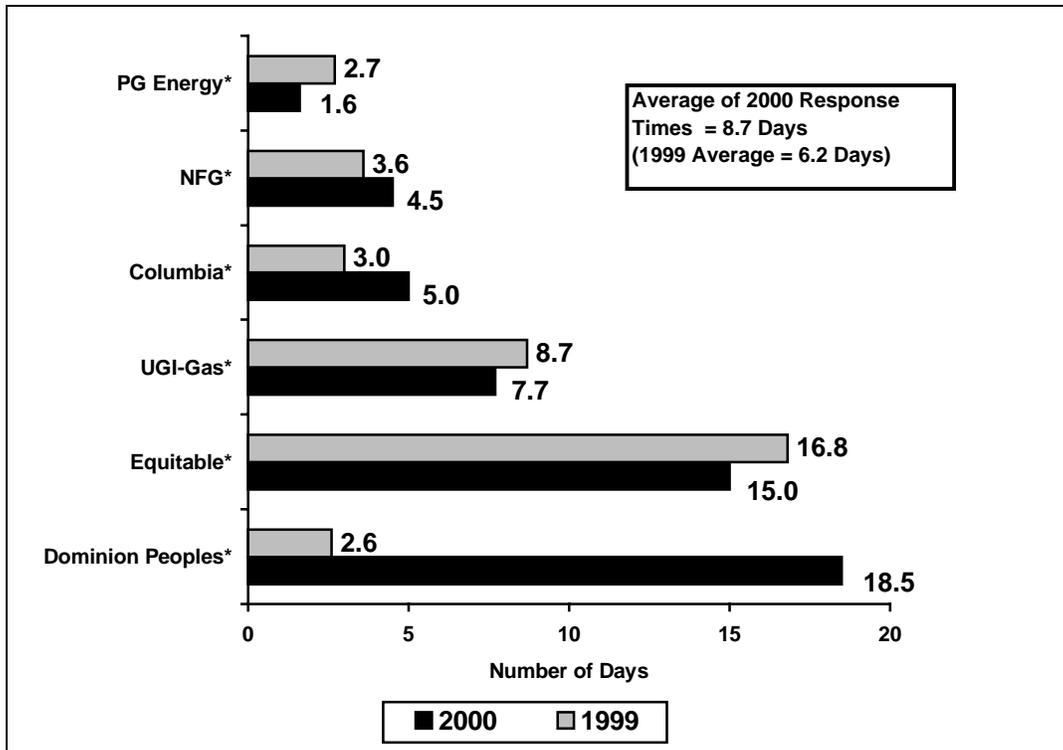
1999-2000 Justified Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies



* Based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the justified PAR rates for the six major gas utilities increased slightly from 1999 to 2000. The justified payment arrangement request rate increased for three of the six major gas companies.
- Appendix F, Table 2 presents the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each major gas company in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Payment Arrangement Requests Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies



* Based on a probability sample of cases

- From 1999 to 2000, the average response time to BCS payment arrangement requests increased by 2.5 days. The average response time to BCS PARs for each major gas company was nearly 9 days in 2000.
- Three of the six major gas companies had increased response times to BCS payment arrangement requests in 2000.
- Appendix G shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to payment arrangement requests for each of the major gas companies as well as for the major electric, water and telephone companies.

Termination of Service

Each month, the gas utilities report to the Commission the number of residential accounts that they terminated during the previous month. Some utilities have maintained a fairly consistent pattern of termination behavior, while others fluctuate from year to year. The table that follows indicates the annual number of residential accounts each of the six largest gas utilities terminated in 1998, 1999 and 2000. The table also presents the termination rates for each of these companies.

Residential Service Terminations/Termination Rates Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Company Name	Residential Service Terminations				Termination Rates		
	1998	1999	2000	% Change in # 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
Columbia	6,236	5,956	5,887	-1%	18.52	17.57	17.20
Dominion Peoples	2,790	3,714	1,264	-66%	8.76	11.60	3.92
Equitable	5,683	4,190	5,873	40%	24.83	18.22	25.44
NFG	4,821	5,517	5,427	-2%	24.71	28.23	27.76
PG Energy	2,309	3,529	3,202	-9%	17.22	26.01	23.29
UGI-Gas	7,783	7,142	7,702	8%	33.67	30.14	31.63
Major Gas	29,622	30,048	29,355	-2%			
Average of Rates					21.29	21.96	21.54

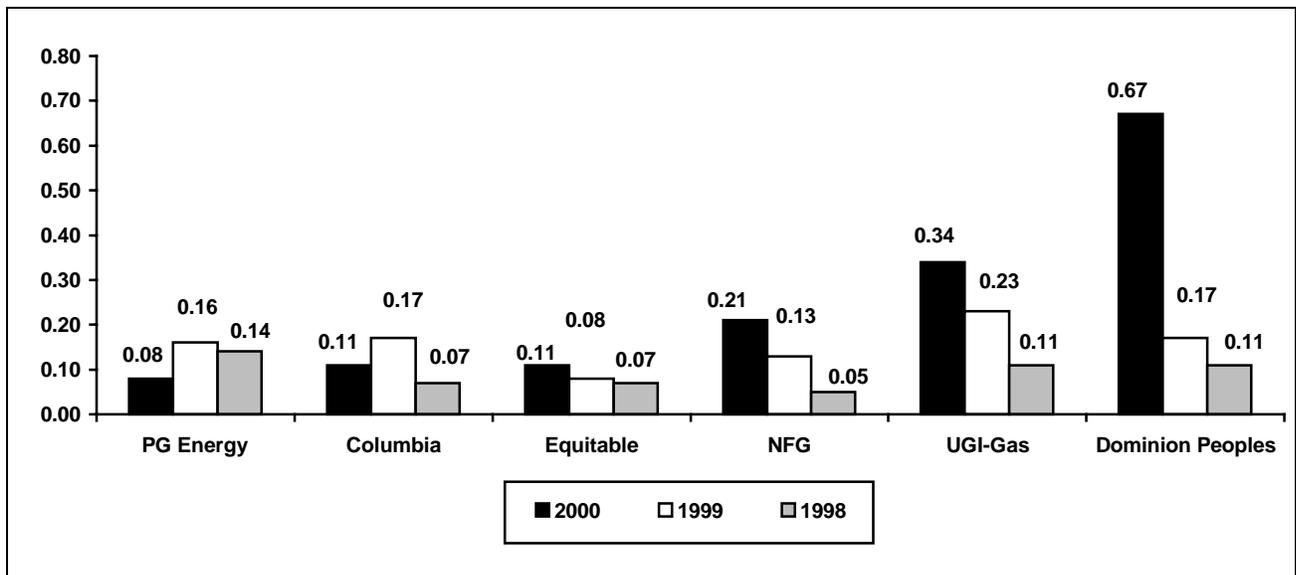
- Overall, the six major gas companies terminated almost 22 out of every 1,000 residential gas customers during 2000.
- Four of the major gas companies terminated fewer residential accounts in 2000 than in 1999 and two terminated more accounts. Overall, the six major gas companies terminated 2% fewer residential accounts in 2000 than in 1999 and 1% less than in 1998.

Compliance

The Bureau's primary compliance effort is its informal compliance process. This process provides utilities with specific examples of apparent problems that may reflect infractions of Commission regulations. Often, through the informal notification process, the BCS provides utilities with written clarifications or explanations of Chapter 56 provisions and other Commission regulations and policies.

During 1998, 1999 and 2000, the Bureau determined that the six major gas utilities together logged 777 infractions of regulations. The chart that follows and the infraction statistics in Appendix H, Table 2 are drawn from all informal complaints that residential consumers filed with the BCS from 1998 through 2000. Infractions identified on complaints involving competition issues are included in the infraction statistics.

PUC Infraction Rates Major Natural Gas Distribution Utilities



- The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers.
- Overall, the number of informally verified infractions attributed to the major gas distribution utilities increased in 2000.
- Appendix H, Table 2 presents the actual number of infractions for each major gas utility in 1998, 1999 and 2000.

5. Water Industry

In 2000, the Commission had jurisdiction over 180 water utilities, including 37 municipal water companies. The Commission categorizes the non-municipal water utilities into one of three classifications: A, B, and C. These three classifications are based on the amount of the utility's annual revenues.

The non-municipal water utilities with the largest annual revenues are classified as Class A water utilities. Class A water companies must have annual revenues of \$750,000 or more for three years in a row. In 2000, there were 11 Class A water companies that served the vast majority of residential water customers. The number of residential customers for these companies ranged from 2,100 for Audubon Water Company to 503,215 residential customers for Pennsylvania-American Water Company; one Class A water company serves no residential customers. In 2000, the Class A water companies were Audubon Water Company, Citizens Utilities Water - PA, Columbia Water Company, Consumers PA Water Company - Roaring Creek Division, Consumers PA Water Company - Shenango Division, Consumers PA Water Company - Susquehanna Division, Manufacturer's Water Company (no residential customers), National Utilities, Inc., Newtown Artesian Water Company, Pennsylvania-American Water Company (PA-American), Philadelphia Suburban Water Company, United Water of Pennsylvania, Inc. and York Water Company. The tables and charts in this chapter present individual statistics for the two largest water companies – PA-American and Philadelphia Suburban -- and for the other “Class A” companies as a whole.

The other classes of water companies have lower annual revenues and typically, fewer residential customers. In 2000, there were 23 Class B companies. Class B water companies have annual revenues between \$150,000 and \$750,000. In 1999, the latest year for which this information is available, the number of residential customers for the Class B companies ranged from 300 to 2,986. There were 109 Class C companies in 2000. Class C water companies have annual revenues of less than \$150,000. The number of residential customers for the Class C companies ranged from 21 to 1,208 in 1999.

The municipal water companies are companies owned by municipalities that serve customers outside their boundaries. The Commission's jurisdiction is limited to regulating the rates and service of customers outside the municipalities. The Commission does not keep records of the number of residential customers each municipal company serves. Overall, the total number of customers served by the municipals that were outside the boundaries of a particular municipality ranged from 3 to 24,892 in 1999.

As would be expected, the majority of the residential consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests to the BCS came from customers of the Class A water utilities. Most of the complaints and payment arrangement requests from water customers

dealt with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code, Chapter 56 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service*. These consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests, for the most part, represent customer appeals to the Commission resulting from the inability of the company and the customer to reach a mutually satisfactory resolution to a dispute or payment negotiation.

The table and charts on the pages that follow depict the performance of the Class A water utilities in 2000. Appendices C through H present the actual statistics that the Bureau used to produce the charts in this chapter.

Consumer Complaints

During 2000, the BCS handled a total of 679 consumer complaints from residential customers of the various water companies. Of those complaints, 86% (581) were from customers of the Class A companies. The remaining 14% were from customers of 41 smaller water companies. In spite of the fact that the vast majority of consumer complaints involved the Class A water utilities in 2000, the Commission devoted a significant amount of attention to the smaller water utilities. Sometimes the amount of time that the BCS spends on a few complaints from customers of a smaller company exceeds the amount of time it spends dealing with the larger number of complaints filed against one of the larger companies. This is because larger companies typically have the resources to respond appropriately to complaints and payment arrangement requests as compared to smaller water companies with limited resources.

In 2000, customers of the small water companies logged complaints with the BCS for a variety of reasons. However, of the 98 consumer complaints filed about the non-Class A water companies, 65% involved some type of service complaint (64 cases) and 22 complaints (22% of the total) related to billing disputes. The other complaints were about various issues including the companies' rates and termination procedures.

Consumer Complaint Categories

After a BCS investigator closes a consumer complaint, the BCS policy unit reviews the complaint, categorizes it into a specific problem category and enters it into the Bureau's computerized information system. The BCS data system then aggregates the data from all complaints. The following table shows the percentage of 2000 complaints from residential customers of the Class A water utilities in each of the categories used by the BCS policy unit to categorize consumer complaints about electric, gas and water utilities. The percentages shown in the table are for all the cases residential customers of these water utilities filed with BCS, not just cases determined to be justified in coming to the Bureau. Appendix D, Table 3 provides the actual number of cases that fell into each category in 2000.

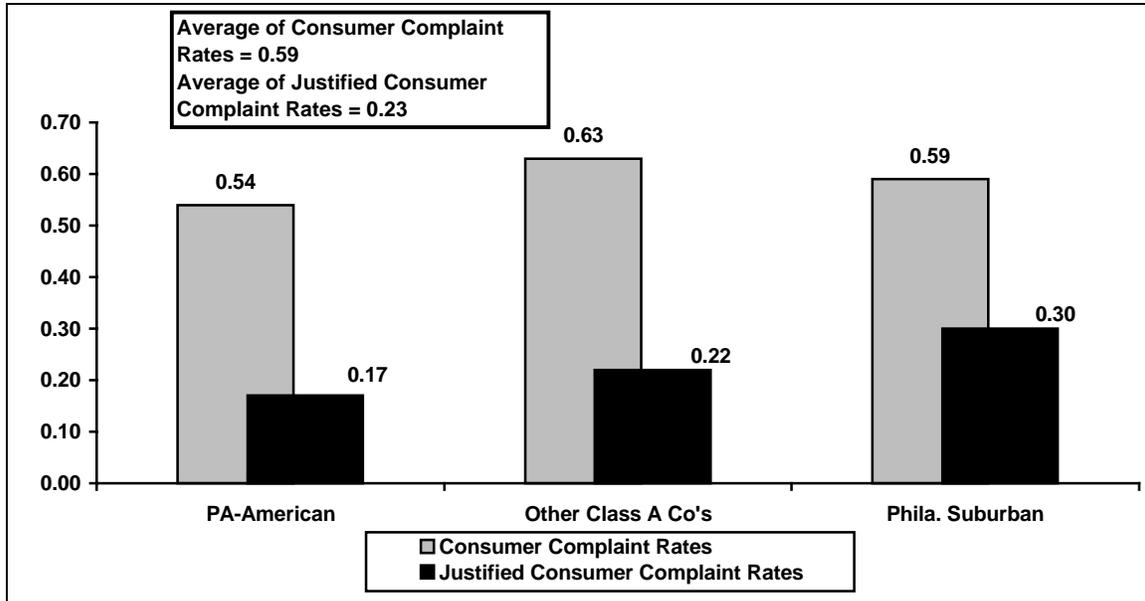
**Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000
Major Water Utilities**

Categories	PA- American	Philadelphia Suburban	Other “Class A” Water	All “Class A” Water
Billing Disputes	33%	52%	18%	38%
Metering	12%	18%	2%	13%
Service Quality	11%	5%	31%	11%
Damages	7%	2%	6%	5%
Personnel Problems	7%	4%	0%	5%
Discontinuance/Transfer	5%	4%	6%	4%
Service Extensions	4%	1%	7%	3%
Scheduling Delays	4%	1%	0%	3%
Other Payment Issues	1%	3%	4%	2%
Service Interruptions	1%	0%	7%	2%
Credit & Deposits	1%	1%	4%	1%
Rates	0%	1%	0%	1%
All Other Problems	14%	8%	15%	12%
TOTAL-Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL-Number*	208	141	54	403

*Based on residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001.

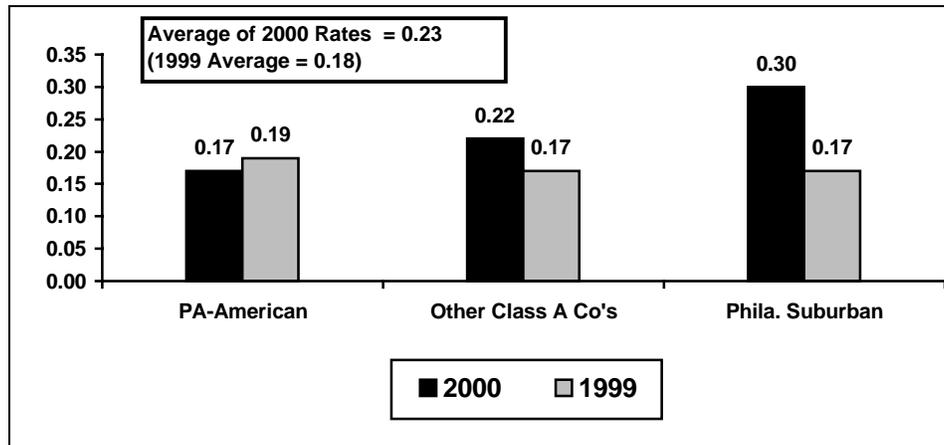
- Categories are for all residential complaints filed with the BCS: justified, inconclusive and unjustified. See Appendix B-1 for an explanation of the various complaint categories and Appendix C-3 for the number of cases in each category.
- Almost half of the consumer complaints about the Class A water utilities involved either billing disputes or service quality issues.
- The percentage of complaints about billing increased from 1999 to 2000. In 2000, thirty-eight percent of the complaints about the Class A water utilities involved billing. Meanwhile, the percentage of complaints about service quality declined from 22% in 1999 to 11% in 2000.

2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Rates/ Justified Consumer Complaint Rates Major Water Utilities



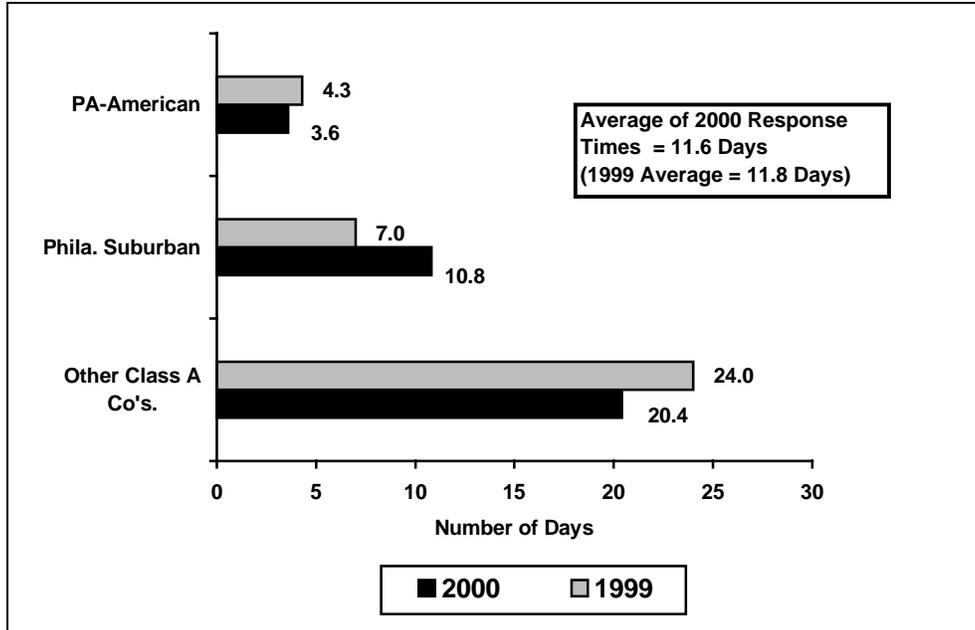
- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers. The consumer complaint rate equals the number of consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the consumer complaint rates is more than 3 times greater than the average of the justified rates for the Class A water companies.
- Appendix D, Table 3 presents the actual number of consumer complaints and justified consumer complaints for Philadelphia Suburban, PA-American and the Other Class A companies in 2000.

1999-2000 Justified Residential Consumer Complaint Rates Major Water Utilities



- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average of the justified consumer complaint rates for the “Class A” water utilities increased from 0.18 in 1999 to 0.23 in 2000.
- Appendix D, Table 3 shows the number of justified consumer complaints for Philadelphia Suburban, PA-American and the Other Class A water companies in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Consumer Complaints Major Water Utilities

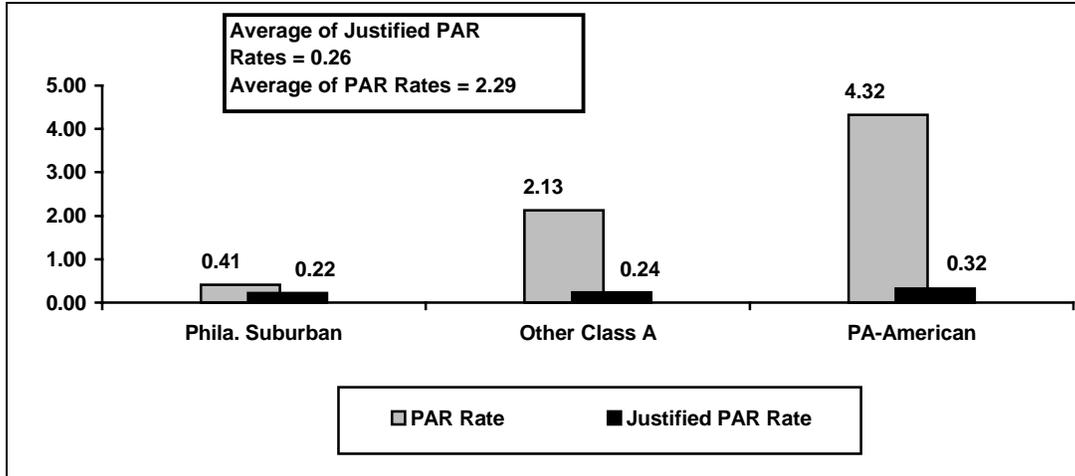


- The average response time for all the Class A water utilities decreased slightly from 11.8 days in 1999 to 11.6 days in 2000. The average response time for the Other Class A companies decreased by 3.6 days.
- Appendix E shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to consumer complaints for the Class A water utilities as well as for the major electric, gas and telephone companies.

Payment Arrangement Requests

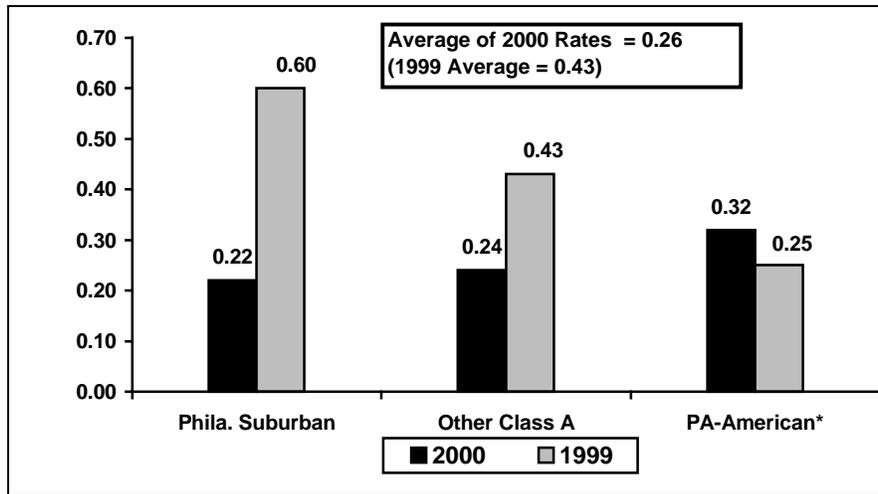
In 2000, the Bureau of Consumer Services handled 2,766 payment arrangement requests (PARs) from residential customers of the water industry. Ninety-eight percent (2,700) of the residential PARs were from customers of the 11 Class A water utilities. As in past years, for the companies with the largest volume of requests, the Bureau policy unit reviewed a representative sample of PARs for case outcome. In 2000, the BCS reviewed a sample of the PARs for PA-American. Thus, the calculations for justified payment arrangement request rate and response time that appear in the pages that follow are based on a subset of cases that the BCS received from customers of PA-American. The BCS believes that the size of the sample gives a reasonable indication of the performance of this company. Appendix F, Table 3 provides additional statistics regarding the payment arrangement requests from residential customers of the Class A water utilities.

2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates/ Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Water Utilities



- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers. The payment arrangement request rate equals the number of payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average PAR rate is nearly nine times the average justified PAR rate.
- Appendix F, Table 3 presents the number of payment arrangement requests and justified payment arrangement requests for PA-American, Philadelphia Suburban and the Other Class A water companies in 2000.

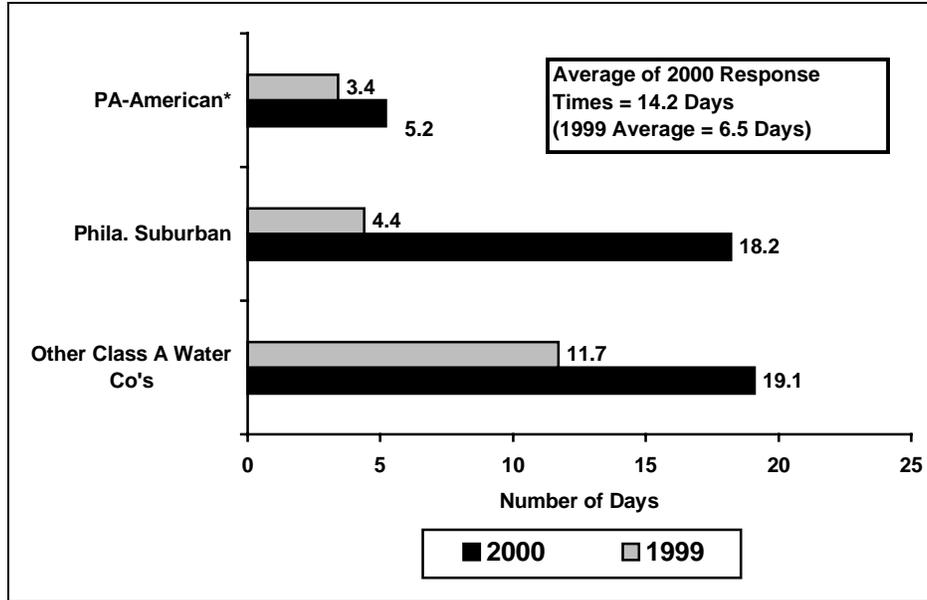
1999-2000 Justified Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Water Utilities



* Based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The average justified PAR rate from the major water utilities declined from 0.43 in 1999 to 0.26 in 2000.
- Appendix F, Table 3 presents the number of payment arrangement requests and justified payment arrangement requests for Class A Water Companies in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Payment Arrangement Requests Major Water Utilities



* Based on a probability sample of cases

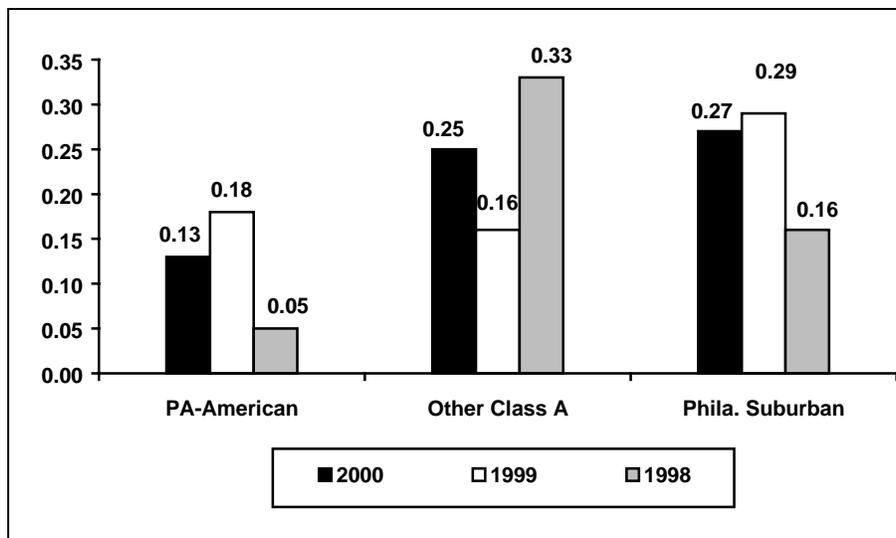
- The average response time for the major water utilities more than doubled from 1999 to 2000, from 6.5 days in 1999 to 14.2 days in 2000.
- Appendix G shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to payment arrangement requests for PA-American, Philadelphia Suburban and the Other Class A Water companies. It also shows the response times for the major electric, gas and telephone companies.

Compliance

The Bureau's primary compliance effort is its informal compliance process. This process provides utilities with specific examples of apparent problems that may reflect infractions of Commission regulations. Often, through the informal notification process, the BCS provides utilities with written clarifications or explanations of Chapter 56 provisions and other Commission regulations and policies.

During 1998, 1999 and 2000, the Bureau informally verified 531 infractions of regulations for the Class A water utilities. The chart that follows and the infraction statistics in Appendix H, Table 3 are drawn from the informal complaints that residential consumers filed with the BCS from 1998 through 2000.

PUC Infraction Rates Major Water Utilities



- The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers.
- Overall, the number of informally verified infractions for the Class A water companies decreased from 1999 to 2000.
- Appendix H, Table 3 presents the actual number of infractions for PA-American, Philadelphia Suburban and the other Class A water companies in 1998, 1999 and 2000.

6. Telephone Industry

Given the growing competitive telecommunications market, the BCS handled cases against or inquiries about many different types of telecommunication service providers such as long distance companies, resellers, billing services, competitive local exchange carriers, as well as local telephone companies. As a result of this growth, there were over 500 such providers doing business in Pennsylvania in 2000. Of this group of telecommunications providers, 37 were incumbent local telephone companies. Thirty-two of these local telephone companies were nonmajor utilities each serving less than 50,000 residential customers. The remaining five local telephone companies were major companies, each with over 100,000 residential customers. Collectively, the major telephone companies served over five million residential accounts in 2000. This chapter will focus exclusively on the five major telephone companies: ALLTEL Pennsylvania, Inc. (ALLTEL), Commonwealth Telephone Company (Commonwealth), United Telephone Company of Pennsylvania (United) d/b/a Sprint, Verizon North Inc. (Verizon North) f/k/a GTE North Incorporated, and Verizon Pennsylvania (Verizon PA) f/k/a Bell Atlantic-Pennsylvania, Inc.

Consumer Complaints

As previously stated, the Bureau handled consumer complaints regarding many different types of telecommunication service providers in addition to complaints from local telephone companies. In 2000, the Bureau handled 12,363 telephone complaints from residential customers. Of these complaints, there were 9,082 from residential customers of the incumbent local telephone companies. Within this group of complaints against local telephone companies, 8,998 were residential consumer complaints against the major telephone companies. The majority of these complaints (8,929) were about matters unrelated to competition. The remaining 3,365 complaints were against other telecommunications providers about various problems such as slamming, cramming, long distance charges, billing, etc. (See Appendix A).

For a third consecutive year, the Bureau received an unprecedented number of consumer complaints about the telephone industry. Given this large number of consumer complaints in 2000, the Bureau did not have the resources to evaluate all of them for case outcome and response time. Therefore, the BCS policy unit reviewed a representative sample of consumer complaints from customers of the largest local telephone company, Verizon PA. Thus, the calculations for justified consumer complaint rate and response time for Verizon PA that appear in the pages that follow are based on a subset of cases that the BCS received from customers of this utility. The BCS believes that the size of the sample gives a reasonable indication of Verizon PA's performance.

Consumer Complaint Categories

Most of the cases found in the consumer complaint categories deal with matters covered under 52 Pa. Code Chapters 63 and 64. The consumer complaint categories table presents the percentage of consumer complaints found in each of the 11 complaint categories for each of the major telephone companies and the telephone industry. The Bureau first classifies all consumer complaints into one of six major problem areas then expands them into one of 11 distinct problem categories for the telephone industry.

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000 Major Local Telephone Companies

Categories	ALLTEL	Commonwealth	United	Verizon North (GTE)	Verizon PA	Telephone Majors
Service Delivery	12%	20%	22%	16%	61%	40%
Unsatisfactory Service	40%	32%	24%	58%	31%	34%
Billing Disputes	7%	14%	18%	10%	2%	8%
Toll Services	4%	20%	14%	1%	1%	5%
Sales Nonbasic Services	6%	1%	9%	3%	1%	3%
Credit & Deposits	24%	7%	3%	4%	0%	3%
Non-Recurring Charges	3%	3%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Discontinuance/Transfer	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%
Annoyance Calls	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Rates	1%	0%	3%	2%	1%	1%
Audiotex	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total-Percent*	100%	98%	99%	99%	100%	99%
Total-Number**	112	69	410	272	907***	1,770

*Columns may total more or less than 100% due to rounding.

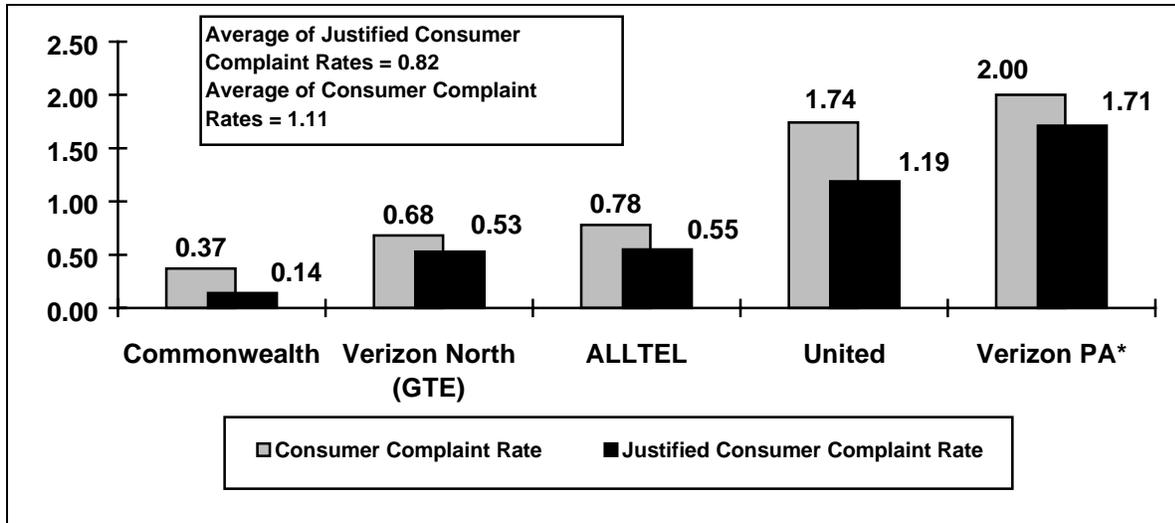
**Based on complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001.

***Based on a probability sample of cases.

- It is important to note that the percentages shown in the table are for all the cases that customers filed with BCS, including unjustified cases. See Appendix B-2 for an explanation of complaint categories and Appendix C-4 for the number of cases in each category.
- Eighty-two percent of all complaints for the telephone industry fall into one of three complaint categories, unsatisfactory service, service delivery, or billing disputes. Unsatisfactory service complaints allege poor service quality, problems with phone numbers or telephone directories and problems with access to the toll network. Examples of service delivery complaints include delays in service installation or disconnection, company failure to keep scheduled appointments, the unavailability of special service and poor performance by company personnel. Billing disputes include any problems that customers have with their bill such as bills that seem too high or are inaccurate.
- The table shows that 40% of all the consumer complaints filed against the telephone industry are about service delivery while 34% are about unsatisfactory service.
- Billing disputes account for 8% of the total number of consumer complaints. With the exception of toll services (5%), the remaining complaint categories each account for 3% or less of total complaints about the telephone industry.

The 1999 and 2000 consumer complaint figures for justified consumer complaint rates and response time for each of the major telephone companies are presented on the following pages.

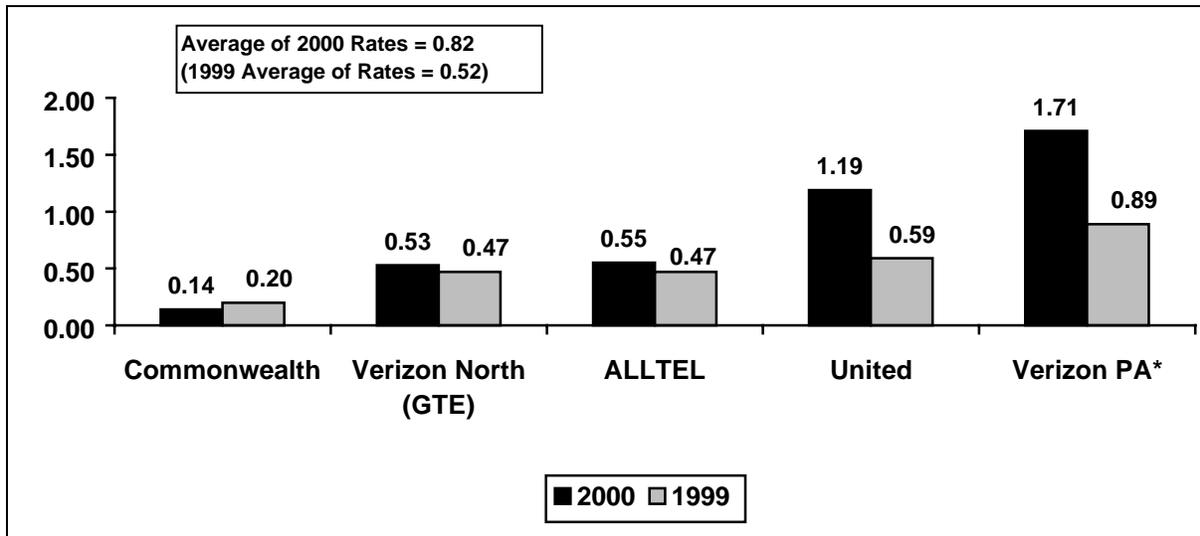
2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Rates/ Justified Consumer Complaint Rates Major Local Telephone Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers. The consumer complaint rate equals the number of consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The Bureau received more complaints from customers about the telephone industry in 2000 than in 1999. As a result of this increase in complaints, the telephone industry average for consumer complaint rate increased from 1999 to 2000.
- Generally, the justified consumer complaint rate is less than the consumer complaint rate. For 2000, the industry average for consumer complaint rate is 1.11 while the justified consumer complaint rate is .82.
- Appendix D, Table 4 shows the number of consumer complaints and justified consumer complaints for each major telephone company in 2000.

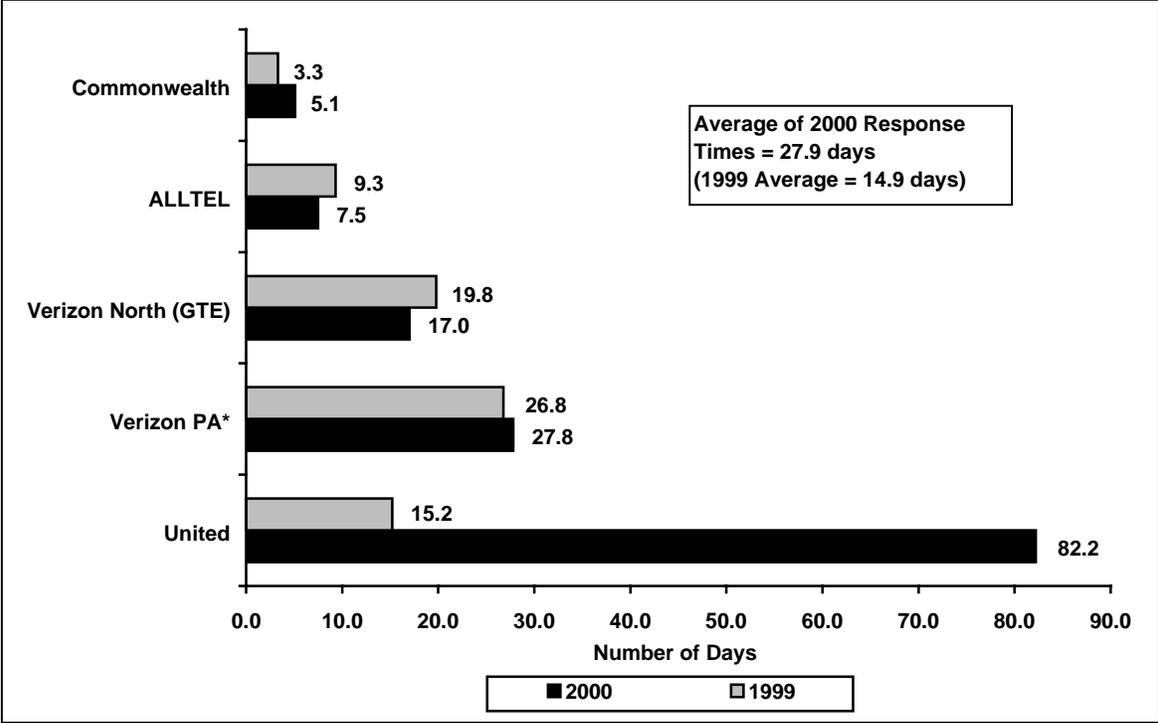
1999-2000 Justified Residential Consumer Complaint Rates Major Local Telephone Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified consumer complaint rate equals the number of justified consumer complaints for each 1,000 residential customers.
- Overall, the major telephone companies' justified consumer complaint rates increased from 1999 to 2000.
- Appendix D, Table 4 shows the number of justified consumer complaints for each major telephone company in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Consumer Complaints Major Local Telephone Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases

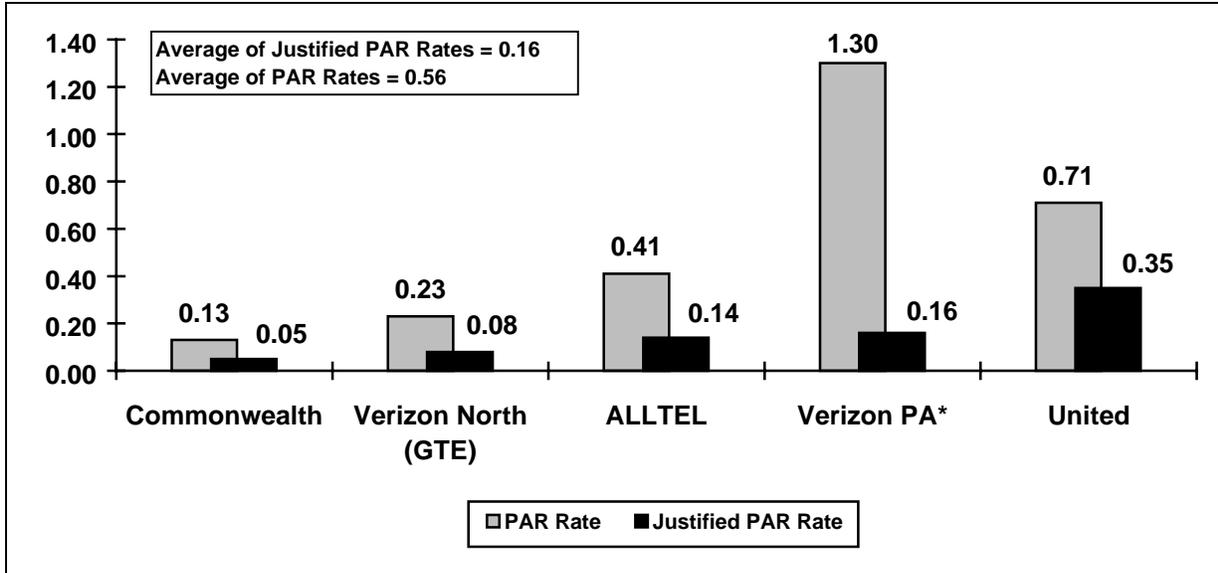
- Appendix E shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to consumer complaints for each of the major telephone companies as well as for the major electric, gas and water utilities.
- The telephone industry’s response to consumer complaints increased by 13 days from 1999 to 2000 primarily because of a dramatic increase in one company’s response time.

Payment Arrangement Requests

Telephone service falls into three categories: basic, nonbasic and toll service. The Bureau does not handle customer requests for payment arrangements that involve toll or nonbasic services. For the telephone industry, payment arrangement requests are principally contacts to the Bureau or to companies involving a request for payment terms for basic service. Most payment arrangement requests are cases relating to the cessation of telephone service and are registered during the suspension phase. Under Chapter 64, a customer contact in response to a suspension notice is a dispute (as the term is defined in §64.2) only if the contact includes a disagreement with respect to the application of a provision of Chapter 64. Where telephone cases involving telephone service suspension are concerned, failure to negotiate a payment arrangement does not in itself mean that a dispute exists. Consequently, in this report, telephone cases that involve payment arrangement requests have been separated from telephone cases that also involve a dispute. During 2000, the Bureau handled 5,983 payment arrangement requests from residential and commercial customers of local telephone companies. Of these cases, 5,536 payment arrangement requests were from residential customers of the five major telephone companies: ALLTEL, Commonwealth, United, Verizon North (GTE) and Verizon PA.

As previously mentioned, the Bureau has used sampling over the years to evaluate the large volume of cases it receives from the largest major companies. Given the large volume of payment arrangement requests from Verizon PA, the Bureau evaluated a representative sample of the company's payment arrangement requests to determine justified rate and response time. The BCS believes that the size of the sample gives a reasonable indication of the company's performance. The 1999 and 2000 payment arrangement request figures for justified payment arrangement request rates and response times for major telephone companies are presented in the tables that follow.

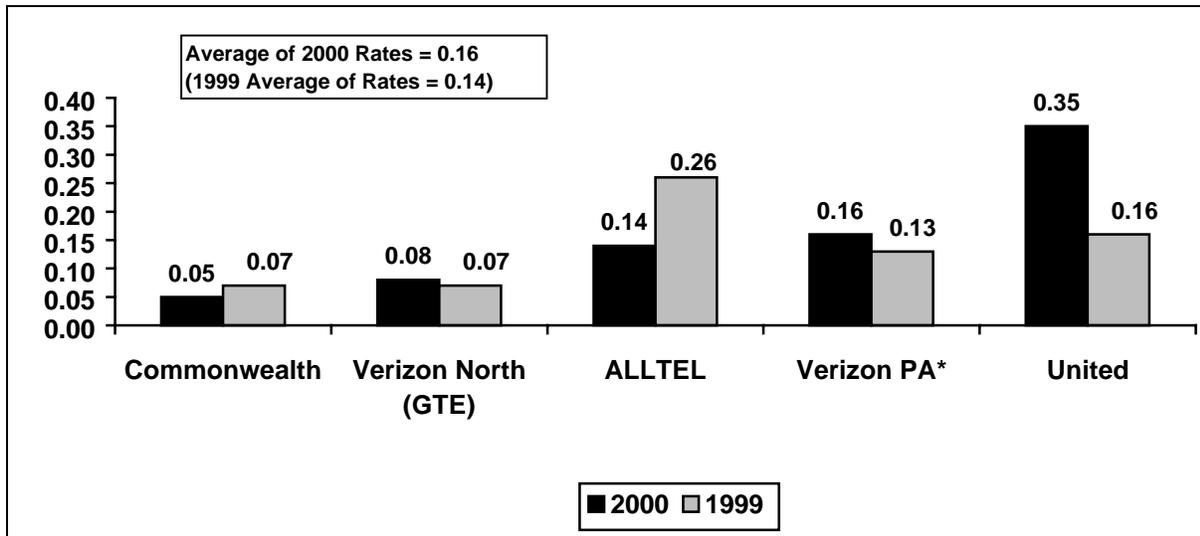
**2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates/
Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rates
Major Local Telephone Companies**



* Justified PAR rate based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers. The payment arrangement request rate equals the number of payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- Most customers in 2000 had already contacted their utility prior to contacting the BCS regarding a payment arrangement request. Fewer customers sought the Commission's assistance in making payment arrangements with their local telephone companies in 2000.
- Appendix F, Table 4 presents the number of payment arrangement requests and justified payment arrangement requests for each major telephone company in 2000.

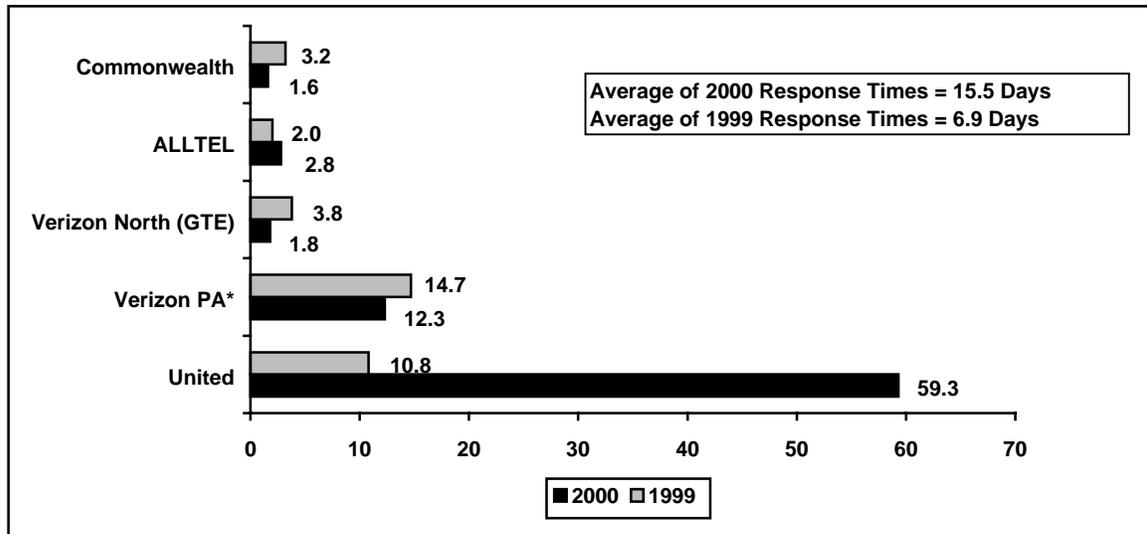
1999-2000 Justified Residential Payment Arrangement Request Rates Major Local Telephone Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases

- The justified payment arrangement request rate equals the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each 1,000 residential customers.
- The telephone industry's justified payment arrangement request rate increased from 1999 to 2000.
- Appendix F, Table 4 shows the number of justified payment arrangement requests for each major telephone company in 1999 and 2000.

1999-2000 Response Time to BCS Residential Payment Arrangement Requests Major Local Telephone Companies



*Based on a probability sample of cases

- The telephone industry's response time to payment arrangement requests increased by over 8 days from 1999 to 2000 primarily because of a dramatic increase in one company's response time.
- Appendix G shows the 1999 and 2000 response times to payment arrangement requests for each of the major telephone companies as well as for the major electric, gas and water utilities.

Termination of Service

Chapter 64 defines suspension as a temporary cessation of service without the consent of the customer. Termination of service, according to Chapter 64, is the permanent cessation of service after a suspension without the consent of the customer. Most payment arrangement requests are cases relating to the cessation of telephone service and are registered during the suspension phase. Many customers who have their basic service suspended are able to make payment arrangements and avoid termination. Those who are not able to avoid termination cease to be customers once the termination of basic service takes place. For the telephone industry, termination rate is based on the number of basic service terminations per 1,000 residential customers. Shifts in terminations can signal potential problems with customers maintaining basic telephone service and reflect the impact of universal service programs.

Residential Service Terminations/Termination Rates Major Local Telephone Companies

Company Name	Residential Service Terminations				Termination Rates		
	1998	1999	2000	% Change in # 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
ALLTEL	3,504	3,564	3,888	9%	19.89	20.06	21.69
Commonwealth	2,880	2,940	3,552	21%	13.77	13.16	14.96
United	5,832	5,868	13,596	132%	20.85	20.69	47.44
Verizon North (GTE)	18,840	16,836	12,732	-24%	39.34	34.66	25.88
Verizon PA	167,928	172,512	174,888	1%	43.93	44.57	44.36
Major Telephone	198,984	201,720	208,656	3%			
Average of Rates					27.55	26.63	28.03

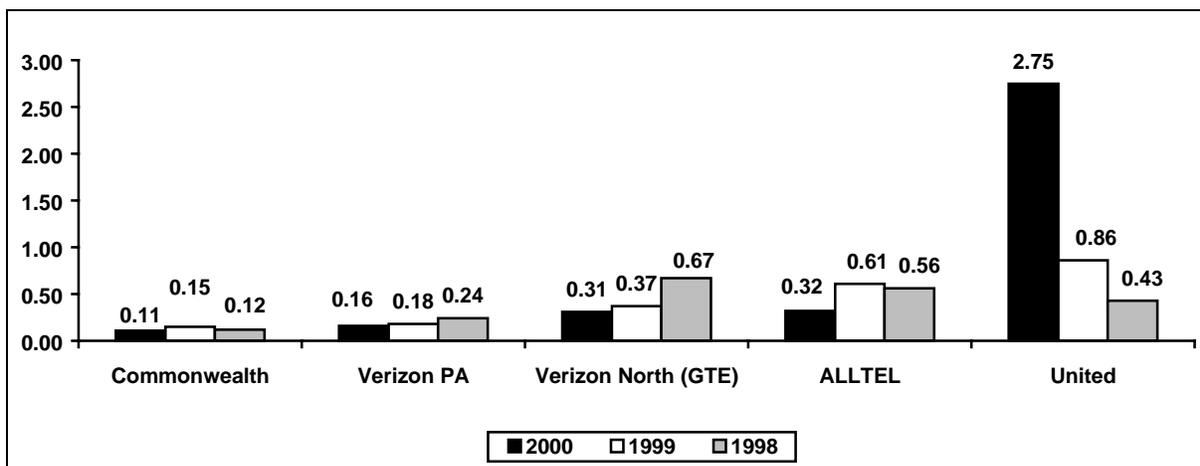
- Overall, the basic service termination rate for major telephone companies increased from 1999 to 2000.

Compliance

The Bureau's primary compliance effort is its informal compliance process. Through informal compliance notifications, this process provides companies with specific examples of apparent problems that may reflect infractions of the Commission's Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Telephone Service (Chapter 64) and the Telephone Quality Service Standards (Chapter 63). The informal notification process also enables the BCS to provide companies with written clarifications and explanations of Chapter 64 and Chapter 63 provisions and Bureau policies. The informal compliance process is specifically designed to identify systematic errors. Companies can then investigate the scope of the problem and take corrective action. Appropriate corrective action usually involves modifying a computer program; revising the text of a notice, a billing or a letter; changing a company procedure, or providing additional staff training to ensure the proper implementation of a sound procedure.

The infraction statistics are drawn from all informal complaints that residential consumers filed with the BCS from 1998 through 2000. This data was retrieved from the BCS' Compliance Tracking System as of June 2001. The chart that follows and the infraction statistics in Appendix H, Table 4 present Chapter 64 infraction statistics for the five major telephone companies.

PUC Chapter 64 Infraction Rate Major Local Telephone Companies



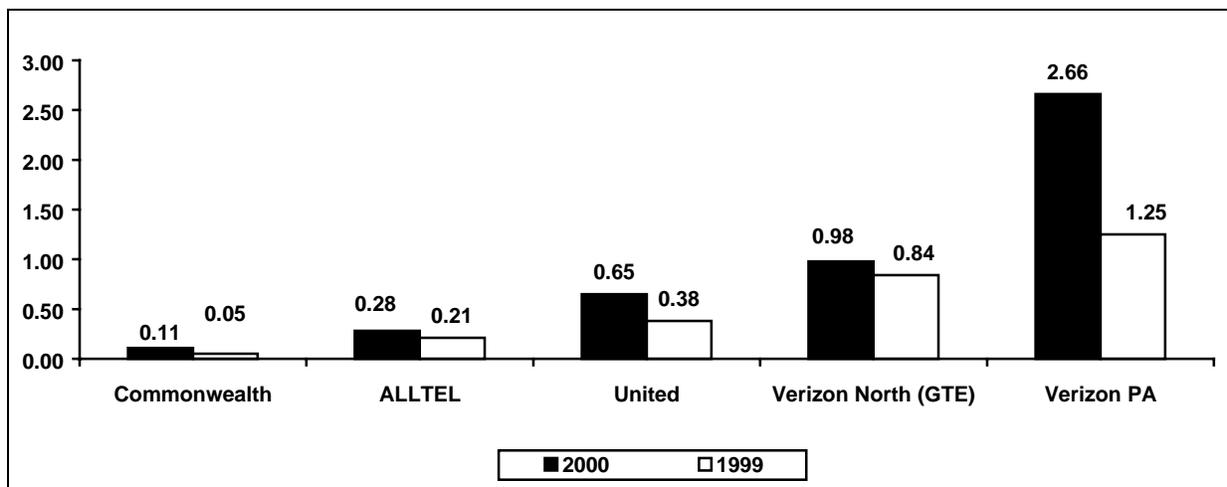
- The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers.

- The number of informally verified infractions of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 64 Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Telephone Service reported by BCS for the five major local exchange carriers increased 31% from 1999 to 2000. This increase is attributed to the performance of one company whereas the other four major companies had decreases in their Chapter 64 infraction rates from 1999 to 2000.

Although the Bureau tracks all infractions gleaned from the informal complaints filed with the PUC by residential telephone customers, only the data on Chapter 64 infractions have been included in past reports. With the recent emphasis at both the state and federal level on quality of service, we have decided that we will include the Chapter 63 infraction statistics in this year's report.

These infraction statistics are drawn from all informal complaints that residential consumers filed with the BCS from 1999 to 2000. This data was retrieved from the BCS' Compliance Tracking System as of June 2001. The chart that follows and the infraction statistics in Appendix H, Table 5 present Chapter 63 infraction statistics for the five major telephone companies.

PUC Chapter 63 Infraction Rate Major Local Telephone Companies



- The infraction rate is the number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers.
- The number of informally verified infractions of 52 Pa. Code Chapter 63 Telephone Quality Service Standards reported by BCS for the five major local exchange carriers increased 107% from 1999 to 2000.

7. Universal Service and Energy Conservation Programs

The Public Utility Commission has a long history of involvement in universal service and energy conservation programs that help utility consumers obtain and keep service and conserve energy. In the sections that follow, readers will find highlights of the many programs that the PUC has supported and encouraged, not only in 2000 but in prior years as well.

Electric, Gas and Water Programs

The Public Utility Commission's Bureau of Consumer Services monitors and evaluates the universal service and energy conservation programs of the electric, gas and water companies. The Bureau's goal in monitoring these programs is to help the Commission fulfill its oversight responsibilities by increasing the effectiveness of utility collections while protecting the public's health and safety.

Experience and evaluation indicate that the programs that grew out of the Bureau's involvement are successful at helping to maintain universal service and cost effective to the utilities. In apparent recognition of the success and value of these programs, the Natural Gas Choice and Competition Act and the Electricity Generation Customer Choice and Competition Act (Acts) require the Commission to ensure that universal service and energy conservation programs are appropriately funded and available in each service territory of the companies covered by the Acts. The Public Utility Code, as amended by the Acts, imposes a mandate for universal service and energy conservation policies, programs, and protections. The Acts define universal service and energy conservation policies as customer assistance programs, termination of service protections and consumer protection policies and services that help residential low-income customers to reduce or manage energy consumption in a cost-effective manner, such as the low-income usage reduction programs and consumer education. The Acts further require the Commission to ensure that programs are available and appropriately funded and to ensure that EDCs (Electric Distribution Companies) and NGDCs (Natural Gas Distribution Companies) operate universal service programs efficiently and cost-effectively. Appendix I, Tables 1-3 highlights future funding and enrollment levels for EDC's and NGDC's CAP (Customer Assistance Program) and LIURP (Low Income Usage Reduction Program) that reach maximum levels in 2004.

At Public Meeting of June 22, 2000, the Commission reviewed and adopted recommendations of the BCS relating to natural gas universal service and energy conservation reporting requirement regulations. Section 2203(8) of the Act requires the Commission to ensure that universal service and energy conservation policies, activities

and services are appropriately funded and available in each natural gas distribution territory. The purpose of these regulations is to establish standard reporting requirements for universal service and energy conservation programs. The data collected as a result of the reporting requirements will assist the Commission in monitoring the progress of the NGDCs in achieving universal service in their service territories. The NGDC reporting requirements are similar to the EDC's universal service reporting requirements.

The Commission also adopted two separate recommendations of BCS to approve UGI –Electric's and PPL's three-year universal service plans. The three-year plans comply with the following orders or regulations: terms of each utility's restructuring agreements, universal service requirements of the Act, the reporting requirements at sections 54.74 and 54.77 of the Act, the CAP Policy Statement, and the LIURP regulations.

PECO Energy (PECO) also submitted its three-year universal service plan to BCS for review and Commission approval. Based on BCS recommendations, the Commission found that PECO's universal service plan complies with sections 2803 and 2804(9) of the Act, the reporting requirements at 52 Pa. Code § 54.74, and the Commission's Final Order approving PECO's restructuring settlement agreement at Docket No. R-00973953. The Commission also found that PECO's plan may not adequately comply with section 2802(10) of the Act and the CAP Policy Statement at 52 Pa. Code § 69.265(2). These sections require that CAP payments be affordable. Pursuant to Commission order at Docket No. M-00001418, BCS and PECO continue to work on a resolution to this issue.

Section 2203(10) of the Natural Gas Choice and Competition Act states, “[c]onsistent with paragraph (7), the Commission shall convene a task force to review universal service programs and their funding. In 2000, the BCS convened six natural gas task force meetings. The BCS provides technical advice and assistance and serves as a facilitator to the task force.

In 2000, PUC contract staff made almost 26,000 referrals to universal service programs as part of the intake process. When customers called BCS for payment arrangement requests, staff made referrals on 75% of those requests.

The following sections briefly discuss the status of universal service programs in the electric, gas and water industries during 2000. The programs include Customer Assistance Programs, the Low-Income Usage Reduction Programs, Utility Hardship Fund Programs, Customer Assistance and Referral Evaluation Services programs, and other programs to assist low-income customers.

Customer Assistance Programs

CAPs provide an alternative to traditional collection methods for low-income, payment troubled utility customers. Generally, customers enrolled in a CAP agree to make monthly payments to the utility based on household size and gross income. Customers make regular monthly payments, which may be for an amount that is less than the current bill for utility service, in exchange for continued provision of the service. Besides regular monthly payments, customers need to comply with certain responsibilities and restrictions to remain eligible for continued participation. This section presents a progress report on the implementation of the Commission's CAP policy statement by the major electric and gas utilities in Pennsylvania.

CAP Progress Report

For the first time in 2000, every major electric and gas utility began to operate full-size programs rather than pilots. However, as in 1999, several EDCs did not meet their enrollment targets for 2000. The EDCs attribute this to a variety of reasons that include computer hardware and software enhancements, and billing system problems. Restrictive eligibility criteria also played a role in not meeting targets.

As of December 31, 2000, utilities had enrolled 128,500 customers in CAP compared with 114,447 customers at the end of December 1999. Each utility will continue to expand its program until EDCs reach maximum participation levels in 2002 and NGDCs reach maximum levels in 2004.

Program Changes

The table on the following page shows the status of the electric and gas CAPs for 2000. Program changes in 2000 include the following:

- Based on BCS review and recommendation, the Commission approved universal service design changes of PG Energy's customer assistance program called Partners Program. To comply with terms of the restructuring order at R-00994783, PG Energy revised the following design features: eligibility, enrollment, and default provisions. PG Energy also requested approval to increase minimum payments and the percentage of income payment required from its customers.
- PPL Gas submitted its universal service plan to BCS to comply with terms of their restructuring order at R-00974788. PPL Gas universal service programs include a CAP, CARES program, and a hardship fund program. Based on BCS review and recommendation, the Commission approved the universal service plan of PPL Gas.

- As a result of NGDC restructuring settlement agreements, NGDCs made revisions to their CAP designs in the following areas:
 - Eligibility – Equitable, PG Energy, Dominion Peoples eliminated negative ability to pay criterion and 12-month residency requirements. NFG and UGI eliminated minimum arrearage requirements.
 - Default Provisions – Equitable, PG Energy, and Dominion Peoples eliminated 12-month stay out provisions.
 - Automatic enrollment – Under certain conditions, Equitable, PG Energy, Dominion Peoples, and UGI will automatically enroll eligible customers into CAP.

2000 CAP Status Summary

Utility	Enrollment Began	Phase-In Size EDCs – 2002 NGDCs - 2004	Enrollment as of 12/00	2000 Program Phase-In or Pilot Size
Allegheny	6/94	16,800	5,254	8,943
Duquesne	9/95	15,000	4,300	6,378
Met-Ed	8/93	7,000	3,387	3,840
PECO	1984	93,000	83,931	80,000
Penelec	7/94	7,000-11,800	5,616	4,714-7,952
Penn Power	10/99	3,400-4,500	2,188	1,133-1,500
PPL Utilities*	6/93	17,000	4,579	11,000
Electric		159,200-165,100	109,255	116,008-119,613
Columbia	6/92	22,000	8,219	2,000
Dominion Peoples	11/94	9,000	1,235	1,000
Equitable	2/91	10,000	4,298	7,000
NFG	12/91	5,000	4,000	5,000
PG Energy	9/95	5,500 by 4/1	827	1,000
UGI-Gas	6/97	4,000	666	1,000
Gas		55,500	19,245	17,000
Total		214,700-220,700	128,500	133,008-136,613

*PPL developed enrollment estimates based on funding levels.

A Helping Hand

In 1994, The Philadelphia Suburban Water Company (PSW) requested and received Commission approval to implement a pilot program that combines several of the elements of energy universal service programs with those of conservation programs. PSW calls this program *A Helping Hand*. In 1996, PSW made *A Helping Hand* a permanent part of its collection strategy. In 1997, PSW expanded *A Helping Hand* to all four counties in its service territory, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. The program offers a water usage audit and includes an arrearage forgiveness component. PSW targets *A Helping Hand* to low-income customers who are payment troubled and have high water bills. The company seeks donations from the community to assist with the arrearage forgiveness component. Community agencies administer the program.

Each household enrolled in *A Helping Hand* receives a water usage audit that includes conservation education. A participating household also receives water conservation improvements as necessary; PSW will pay up to \$100 for minor plumbing repairs. As an incentive to encourage regular bill payment, PSW forgives a percentage of a participant's arrearage if the participant makes regular monthly payments toward the arrearage.

At the end of 2000, PSW's program had 246 active participants. During the year, PSW spent \$14,682 to complete district interviews and household audits. In addition, the company granted \$800 in forgiveness credits to 13 program participants.

Low-Income Rate

By order dated October 2, 1997, the Commission approved PA-American's request to establish a Low-Income Rate. At the end of 2000, there were 5,945 active participants in the Low-Income Rate.

PA-American targets the program to customers whose incomes meet the low-income criteria published by the BCS. BCS defines low-income households as those households whose incomes are below 150% of the federal poverty income guidelines. Customers agree to make monthly payments in exchange for a 20% discount on the service charge. Customers who miss more than two payments in a six-month period lose their eligibility in the program. Customers who are ineligible because of nonpayment remain so for one year.

CARES Programs

In May 1985, the Commission issued a Secretarial letter encouraging each of the major electric and gas utilities to establish a Customer Assistance and Referral Evaluation Services (CARES) program. The purpose of a CARES program is to provide a cost-effective service that helps selected, payment-troubled customers maximize their ability to pay utility bills. A utility CARES representative works with program participants on a personal basis to help them secure energy assistance funds. By securing these funds, customers with special needs can maintain safe and adequate utility service. Besides directly providing assistance to needy customers, CARES representatives also perform the task of strengthening and maintaining a network of community organizations and government agencies that can provide services to the program clients.

Quantifying the advantages of CARES is often difficult; a CARES program generally helps address health and safety concerns relating to utility service by providing important benefits. One example of a CARES function is that staff conducts outreach and makes referrals to programs that provide energy assistance grants. CARES staff makes referrals to LIHEAP, the federal program that provides energy assistance grants, hardship funds, and other agencies that provide cash assistance. In 2000, utilities reported that their CARES staff helped low-income customers receive almost \$31.5 million in LIHEAP energy assistance grants. Appendix J shows the number of participants in each utility's CARES program.

For more information about CAPs, *A Helping Hand*, Low-Income Rate, CARES, or Hardship Funds, readers may contact Janice K. Hummel at (717) 783-9088 or by e-mail at hummel@puc.state.pa.us.

Low Income Usage Reduction Program

The Pennsylvania Low Income Usage Reduction Program (LIURP) is a statewide, utility-sponsored, residential usage reduction program mandated by Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission regulations. Overall, the 15 major electric and gas companies that are required to participate in LIURP have spent nearly \$193 million from 1988 through 2000, by providing weatherization/usage reduction treatments to 175,087 low-income households. While the initial regulations mandated the program from 1988 to 1992, revised regulations extended LIURP for an additional five years through January 1998. The regulations were revised again on January 31, 1998 and extended without a sunset provision.

The primary goals of LIURP are to assist low-income residential customers to conserve energy and reduce their energy bills. If these goals are met, LIURP should serve as an effective means to improve the LIURP recipients' ability to pay their energy bills. LIURP is targeted toward customers with annual incomes at or below 150% of the federal

poverty level. However, beginning in 1998, the regulations permit companies to spend up to 20% of their annual LIURP budgets on customers with incomes between 150% and 200% of the federal poverty level. LIURP places priority on the highest energy users which offer the greatest opportunities for bill reductions. When feasible, the program targets customers with payment problems (arrearages). The program is available to both home owners and renters. LIURP services all housing types, including single family homes, mobile homes, and small and large multi-family residences.

The 1998 program year is the latest year for which post-installation annual usage data is available. Overall, the 15 major electric and gas companies spent \$14,867,657 on LIURP in 1998. These companies provided usage reduction services to 12,711 low-income households in 1998. LIURP was successful in achieving its goals by producing benefits in the areas of demand side management, bill reduction, arrearage reduction and avoided collection costs. The list of LIURP benefits includes many other benefits for both utilities and their customers. Noteworthy among the program benefits is arrearage reduction. The analysis of the accounts of payment-troubled LIURP recipients in recent years shows that their arrearages were increasing in the year prior to the customers' receipt of LIURP services. However, in the year following these treatments, arrearages declined. Overall, the total annual program arrearage reductions have been between \$1 million and \$2 million. The BCS believes that this result is directly attributable to two factors: 1) lower bills and 2) the development of a partnership between the customer and the utility as a result of the provision of LIURP services. The energy savings and bill reductions for 1998 are presented in the following table:

1998 Energy Savings and Bill Reduction

Job Type	1998 Average Energy Savings	Estimated Annual Bill Reduction
Electric Heating	10.6%	\$167
Electric Water Heating	5.7%	\$86
Electric Baseload	9.6%	\$106
Gas Heating	23.1%	\$366

Appendices K and L show the spending and production levels of each participating utility from 1998 to 2000 and include the total spending and production amounts since LIURP began in 1988.

For more information about LIURP, readers may contact David Mick of the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at (717) 783-3232 or by e-mail at mick@puc.state.pa.us.

Utility Hardship Fund Programs

Utility company hardship funds provide cash assistance to utility customers who “fall through the cracks” of other financial programs or to those who still have a critical need for assistance after other resources have been exhausted. The funds make payments directly to companies on behalf of eligible customers. Contributions from shareholders, utility employees and customers are the primary sources of funding for these programs. Monies from formal complaint settlements, overcharge settlements, off-system sales, special solicitations of business corporations and natural gas purchase arrangements with Citizens Energy Corporation expand the funding for these assistance programs. Each fall, the Bureau of Consumer Services surveys the companies with hardship funds to obtain information about their programs. The information in this section is from the data that the companies supplied about their hardship funds.

The Pennsylvania Electric Company and Metropolitan Edison Company were the first utilities to begin hardship fund programs. With encouragement from the Public Utility Commission, many other major companies began supporting similar programs. In 1985, the Commission issued a Secretarial letter to all major utilities urging them to develop and support a utility company hardship fund. By 1986 each major electric and gas company sponsored a utility hardship fund in its service territory. PA-American is the only Pennsylvania water utility that sponsors a hardship fund for its customers. The Commission issued another Secretarial letter in November 1992 that recommended specific guidelines for the funds. (Appendix M lists the name of the hardship fund(s) each utility supports.)

Contributions

In the electric industry the average ratepayer/employee contribution in the 1999-2000 program year was \$.32 per residential customer. In the gas industry, the average contribution was \$.34 per residential customer and for PA-American, the average contribution was \$.11 per residential customer. According to the 1999-2000 survey data, total contributions from electric, gas and water ratepayers and employees decreased for the fifth year in a row. In 1999-2000, contributions from ratepayers and employees totaled \$2,013,220 compared to \$2,073,932 in 1998-99. Contributions from shareholders increased slightly; electric, gas and water shareholders contributed \$3,040,083 in 1999-2000 compared to \$2,955,784 in 1998-99. For the 1999-2000 program year, on average, shareholders of the electric distribution companies contributed .05% of residential revenues to their utility’s hardship fund. For the gas utilities, the average was .08% of residential revenues. PA-American’s shareholders contributed .04% of residential revenues.

Shareholders contribute to utility hardship funds in three ways: grants for program administration, outright grants to the funds, and grants that match the contributions of ratepayers. Relative comparisons of shareholder contributions are based on the total dollars of shareholder contributions in 1999-2000 divided by the company's residential revenues for 2000. The following table shows the amount of contributions from each company's shareholders and from employees and ratepayers for the 1999-2000 program year.

**1999-00 Ratepayer/Employee and
Shareholder Contributions to Hardship Funds**

Company	Ratepayer/ Employee Contributions	Average Ratepayer/ Employee Contribution per Customer	Shareholder Contributions	1999-00 Contribution/ Residential Revenues
Allegheny Power	\$202,607	\$.34	\$196,648	.049%
Duquesne	281,076	.54	420,640	.107
Met-Ed	88,202	.20	150,000	.039
PECO*	288,706	.21	511,000	.033
Penelec	49,593	.10	150,000	.044
Penn Power	58,304	.44	150,350	.121
PPL Utilities	471,644	.42	440,000	.047
Columbia	115,435	.34	134,958	.051
Dominion Peoples	185,098	.57	427,000	.224
Equitable	106,121	.46	240,000	.103
NFG	45,568	.23	33,333	.019
PG Energy	16,348	.12	33,159	.027
T.W. Phillips	30,000	.56	36,750	.084
UGI*	18,756	.08	48,090	.027
PA-American	55,762	.11	71,190	.037
TOTAL	\$2,013,220		\$3,040,433	
Average		\$.30		.055%

*Includes electric and gas

Benefits

The amount of benefits disbursed to eligible ratepayers increased from the 1998-1999 program year to the 1999-2000 program year. The number of ratepayers receiving grants decreased by 1% during that time, while the size of the average grant increased by 2%. The following table presents information regarding the number of ratepayers receiving grants for each utility and the amount of the total benefits disbursed during each of the past two program years.

Utility Hardship Fund Grant Distribution

Company	Ratepayers Receiving Grants		Average Grant		Total Benefits Disbursed	
	1998-99	1999-00	1998-99	1999-00	1998-99	1999-00
Allegheny Power	1,403	1,499	\$214	\$200	\$300,000	\$300,00
Duquesne	3,192	3,366	\$204	\$211	\$650,040	\$711,280
Met Ed	1,227	560	\$113	\$249	\$138,428	\$139,695
PECO*	3,251	1,754	\$185	\$376	\$601,874	\$659,853
Penelec	1,119	614	\$120	\$235	\$134,631	\$144,505
Penn Power	784	589	\$241	\$294	\$188,949	\$172,915
PPL Utilities	2,704	2,703	\$257	\$288	\$694,380	\$779,442
Columbia	1,860	1,955	\$247	\$199	\$458,550	\$388,810
Dominion Peoples	2,571	2,443	\$267	\$292	\$686,000	\$714,000
Equitable	1,498	1,459	\$252	\$274	\$377,000	\$400,000
NFG	294	257	\$191	\$211	\$56,283	\$54,318
PG Energy	634	420	\$82	\$100	\$52,253	\$42,209
T.W. Phillips	236	214	\$280	\$280	\$66,000	\$60,000
UGI*	678	349	\$111	\$126	\$75,394	\$44,134
PA-American	655	794	\$183	\$75	\$120,000	\$59,190
TOTAL	22,106	18,976	\$208	\$246	\$4,599,782	\$4,670,751

*Includes electric and gas

Telephone Universal Service Programs

As part of its ongoing responsibilities, the Bureau also monitors the universal service programs of local telephone companies. For the telephone industry, universal service programs include Link-Up America (Link -Up), Lifeline Service (Lifeline) and the Universal Telephone Assistance Program (UTAP). In 1989, the Commission approved the implementation of Pennsylvania’s first universal service program for telephone companies, Link-Up America. At the end of 1996, the Commission directed all telecommunications providers of local service to file lifeline service plans. By May 1997, the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Universal Service Order stated that all eligible telecommunications carriers should be required to provide lifeline service to qualified low-income customers regardless of whether states provide matching funds. On July 31, 1997, the Commission mandated that all telephone companies offering residential service file Lifeline service plans and by December 1997, the Commission approved Lifeline service plans for 44 telephone companies. January 1998 marked the statewide implementation of telephone companies’ Lifeline programs. The discussion below describes the universal service programs for the telephone industry in 2000.

Link-Up

Thirty-six local telephone companies, including the five major local telephone companies, participated in the Link-Up program in 2000. Link-Up helps make telephone service more affordable for low-income customers who apply for new telephone service or who transfer telephone service. Link-Up provides qualified customers with a 50% discount, up to \$30, on line connection charges for one residential telephone line. The program targets those customers who have incomes at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines, who receive Supplemental Security Income or who participate in certain Pennsylvania Department of Welfare assistance programs. The table below presents the number of Link-Up connections reported by major local companies.

Link-Up Connections 1999-2000

Company	Number of Connections 1999	Number of Connections 2000
ALLTEL	1,839	1,860
Commonwealth	284	287
United	250	8
Verizon North (GTE)	860	645
Verizon PA	48,897	50,557
Total	52,130	53,357

Lifeline Service

As previously stated, the Lifeline program was implemented statewide in 1998 to help low-income customers maintain basic telephone service by providing a monthly credit for basic service. The 1999 Lifeline program targeted those customers who have incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines, who receive Supplemental Security Income or who participate in certain Pennsylvania Department of Welfare programs. For most local telephone companies, Lifeline service included a \$5.25 credit toward their basic monthly phone charges with the option of choosing one-party residence unlimited service or local measured service (if it is available). However, Verizon PA's (f/k/a Bell Atlantic-PA) Lifeline Service included a \$9.00 credit toward its basic monthly phone charges with the option of choosing either the local area standard usage service or the local area unlimited usage service. The 1999 Lifeline program did not permit customers to subscribe to call waiting or other optional services. However, Lifeline customers were permitted to subscribe to Call Trace Service (at the tariffed rate) under special circumstances.

Lifeline 150

On September 30, 1999, the Commission approved a "Global Telecommunication Order" (Global Order) that changed among other things the Lifeline program. Under the new Lifeline 150 program, customers with incomes up to 150% of the federal poverty level guidelines and who participate in certain assistance programs¹ would be eligible for this program. With the exception of Verizon PA and Verizon North (GTE), eligible customers of most local telephone companies could receive a \$5.25 credit towards their basic monthly telephone charges. However, under the Lifeline 150 program, they would be allowed to subscribe to one optional service such as voice mail or call waiting at cost. Verizon PA's 1999 Lifeline program would still be available to its eligible customers with incomes of up to 100% of the federal poverty level guidelines. Customers who are eligible for Verizon PA's Lifeline program could receive a \$10.50 credit toward their basic monthly telephone bill. These customers also have the option of selecting the Verizon PA's Lifeline 150 program, which would provide them with a \$6.75 credit and allow them to have one optional service. As a result of the Commission's order addressing the merger of Bell Atlantic PA and GTE North, Verizon North (f/k/a/ GTE North) is also required to offer Lifeline Service under the same terms and conditions as Verizon PA.

¹ These programs are as follows: General Assistance (GA), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance and State Blind Pension.

The Lifeline 150 program was not implemented until September 2000 due to pending issues related to the Global Order. The following table presents the 1999 and 2000 enrollment statistics for Lifeline and Lifeline 150.

Lifeline Service Activity 1999-2000*

Company	Total Number of Customers Who Received Lifeline Service		Total Number of Customers Enrolled as of December	
	1999	2000	1999	2000
ALLTEL	2,650	1,856	2,306	1,356
Commonwealth	796	945	606	694
United	1,027	1,480	780	1,078
Verizon North (GTE)	2,303	3,810	2,244	3,070
Verizon PA	68,236	80,696	39,772	46,459
Total	75,012	88,787	47,707	52,657

*Please note: The 2000 figures include statistics for both the Lifeline and Lifeline 150 programs.

Universal Telephone Assistance Program (UTAP)

Verizon PA implemented a Universal Telephone Assistance Program (UTAP) along with its Lifeline Service program as part of a settlement agreement that was approved by the Commission in 1995. Verizon PA is the only company that offers a financial assistance program that helps existing Lifeline customers and qualified Lifeline applicants (with a pre-existing basic service arrearage) to restore their basic telephone service. The Salvation Army manages UTAP and distributes funds to qualified customers and Lifeline applicants. The average UTAP assistance given to customers in 2000 was \$102. Overall, UTAP distributed \$779,393 in financial assistance to 7,678 of Verizon PA's Lifeline customers in 2000.

For more information about the telephone universal service programs readers may contact Lenora Best of the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at (717) 783-9090 or by e-mail at best@puc.state.pa.us.

8. Other Consumer Activities of the Commission

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission serves consumers in a variety of ways. The informal complaint handling services of the Bureau of Consumer Services and the establishment and monitoring of universal service programs are just some of the consumer activities in which the Commission engages. The Commission also has a unit outside of the BCS that is dedicated to educating consumers about utility-related issues. The unit's goal is to help utility customers make good consumer decisions. The Commission, through its Office of Communications, is strongly committed to help customers understand their rights and make the most of competitive alternatives. As utility industries change, the PUC believes it must actively assist customers to make the connections between those changes and the effects they will have on customers' daily lives.

In addition to its consumer education program, the Commission sponsors a Consumer Advisory Council that studies and develops issues of concern to utility consumers. The council operates with support from the Commission's Office of Communications. The Commission also supports the Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board that provides guidance to the Commission regarding matters affecting telecommunications relay service in Pennsylvania. This chapter briefly discusses the Commission's consumer education program, the Consumer Advisory Council and the Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board and provides highlights of their 2000 activities.

Office of Communications -- Consumer Education

The Commission's consumer education program has five interrelated, operational goals:

- **Consumer Information:** Disseminating consumer information about regulatory matters, current utility issues and competition.
- **Outreach and Leadership Training:** Establishing the Commission's presence and increasing its visibility as a consumer education agent.
- **Regulatory Review:** Developing and monitoring utility company performance in consumer education.
- **Feedback:** Obtaining information from the utility industry and consumers about consumer education needs and the success of existing programs.

- **Coordinated Resources:** Responding to legislative requests for assistance and sharing consumer education materials with legislative offices, community organizations and state and local agencies.

Staff of the Office of Communications



Staff of the Office of Communications (front row, left to right): Verna Edmonds, Public Information Specialist; Maureen Mulligan, Consumer Education Manager; Christina Chase-Pettis, Consumer Outreach Specialist; Shari Williams, Consumer Outreach Specialist. **Back row:** Maria Hanley, Utility Analyst; Brooks Mountcastle, Consumer Information Specialist; Maureen Mulligan, Consumer Education Manager; Cynthia Page, Webmaster. **Absent from photo:** Kevin Cadden, Manager of Communications; Eric Levis, Press Secretary.

Consumer Information

The consumer education staff continued consumer education efforts during 2000, while maintaining many of its traditional brochure and pamphlet distribution efforts and community outreach. The Electric Choice Program was responsible for much of this increase in activity, although the staff also focused attention on other industries under the Commission's jurisdiction such as telephone and natural gas competition.

The staff, in cooperation with the Council on Electricity Choice updated and released several electric brochures in English and Spanish. The brochures included, “*Questions and Answers for Customers on Limited Incomes*,” “*Electric Choice: What it’s all about*”, a guide on how electricity was delivered to the home prior to the Pennsylvania Electric Choice program and how electricity is delivered under the new program; and “*Electric Choice: What You Need to Know and Where to Find It*”, a general overview of the Electric Choice Program and essential information on how to become part of the Electric Choice Program. Other brochures that were distributed to consumers included “*How to Shop Guide*”, “*Answers to Commonly Asked Questions and Helpful Hints.*”

Staff participated in several national forums by actively participating in Electric Choice conferences, the National Low Income Energy Consortium (held in Cincinnati, Ohio), served as representative for Commissioner Nora Mead Brownell to the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners’ Consumer Affairs Committee, served as the Commission’s representative on the Mid-Atlantic Green –e Advisory Board, attended the first-ever Summit on National Identity Theft in Washington, DC, testified before the Federal Communications Commission about truth in billing, and served as a track leader for the Affordable Comfort Conference held in Milwaukee.

Staff worked closely with the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) and others to educate the public about the opportunities that can be realized by shopping for electricity. The Office of Communications served as a clearinghouse for the OCA Shopping Guide that is now published monthly for Pennsylvania consumers. The Shopping Guide can be acquired by calling 1-800-684-6560 or by visiting OCA’s website (www.oca.state.pa.us).

In addition to encouraging consumers to reduce their energy costs through competition, the consumer education staff has promoted the use of energy conservation and efficiency as a way to lower energy bills.

Building on energy efficiency, the Commission began exploring utilities’ demand side response programs that will encourage consumers to cut back on their electric use when electric supplies are limited, especially during hot, summer days. In 2001, programs will be in place for commercial and industrial customers. The Commission is working with the electric distribution companies to develop residential and small business programs for summer 2002.

Press Summary

During 2000, the Office of Communications issued 88 press releases; 13 involved the electric industry, 11 addressed natural gas issues, 29 pertained to water/wastewater concerns, 27 pertained to the telecommunications industry and 8 covered transportation.

The office continued to promote its Online News Report for media, utility employees and consumers. This free service keeps subscribers up to date on PUC issues by sending them press releases via e-mail. Interested persons may subscribe on the PUC's website at <http://puc.paonline.com> by selecting Press Releases and following the directions. Approximately 600 individuals subscribe to the service.

The Office of Communications also continued to revamp the PUC Internet website to make it more consumer-friendly and to include more information. The PUC's goal for Fall 2001 is to have all documents from public meetings available to consumers on the website.

Electric Choice continued to be a major issue in 2000. Staff worked with four public relations firms to promote the program through a variety of media.

Outreach and Leadership Training

Highlights of 2000 outreach activities are listed below:

- In the Central, Western, and Northwest regions of Pennsylvania, staff organized, promoted and conducted 32 workshops held in Adams, Allegheny, Dauphin, Erie, Franklin, Lancaster, Perry, Schuylkill, and Wyoming Counties. The staff reached over 11,000 senior, low-income customers. Staff also participated in utility fairs, workshops, county fairs, legislative events, and "train the trainer" seminars in Allegheny, Dauphin, Erie, Lancaster, Luzerne, Perry, Schuylkill, Washington, Warren, and Berks counties.
- Philadelphia staff participated in workshops (27), fairs and festivals (60), television and radio interviews (25), seminars and conferences (50), faith-based meetings, and public input hearings in Philadelphia, Bucks, Montgomery, Delaware, Chester, Lehigh and Northampton counties. In addition, outreach specialists visited public libraries, schools, and senior centers to discuss the Electric Choice Program, and to a lesser extent, telephone competition. Through this effort staff reached over 3,5000 individuals.

- As part of the Electric Choice education efforts, staff reached out to the Vietnamese Community in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Activities included participating in television and radio interviews and attending community events.
- Staff provided extensive oversight of the electric choice education program which included: managing contracts with a robotics company responsible for the Electric Choice robot, and working with two public relations firms to communicate with the African-American and Hispanic-American communities and other consumers. Bi-weekly conference calls are part of the oversight efforts.
- The Electric Choice web site, <http://www.electrichoice.com> was most active the first three months of 2000. There were 1,380,913 hits and 74,197 visits to the site from both inside and outside of Pennsylvania. This site gives consumers up to date and comprehensive information about shopping for an electric supplier.

Regulatory Review

Consumer education staff completed plain language reviews on a variety of utility company notices and newspaper advertisements. As part of its review, the staff makes recommendations to utilities and suppliers regarding the language, content and layout of the materials so they are accurate and readily understood by residential customers. The staff uses the Commission's plain language guidelines as a basis for its recommendations. Notices concerning issues related to restructuring, utility rate changes, bill messages, billing changes, plain language summaries of rate requests, new billing charges, and announcements of public hearings are examples of company materials the staff reviews. During the last year, staff reviewed and approved a number of utility bills and customer notices, as well as numerous electric generation supplier items and publications targeted to consumers that related to the Electric Choice program.

Considerable staff resources were devoted to reviewing and approving Natural Gas Distribution Companies' (NGDCs) Local Consumer Education Plans. NGDCs completed drafts of the plans based on an outline provided by the Commission. Following further review by the Commission and modifications by the NGDCs, plans were finalized.

During 2000, the consumer education staff continued its ongoing participation in numerous Commission rulemakings and orders related to restructuring implementation.

As part of a Commission-led team, staff participated in monitoring the Sustainable Energy Fund and assisted in developing the rules for the Low Income Renewable Pilot Programs. Both of these programs are a result of settlement agreements negotiated among the electric utilities, environmental community, and consumer advocates during electric restructuring. The Sustainable Energy Fund targets the growth and development of energy efficient and renewable technologies. The Low Income Renewable Pilot Program benefits low-income customers through the deployment of renewable energy sources such as solar/photovoltaic (PV) that generate clean electricity.

Renewable Energy

With electric competition in its fourth year, interest in purchasing cleaner, renewable energy has led to the development of several wind farms or wind plants in Pennsylvania as an alternative source of energy. The Office of Communications' staff provided current information to reporters and Commissioners for press conferences regarding the status of wind farm projects and the renewable energy market.

The Council on Electric Choice/Council for Utility Choice

The Council on Electric Choice serves as the oversight body for the Electric Choice campaign. Representatives from the Commission's Consumer Advisory Council, the Pennsylvania Electric Association, the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate, the Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs, the Pennsylvania Rural Development Council, the Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs, the Community Action Association of PA and the Commission's consumer education staff make up the Council. In its role as Council member, the Office of Communications' consumer education staff reviewed and approved the local education plans of the electric distribution companies. The PUC approves the budgets for the statewide campaign and the local consumer education plans.

To better serve the public and pursuant to a Commission Order, the Council on Electric Choice was disbanded on December 14, 2000, and replaced with a new 501(c)(3) organization (Council for Utility Choice). New by-laws and incorporation papers were developed and a part-time Executive Director was hired to manage the accounts. Additional board members were appointed and the remaining money from the Council on Electric Choice was transferred to the Council for Utility Choice.

The new organization, the Council for Utility Choice, functions in a similar capacity as the Council on Electric Choice. The Council on Utility Choice has jurisdiction over consumer education programs for electric, telephone and natural gas competition.

Feedback

The sixth survey of the Electric Choice program was conducted in March 2000, with 1211 respondents. The surveys are an ongoing education monitoring effort and provide a “snapshot” of the Electric Choice Program. The surveys are important to determine where adjustments and or improvements may be needed in the program.

The Council for Electricity Choice and the new Council also provided valuable information regarding the progress of the Commission’s consumer education campaign. The staff also solicited informal feedback from consumer leaders and the PUC’s Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) on the Commission’s education efforts. The staff used the CAC’s feedback to continue to improve the education program. In addition, the Office of Communications’ consumer education staff regularly briefed the CAC at its monthly meetings.

After utility fairs were held in various cities across the state, consumer education staff evaluated their success including working the Department of Public Welfare to increase and coordinate efforts on the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) outreach. Fair-planning committee members and attendees completed evaluations that the consumer education staff used to develop recommendations for future fairs and events.

Coordinated Resources

By working with the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC), the Office of Communications’ consumer education staff continued to develop a network of resources through other state agencies and community-based organizations to help in disseminating the consumer education messages of the Commission.

The consumer education staff coordinated efforts with other state and local agencies to provide information on utility issues. Other agencies involved with energy, consumer issues, and consumer protection developed consumer seminars in which the PUC actively participated.

The consumer education staff participated in media appearances, including radio, television, and cable programs and discussions to provide information about Electric Choice and other utility issues that affect consumers statewide.

The PUC Consumer Advisory Council

The purpose of the Consumer Advisory Council (CAC) is to represent the public in advising the Commissioners on matters relating to the protection of consumer interests which are under the jurisdiction of the Commission, or which, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The Council acts as a source of information and advice for the Commissioners. Interactions between the Council and the Commissioners occur through periodic meetings with the Commissioners and in writing via minutes of meetings and formal motions. Council meetings are generally held on the fourth Tuesday of the month in PUC Executive Chambers in Harrisburg starting at 10:00 a.m. and are open to the public.

Agenda Items

The Council considers matters that arise from consumer inquiry or request, Commissioner inquiry or request, or the proceedings, deliberations or motions of the Council itself. The Council solicits matters for review from these sources and establishes an agenda for action. In considering matters within its jurisdiction, the Council, or members of the Council acting under direction of the Council, may conduct investigations and solicit and receive comments from interested parties and the general public. Public Utility Commission staff is made available to brief the Council on relevant matters and provide necessary support for the Council to complete its agenda. The monthly meeting agenda is available prior to each meeting from the PUC Press Office (717) 787-5722.

Qualifications and Appointment of Council Members

The following elected officials may each appoint one representative to the PUC Consumer Advisory Council: the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Republican and Democratic Chairpersons of the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee, and the Republican and Democratic Chairpersons of the House Consumer Affairs Committee. The Commission appoints additional “At-Large” representatives, as appropriate, to ensure that the group reflects a reasonable geographic representation of the Commonwealth, including low-income individuals, members of minority groups and various classes of consumers. A person may not serve as a member of the Council if the individual occupies an official relation to a public utility or holds or is a candidate

for a paid appointive or elective office of the Commonwealth. Members of the Council serve a two-year term, and may be re-appointed thereafter without limit. Officers of the Council serve for two-year terms. A Chairperson may not act for more than two consecutive terms.

The current, two-year Council term started in July 1999. Katherine Newell served as Chair and Cindy Datig served as Vice Chair. The CAC met nine times in 2000.

1999-2001 PUC Consumer Advisory Council



**Picture left to right: Julio Tio, Cindy Datig (Vice-Chair), Harry Geller, K. Tucker Landon, Carl Karl
Absent from photo: Joseph Dudick, Jr., Joy M. Dunbar, William Farally, Michael Fiorentino, William Jones,
Andrew McElwaine, Katherine A. Newell (Chair), Daniel M. Paul, James S. Schneider**

Summary of Activities

In 2000, the Council continued to focus on the variety of issues arising from the restructuring of the electric, gas, and telecommunication industries. Matters that the Council addressed included the following:

- The Council initiated and participated in the development of a PUC sponsored consumer conference “Utilities and Public Policy V: Challenges, Changes and Choice”. A gathering of approximately 350 consumers, policy makers, utilities and suppliers from across the state and country met, discussed and shared their experiences in the evolving energy and telecommunication markets. The Council helped develop workshop and speaker ideas and actively participated in the conference proceedings in March 2001.
- The Council continued to closely monitor the development and implementation of the consumer education program for both Electric Choice and the recently enacted gas choice program. The Council was particularly interested in insuring that these efforts continue to target hard-to-reach consumer groups such as the rural, minority, and aged communities. The Council provided recommendations as to the direction and content of the program, including advice on how to tailor the programs to provide more specific information on matters such as choosing a new supplier and consumer rights. In addition, the Chair of the Council participated as an active member of the Council for Utility Choice, the entity responsible for coordinating all PUC consumer education campaign activities.
- The Council extensively studied the role and status of small-scale renewable power generation in Pennsylvania, and met with several parties representing small-scale generators. The Council urged the Commission to examine the availability of such generation in Pennsylvania and facilitate the development of and consumer accessibility to renewable power.
- With passage of legislation in June 1999 to restructure and open the gas industry to competition, the Council participated in developing the Commission’s implementation plans, consumer education efforts, and regulations. The Council was especially interested in the development of customer information regulations for gas customers. These are the regulations that address supplier disclosure requirements, price and bill formats, etc. The Council developed and submitted specific comments on the proposed regulations to the Commission. With the advent of the 2000-2001 heating

season, the Council expressed concerns over the escalating costs of natural gas and was briefed on the workings of the gas markets.

- The Council followed the progress of the Commission's Global Telephone Order of August 1999 as it moved through the courts and various Commission implementation procedures. The Global Order is intended to open up the local telephone market to competition. The Council discussed the development of consumer education efforts to inform Pennsylvania consumers of their options for local telephone service and related issues.
- With utility mergers and consolidations remaining an important issue in 2000, the Council studied the impact of such activities on the market and on consumers. The Council examined the proposed merger of PECO Energy and Unicom and submitted comments to the Commission on the matter. The comments expressed the Council's concerns and priorities in how the interests of consumers should be addressed and protected as the Commission considers this and similar merger proposals.
- The Council was briefed on the various new regulations in place that help monitor and ensure that electric service remains sufficient and reliable in the competitive age. The Council repeatedly emphasized the importance of electric reliability and worked to ensure that this remains a priority for utility companies and policy makers.
- During 2000, the Council, among other things, also examined renewable energy pilot programs, PUC assumption of regulatory responsibility for the Philadelphia Gas Works, the adequacy of universal service programs, and the status of the water industry.

Readers may contact Verna Edmonds of the PUC's Office of Communications at (717) 783-5117 for more information about the PUC's Consumer Advisory Council. Information on the Council and its activities, including "Minutes" from recent meetings, is also available on the PUC's website at <http://puc.paonline.com> under "Consumer Services." A listing of the names and addresses of Council members appears in Appendix N.

Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board

The Commission established the Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board (PRSAB) on May 24, 1990, with its order to establish a statewide

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS)². The purpose of the PRSAB is to review the success of TRS and identify improvements that should be implemented. The PRSAB functions primarily as a TRS consumer group by providing feedback and guidance to the TRS provider regarding communication assistant training, problem solving and service enhancements.

The Board meets four times a year to advise the TRS provider on service issues and to discuss policy issues related to TRS. At each meeting, the TRS provider gives the Board a status report of its activities which include call volumes, new service offerings, complaint handling and outreach plans.

Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board Members



2000-2002 Board -- Seated (left to right): Russell Fleming (Secretary); Lawrence Brick (Chairman); Takao (service dog); Donald Lurwick (Vice Chairman); Gary Bootay. Standing (left to right): Grace House, Lois Steele, Diana Bender, Douglas Hardy, Steve Samara, Lenora Best. Absent from photo: Mitchell Levy, Debra Scott.

² TRS is a telecommunications service that allows people with hearing and/or speech disorders to communicate with others by phone. TRS centers are staffed with communications assistants who relay conversation verbatim between people who use text telephone (TTY) or telebraille and people who use standard phones. Pennsylvania's TRS centers are located in Wayne and New Castle and are operated by AT&T of Pennsylvania. The total volume of calls through the Pennsylvania TRS increased 8% from 1999 to 2000. AT&T reported that it handled 1,903,445 relay calls in 2000.

The twelve members of the Board are appointed by the Commission and serve two-year terms. The Commission requires that the Board consist of one representative from the Pennsylvania Telephone Association, the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), and the TRS provider (AT&T of Pennsylvania); two representatives from the Commission and seven representatives from the deaf, hard of hearing and speech disabled communities. During 2000, board members from the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech disabled communities included representatives from the following organizations: Pennsylvania Society for Advancement of the Deaf, Self Help for the Hard of Hearing, and Central Pennsylvania Association for the Deaf & Blind and Center on Deafness at the Western Pa. School for the Deaf. See Appendix O for the Board membership listing.

As a user group, the Board meeting agenda items are primarily related to quality of service issues for improving relay service. However, since the establishment of the PRSAB, the Board has advised the Commission on many critical policy issues that affect TRS users. The following highlights some of the issues addressed by the Board in 2000.

2000 Highlights

Many of the Board's discussions in 2000 focused on outreach, the implementation of 711, on ways to improve the TRS, and the introduction of new services.

- An ongoing concern for the Board is outreach and the general public's awareness of TRS. As with 1999, much of the Board's discussion in 2000 centered on increasing public awareness of TRS and its benefits. Since many businesses were not familiar with TRS, users often encounter problems with companies accepting TRS calls or using TRS to contact them. The Board requested that the Commission authorize a survey to determine the general public awareness of TRS. The Board also recommended that AT&T expand its outreach to focus its efforts on the general hearing public.
- Pennsylvania was among the first states to implement 711 abbreviated dialing. This abbreviated dialing for TRS went into effect on May 1, 2000. Ideally, the use of 711 abbreviated dialing provides easier access to relay services for both text and voice TRS users by eliminating the need to remember a 10-digit number. With the nationwide implementation of 711 by October 2001, TRS users will have access to relay service in any state by simply dialing 711. However, 711 has not been fully implemented in all private phone systems (i.e., PBX systems). Given this problem, Pennsylvania TRS users may

continue to access the relay services by dialing 1-800 855-2880 (TTY/Computer) or 1-800-855-2881 (voice).

- Although 711 was implemented in May 2000, many organizations that have PBXs, such as hospitals and department stores, have not reprogrammed their systems to handle 711 calls. A PBX system is simply a centralized phone network housed within a building or dwelling complex, designed to handle all incoming and outgoing phone calls. If the PBX has not been programmed to allow for 711 access, then TRS users cannot make or receive calls from these organizations or businesses. During several discussions about this problem, the board members expressed concern about contacting the appropriate parties to get this problem resolved. AT&T advised the board that each PBX manager or owner would have to be contacted and asked to reprogram the PBX switch software to allow for 711 access.
- During 2000, TRS callers used the relay services to make 181,473 interstate calls. Some of these calls were made through another long distance carrier. TRS users have the option of using their Carrier of Choice (COC) when making toll calls from their homes. Nevertheless, many TRS users have subscribed to a COC for direct calls from their homes, but their COC is not available when they use TRS. As a result of this problem, customers cannot take advantage of any discounted calling plans and may incur higher charges from AT&T. When the board made AT&T aware of this problem, the company suggested that customers should have their long distance carrier contact AT&T in writing to request information for participation in the COC for TRS. Even so, some carriers are still unwilling to participate as a COC for relay services.
- Generally, much of the board's discussion in 2000 was about ways to improve TRS. AT&T suggested that TRS users establish a personal preference profile through Relay Choice Profile (RCP) for easier access and faster relay calls. With RCP, there would be no need for TRS users to supply the communication assistant with the information about their service preference for each call. The board discussed whether this service would be practical in households that had multiple TRS users with different preferences.
- Throughout the year, AT&T presented updates on its progress with implemented new services as mandated by the FCC. The following services were made available to TRS users during 2000:

STS - Speech to Speech Relay Service - allows a person whose speech may be difficult to understand to communicate over the telephone with the help of a specially trained Communications Assistant. No special telephone is needed for this calling option. For more information about STS, visit AT&T's website at www.att.com/relay/speechdisabled.html.

900 Pay-Per-Call Relay Service - TTY/TDD relay customers can access any 900-service provider by dialing AT&T's 900 Pay-Per-Call Relay. For more information about 900 calling, visit www.att.com/relay/900.html.

Spanish Relay Service - Spanish relay users can access Speech-to-Speech and 900 Pay-Per-Call services through a dedicated toll-free number specifically for Spanish speaking relay users. For more information about Spanish Relay, visit www.att.com/relay/foreignlanguag.html.

- In addition to TRS, the Board discussed the progress of the Telecommunications Device Distribution Program (TDDP) and its outreach efforts. The board expressed concern about the high cost of equipment (i.e., TTY) and the need to revisit the program's eligibility criteria so more people could get equipment. This program provides qualified people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have speech disorders with communications equipment such as a TTY, TTY with Braille Display, In-Line Amplifier, and other devices to help them use telecommunications services. As of December 2000, TDDP distributed 1,062 pieces of communications equipment. For more information on the TDDP, you may visit the Pennsylvania Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) at www.silcpa.org. For an application, or to speak with the TDDP processor, you may call SILC at: Voice 717-236-2400 or toll free 1-800-670-7303; TTY 717-236-5733 or toll free 1-800-440-0347, or email dlaube@silcpa.org.

For more information about the Pennsylvania Relay Service Advisory Board contact Verdina Showell, PUC Liaison and Legal Advisor at (717) 787-4717. To learn more about TRS, contact Mitchell Levy at AT&T by using the TRS at 1-800-654-5988, then (908) 221-2818-TTY or AT&T's website at www.att.com/relay or the Commission's website at <http://puc.paonline.com>.

Glossary of Terms

Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) - A competitive LEC that provides basic local telephone and/or toll services as a reseller, a facilities-based carrier, or a combination reseller/facilities-based provider.

Consumer Complaint Rate - The number of consumer complaints per 1,000 residential customers.

Consumer Complaints - Cases to the Bureau of Consumer Services involving billing, service, rates and other issues not related to requests for payment terms.

Customer Assistance Program (CAPs) - Alternative collection programs set up between a utility company and a customer that allow low-income, payment troubled customers to pay utility bills that are based on household size and gross household income. CAP participants agree to make regular monthly payments, which are usually less than the current bill, in exchange for continued utility service.

Electric Distribution Company (EDC) - Owner of the power lines and equipment necessary to deliver purchased electricity to the customer.

Electric Generation Supplier (EGS) - A person or corporation, generator, broker, marketer, aggregator or other entity, that sells electricity, using the transmission or distribution facilities of an electric distribution company (EDC).

Hardship Funds - Utility-sponsored funds that provide cash assistance to low-income utility customers to help them pay their utility bills.

Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILEC) - Currently there are 37 facilities-based local telephone companies that provide basic local telephone service and/or toll services.

Infraction - A misapplication or infringement of a Commission regulation, particularly the standards and billing practices for residential utility service.

Infraction Rate - The number of informally verified infractions per 1,000 residential customers (includes infractions drawn from both consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests).

Inquiries - Consumer contacts to the Bureau of Consumer Services that, for the most part, require no follow-up investigation beyond the initial contact.

Justified Consumer Complaint Rate - The number of justified consumer complaints per 1,000 residential customers.

Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate - The number of justified payment arrangement requests per 1,000 residential customers.

Local Exchange Carrier (LEC) - A public utility which provides basic telephone service either exclusively or in addition to toll service.

Natural Gas Distribution Company (NGDC) - A natural gas utility regulated by the PUC that owns the gas lines and equipment necessary to deliver natural gas to the consumer.

Natural Gas Supplier (NGS) - An entity other than an NGDC that sells or arranges to sell natural gas to customers using the distribution lines of an NGDC.

Payment Arrangement Request Rate - The number of payment arrangement requests per 1,000 residential customers.

Payment Arrangement Requests - Consumer requests for payment arrangements principally include contacts to the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services involving a request for payment terms in one of the following situations: suspension/termination of service is pending; service has been suspended/terminated and the customer needs payment terms to have service restored; or the customer wants to retire an arrearage.

Problem Categories - A breakdown of residential consumer complaints by specific problem categories such as billing, credit and deposits, service quality, rates, etc.

Response Time in Days - Response time is the time span in days from the date of the Bureau's first contact with the company regarding a consumer complaint and/or request for payment arrangements to the date on which the company provides the Bureau with all of the information needed to resolve the case and determine whether or not the customer was justified in seeking a payment arrangement through the BCS. Response time quantifies the speed of a utility's response in resolving BCS cases. In this report, response time is presented as a mean number of days for each company.

Slamming – The unauthorized switching of a customer’s service provider. In telecommunications, slamming refers to changing a customer’s local exchange carrier or primary long distance service provider without the customer’s consent. In electric and gas, slamming refers to changing the customer’s supply provider without customer authorization.

Termination Rate - The number of residential customers whose service was terminated per 1,000 residential customers.

Appendices

Appendix A
2000 Residential Consumer Complaints
Non-Major Companies*

Company	Number of Complaints
Electric	
Other Non-Major Electric Companies	148
TOTAL NON-MAJOR ELECTRIC	148
Gas	
PPL Utilities (NGDC)	58
T.W. Phillips (NGDC)	35
Other Non-Major Gas Companies	88
TOTAL NON-MAJOR GAS	181
Telephone	
Denver-Ephrata Telephone	10
North Pittsburgh Telephone Company (LEC)	14
Other Non-Major Telephone Companies	394
TOTAL NON-MAJOR TELEPHONE	418

*Listing shows companies having 10 or more complaints in 2000.

Appendix B-1

Classification of Consumer Complaints Electric, Gas & Water

Billing Disputes - Complaints about bills from the utility: high bills, inaccurate bills or balances, installation charges, customer charges, service charges, repair charges, late payment charges, frequency of bills and the misapplication of payment on bills.

Competition - Complaints about issues that are directly related to competition: enrollment/eligibility, application and licensing, supplier selection, changing/switching suppliers which includes slamming, advertising and sales, billing, contracts, and credit and deposits. This category also includes any complaints about more general competition issues such as consumer education, pilot programs and restructuring.

Credit & Deposits - Complaints about a company's requirements to provide service: applicant must pay another person's bill, applicant must complete an application, applicant must provide identification, or applicant must pay a security deposit. This category also includes complaints about the amount of or the amortization of a deposit, the payment of interest on a deposit or the failure of a company to return a deposit to the customer.

Damages - Complaints about a company's lack of payment or lack of restored property related to damages to equipment, appliances or property due to service outages, company construction or repair, and improperly delivered or transferred service.

Discontinuance/Transfer - Complaints related to the responsibility for or the amount of bills after discontinuance or transfer of service: the customer requested discontinuance of service and the company failed to finalize the account as requested or the company transferred a balance to a new or existing account from the account of another person or location.

Metering - Billing complaints directly related to the reading of or the failure to read the customer's meter and the accuracy of the meter readings (company reading, customer supplied reading, misreading).

Other Payment Issues - Complaints about the amount of budget bills or the transfer of a customer's debt to a collection agency.

Personnel Problems - Complaints about performance by company personnel: a company representative did not finish job correctly, a meter reader entered a customer's home to read the meter without knocking, company personnel will not perform a requested service, business office personnel treated the customer rudely, and overall mismanagement of a utility. This category also includes any complaints about sales such as appliance sales by the utility.

Rates - General or specific complaints about a utility's rates: general or specific rates are too high, the company's rates are being used to recover advertising costs, or the customer is being billed on the incorrect rate.

Scheduling Delays - Complaints about problems with a company's scheduling: delays in scheduling or repairing service or relocating poles, failures to keep scheduled meetings or appointments, and lack of accessibility to customers.

Service Extensions - Complaints about line extensions or installation of service: the responsibility for line extensions, the cost and payment for line extensions, inspection requirements, delay in installation, connection or disconnection of service, and denial of service extensions.

Service Interruptions - Complaints about service interruptions: the frequency of service interruptions, the duration of interruptions or the lack of prior notice regarding interruptions.

Service Quality - Complaints about a utility's product: The quality of the product is poor (water quality, voltage, pressure), the company's equipment is unsatisfactory or unsafe, the company fails to act on a complaint about safety, the company plans to abandon service, the company does not offer needed service, the company wants to change location of equipment or the company providing service is not certified by the PUC (defactos).

Other - All other complaints that do not fit into the above categories including, but not limited to, complaints about termination procedures when there is no need for payment arrangements and complaints about delivered service from the utility.

Appendix B-2

Classification of Consumer Complaints Telephone

Annoyance Calls - Complaints about the company's failure to resolve problems related to receiving unsolicited sales calls or harassing calls. This includes the company's failure to change the phone number, initiate an investigation and problems with auto dialers and fax machines.

Audiotex - Complaints about the company's failure to resolve billing problems related to special phone entertainment or information services.

Billing Disputes - Complaints about bills from the utility: high bills, inaccurate bills or balances, installation charges, customer charges, service charges, repair charges, late payment charges, frequency of bills and the misapplication of payment on bills.

Credit & Deposits - Complaints about a company's requirements to provide service: applicant payment of another person's bill, completion of an application, provision of identification, or payment of a security deposit. This category also includes complaints about the amount of or the amortization of a deposit, the payment of interest on a deposit or the failure of a company to return a deposit to the customer.

Discontinuance/Transfer - Complaints related to responsibility for or the amount of bills after discontinuance or transfer of service; company failure to finalize the account as requested or the company transferred a balance to a new or existing account from the account of another person or location.

Non Recurring Charges - Complaints about one-time charges for installation of basic and/or nonbasic services.

Rates - General or specific complaints about a utility's rates: general or specific rates are too high, or the customer is being billed on the incorrect rate.

Sales Nonbasic Services - Complaints related to the sale of nonbasic services including the availability of certain services.

Service Delivery - Complaints about delays in service installations or disconnections of service and failures to keep scheduled appointments; lack of facilities to provide service, unauthorized transfer of service, unavailability of special services and the rudeness of business office personnel.

Toll Services - Complaints about charges for local toll and/or long distance toll services.

Unsatisfactory Service - Complaints about poor service quality, problems with the assignment of phone numbers, incorrect information in phone directories, lack of directories, equal access to toll network and service interruptions and outages.

Other - All other complaints that do not fit into the above categories including, but not limited to, complaints about Extended Area of Service and the expansion of local calling areas, excessive rates from operator services that provide phone service to hospitals, hotels, and excessive coin phone rates.

Appendix C - Table 1

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000* Major Electric Distribution Companies

Categories**	Allegheny Power	Duquesne	GPU	PECO	Penn Power	PPL Utilities	UGI-Elec.	Electric Majors
Billing Disputes	36	43	209	234	8	347	11	888
Metering	35	15	104	195	0	143	9	501
Service Interruptions	28	29	92	43	26	28	0	246
Discontinuance/Transfer	24	25	39	188	1	106	3	386
Service Quality	15	17	19	78	4	25	1	159
Service Extensions	26	6	28	53	2	14	2	131
Personnel Problems	12	18	20	79	1	16	1	147
Damages	23	16	20	48	1	15	1	124
Scheduling Delays	6	12	25	33	0	12	0	88
Other Payment Issues	3	14	20	48	0	64	0	149
Credit & Deposits	2	10	10	18	2	2	3	47
Rates	3	5	6	7	0	10	0	31
All Other Problems	18	15	24	86	2	36	2	183
TOTAL	231	225	616	1,110	47	818	33	3,080

* Categories are for residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

**An explanation of the various complaint categories appears in Appendix B-1.

Appendix C - Table 2

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000* Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Categories**	Columbia	Equitable	NFG	PG Energy	Dominion Peoples	UGI-Gas	Gas Majors
Billing disputes	24	43	21	11	72	26	197
Metering	55	32	23	11	82	47	250
Discontinuance/Transfer	26	23	22	6	36	46	159
Service Extensions	19	6	6	6	24	9	70
Personnel Problems	15	22	12	3	19	13	84
Service Quality	17	3	8	5	9	10	52
Damages	11	10	3	2	17	4	47
Credit & Deposits	3	7	3	3	16	8	40
Scheduling Delays	7	2	1	0	21	5	36
Other Payment Issues	5	9	5	3	38	4	64
Rates	3	4	2	0	8	0	17
Service Interruptions	3	1	0	1	3	0	8
All Other Problems	11	15	20	6	23	12	87
TOTAL	199	177	126	57	368	184	1,111

* Categories are for residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

**An explanation of the various complaint categories appears in Appendix B-1.

Appendix C - Table 3

Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000* Major Water Utilities

Categories**	PA- American	Philadelphia Suburban	Other “Class A” Water	All “Class A” Water
Billing Disputes	69	74	10	153
Service Quality	22	7	17	46
Metering	26	25	1	52
Discontinuance/Transfer	10	5	3	18
Damages	15	3	3	21
Personnel Problems	15	5	0	20
Service Extensions	8	2	4	14
Scheduling Delays	9	2	0	11
Other Payment Issues	1	4	2	7
Credit and Deposits	2	2	2	6
Service Interruptions	2	0	4	6
Rates	0	1	0	1
All Other Problems	29	11	8	48
TOTAL	208	141	54	403

* Categories are for residential complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

**An explanation of the various complaint categories appears in Appendix B-1.

Appendix C -Table 4
Consumer Complaint Categories: 2000*
Major Local Telephone Companies

Categories**	ALLTEL	Commonwealth	United	Verizon North (GTE)	Verizon PA	Telephone Majors
Service Delivery	13	14	91	44	552	714
Unsatisfactory Service	45	22	100	158	279	604
Billing Disputes	8	10	75	27	21	141
Toll Services	4	14	57	4	9	88
Sales Nonbasic Services	7	1	38	8	6	60
Credit & Deposits	27	5	11	10	2	55
Non-Recurring Charges	3	2	13	4	10	32
Discontinuance/Transfer	2	0	7	6	12	27
Annoyance Calls	1	1	1	5	8	16
Rates	1	0	12	5	5	23
Audiotex	0	0	3	0	0	3
Other	1	0	2	1	3	7
TOTAL*	112	69	410	272	907	1,770

* Categories are for all complaints evaluated by BCS as of June 15, 2001. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

**An explanation of the various complaint categories appears in Appendix B-2.

Appendix D - Table 1

1999-2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Statistics Major Electric Distribution Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Consumer Complaints to BCS			Consumer Complaint Rates ¹		Justified Consumer Complaints Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
Allegheny Power	589,092	369	302	-18%	0.63	0.51	123	0.21	75	0.13
Duquesne	522,665	391	309	-21%	0.76	0.59	80	0.16	45	0.09
GPU	935,636	676	776	15%	0.73	0.83	281	0.30	419	0.45
PECO	1,371,665	1,764	1,743	-1%	1.30	1.27	794	0.58	798	0.58
Penn Power	131,974	60	64	7%	0.46	0.48	8	0.06	8	0.06
PPL Utilities	1,119,772	936	1,032	10%	0.85	0.92	390	0.35	372	0.33
UGI-Electric	54,225	28	41	46%	0.53	0.76	15	0.28	14	0.26
Major Electric	4,725,029	4,224	4,267	1%			1,691		1,731	
Average of Rates					0.79⁴	0.77⁴		0.28⁴		0.27⁴

¹Consumer Complaint Rate = Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Consumer Complaint Rate = Justified Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers.

⁴Does not include UGI-Electric.

Appendix D - Table 2

1999-2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Statistics Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Consumer Complaints to BCS			Consumer Complaint Rates ¹		Justified Consumer Complaints Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
Columbia	342,258	233	289	24%	0.69	0.84	66	0.19	73	0.25
Dominion Peoples	322,199	221	476	115%	0.69	1.48	81	0.25	229	0.49
Equitable	230,897	205	248	21%	0.89	1.07	50	0.22	49	0.20
NFG	195,465	119	168	41%	0.61	0.86	39	0.20	59	0.35
PG Energy	137,508	103	71	-31%	0.76	0.52	27	0.20	15	0.21
UGI-Gas	243,512	245	242	-1%	1.03	0.99	75	0.32	95	0.39
Major Gas	1,471,839	1,126	1,494	33%			338		520	
Average of Rates					0.78	0.96		0.23		0.32

¹Consumer Complaint Rate = Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Consumer Complaint Rate = Justified Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix D - Table 3

1999-2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Statistics Major Water Utilities

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Consumer Complaints to BCS			Consumer Complaint Rates ¹		Justified Consumer Complaints Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
PA-American	503,215	290	272	-6%	0.58	0.54	96	0.19	85	0.17
Phila. Suburban	324,000	126	192	52%	0.42	0.59	49	0.17	97	0.30
Other Class A	185,116	87	117	34%	0.50	0.63	29	0.17	40	0.22
Major Water	1,012,331	503	581	16%			174		222	
Average of Rates					0.50	0.59		0.18		0.23

¹Consumer Complaint Rate = Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Consumer Complaint Rate = Justified Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix D -Table 4

1999-2000 Residential Consumer Complaint Statistics Major Local Telephone Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Consumer Complaints to BCS			Consumer Complaint Rates ¹		Justified Consumer Complaints Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
ALLTEL	179,267	113	139	23%	.64	.78	84	.47	99	.55
Commonwealth	237,406	102	87	-15%	.46	.37	44	.20	34	.14
United	286,620	283	498	76%	1.00	1.74	168	.59	341	1.19
Verizon North (GTE)	491,869	286	334	17%	.59	.68	227	.47	259	.53
Verizon PA	3,942,329	4,902	7,871	61%	1.27	2.00	3,443*	.89*	6,734*	1.71*
Major Telephone	5,137,491	5,686	8,929	57%			3,966		7,467	
Average of Rates					.79	1.11		.52		.82

¹Consumer Complaint Rate = Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers. The case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Consumer Complaint Rate = Justified Consumer Complaints per 1,000 Residential Customers.

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

Appendix E

1999-2000 Response time: BCS Consumer Complaints

Company	Average Time in Days		Change in Days 1999 to 2000
	1999	2000	
Allegheny Power	22.0	18.7	-3.3
Duquesne	19.4	23.3	3.9
GPU	17.0	16.7	-0.3
PECO	35.2	26.3	-8.9
Penn Power	14.2	11.9	-2.3
PPL Utilities	22.2	25.0	2.8
UGI-Electric	27.8	39.3	11.5
Major Electric¹	21.7²	20.3²	-1.4²
Columbia	7.9	13.8	5.9
Dominion Peoples	8.2	19.4	11.2
Equitable	17.8	18.8	1.0
NFG	10.5	8.8	-1.7
PG Energy	7.3	15.6	8.3
UGI-Gas	16.8	17.0	0.2
Major Gas¹	11.4	15.5	4.1
PA-American	4.3	3.6	-0.7
Phila. Suburban	7.0	10.8	3.8
Other Class A	24.0	20.4	-3.6
Major Water¹	11.8	11.6	-0.2
ALLTEL	9.3	7.5	-1.8
Commonwealth	3.3	5.1	1.8
United	15.2	82.2	67.0
Verizon North (GTE)	19.8	17.0	-2.8
Verizon PA	26.8*	27.8*	1.0
Major Telephone¹	14.9	27.9	13.0

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

¹Average of response times.

²Does not include UGI-Electric.

Appendix F - Table 1

1999-2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Statistics Major Electric Distribution Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Payment Arrangement Requests (PARs) to BCS			Payment Arrangement Request Rates ¹		Justified Payment Arrangement Requests Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
Allegheny Power	589,092	4,836	4,321	-11%	8.26	7.34	710*	1.21*	603*	1.02*
Duquesne	522,665	9,152	8,144	-11%	17.74	15.58	409*	0.79*	917*	1.75*
GPU	935,636	955	998	5%	1.03	1.07	89*	0.10*	106*	0.11*
PECO	1,371,665	6,437	5,270	-18%	4.74	3.84	860*	0.63*	927*	0.68*
Penn Power	131,974	1,239	1,108	-11%	9.49	8.40	383*	2.93*	293*	2.22*
PPL Utilities	1,119,772	14,042	11,648	-17%	12.78	10.40	2,333*	2.12*	1,269*	1.13*
UGI-Electric	54,225	274	274	0%	5.15	5.05	114	2.14	81	1.49
Major Electric	4,725,029	36,935	31,763	-14%			4,898		4,196	
Average of Rates					9.01⁴	7.77⁴		1.30⁴		1.15⁴

¹Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers. Case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on a probability sample of cases and/or the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Justified Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers.

⁴Does not include UGI-Electric.

* Based on a probability sample of cases.

Appendix F - Table 2

1999-2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Statistics Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Payment Arrangement Requests (PARs) to BCS			Payment Arrangement Request Rates ¹		Justified Payment Arrangement Requests Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
Columbia	342,258	5,164	3,291	-36%	15.23	9.62	489	1.44	492	1.44
Dominion Peoples	322,199	3,697	4,074	10%	11.55	12.64	245	0.77	557	1.73
Equitable	230,897	4,733	5,238	11%	20.58	22.69	472	2.05	1,061	4.60
NFG	195,465	1,725	1,609	-7%	8.83	8.23	733	3.75	570	2.92
PG Energy	137,508	735	693	-6%	5.42	5.04	80	0.59	47	0.34
UGI-Gas	243,512	3,623	3,391	-6%	15.29	13.93	1,634	6.89	1,211	4.97
Major Gas	1,471,839	19,677	18,296	-7%			3,653		3,938	
Average of Rates					12.82	12.02		2.58		2.67

¹Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers. Case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on a probability sample of cases and/or the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Justified Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers.

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

Appendix F - Table 3

1999-2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Statistics Major Water Utilities

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Payment Arrangement Requests (PARs) to BCS			Payment Arrangement Request Rates ¹		Justified Payment Arrangement Requests Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
PA-American	503,215	1,310	2,173	66%	2.63	4.32	122*	0.25*	162*	0.32*
Phila. Suburban	324,000	356	133	-63%	1.20	0.41	177	0.60	72	0.22
Other "Class A" Water	185,116	359	394	10%	2.07	2.13	75	0.43	45	0.24
Major Water	1,012,331	2,025	2,700	33%			374		279	
Average of Rates					1.97	2.29		0.43		0.26

¹Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers. Case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on a probability sample of cases and/or the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Justified Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers.

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

Appendix F - Table 4

1999-2000 Residential Payment Arrangement Request Statistics Major Local Telephone Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Residential Payment Arrangement Requests (PARs) to BCS			Payment Arrangement Request Rates ¹		Justified Payment Arrangement Requests Numbers ² and Rates ³			
		1999	2000	% Change in #	1999	2000	1999		2000	
ALLTEL	179,267	120	73	-39%	.68	.41	47	.26	25	.14
Commonwealth	237,406	31	31	0%	.14	.13	15	.07	11	.05
United	286,620	136	204	50%	.48	.71	46	.16	100	.35
Verizon North (GTE)	491,869	100	114	14%	.21	.23	36	.07	40	.08
Verizon PA	3,942,329	5,745	5,114	-11%	1.48	1.30	504*	.13*	614*	.16*
Major Telephone	5,137,491	6,132	5,536	-10%			648		790	
Average of Rates					.60	.56		.14		.16

¹Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers. Case outcome may have been justified, inconclusive or unjustified.

²Estimated based on the number of cases on CSIS as of June 15, 2001.

³Justified Payment Arrangement Request Rate = Justified Payment Arrangement Requests per 1,000 Residential Customers.

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

Appendix G

1999-2000 Response Time: BCS Payment Arrangement Requests

Company	Average Time in Days		Change in Days 1999 to 2000
	1999	2000	
Allegheny Power	16.1*	9.3	-6.8
Duquesne	11.5*	12.9	1.4
GPU	4.2*	13.4	9.2
PECO	22.3*	14.9	-7.4
Penn Power	1.8*	3.0	1.2
PPL Utilities	18.4*	14.1	-4.3
UGI-Electric	21.4	8.9	-12.5
Major Electric¹	12.4²	11.3²	-1.1²
Columbia	3.0*	5.0	2.0
Dominion Peoples	2.6*	18.5	15.9
Equitable	16.8*	15.0	-1.8
NFG	3.6*	4.5	0.9
PG Energy	2.7	1.6	-1.1
UGI-Gas	8.7*	7.7	-1.0
Major Gas¹	6.2	8.7	2.5
PA-American	3.4*	5.2	1.8
Philadelphia Suburban	4.4	18.2	13.8
Other Class A	11.7	19.1	7.4
Major Water¹	6.5	14.2	7.7
ALLTEL	2.0	2.8	0.8
Commonwealth	3.2	1.6	-1.6
United	10.8	59.3	48.5
Verizon North (GTE)	3.8	1.8	-2.0
Verizon PA	14.7*	12.3*	-2.4
Major Telephone¹	6.9	15.5	8.6

*Based on a probability sample of cases.

¹Average of Response Times.

²Does not include UGI-Electric.

Appendix H - Table 1

1998-2000 Infraction Statistics Major Electric Distribution Companies

Company	2000 Residential Customers	Infractions				Infraction Rates ¹		
		1998	1999	2000	% Change in 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
Allegheny Power	589,092	50	112	54	-52%	0.09	0.19	0.09
Duquesne	522,665	9	38	14	-63%	0.02	0.07	0.03
GPU	935,636	115	194	604	211%	0.13	0.21	0.65
PECO	1,371,665	311	1,093	1,047	-4%	0.23	0.80	0.76
Penn Power	131,974	0	14	2	-86%	0.00	0.11	0.02
PPL Utilities	1,119,772	29	708	714	1%	0.03	0.64	0.64
UGI-Electric	54,225	10	14	10	-29%	0.19	0.26	0.18
Major Electric	4,725,029	524	2,173	2,445	13%			

¹Infraction Rate = Number of Infractions per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix H - Table 2

1998-2000 Infraction Statistics Major Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Company	2000 Residential Customers	Infractions				Infraction Rates ¹		
		1998	1999	2000	% Change in 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
Columbia	342,258	22	57	36	-37%	0.07	0.17	0.11
Dominion Peoples	322,199	36	55	217	295%	0.11	0.17	0.67
Equitable	230,897	17	19	26	37%	0.07	0.08	0.11
NFG	195,465	9	25	42	68%	0.05	0.13	0.21
PG Energy	137,508	19	22	11	-50%	0.14	0.16	0.08
UGI-Gas	243,512	25	55	84	53%	0.11	0.23	0.34
Major Gas	1,471,839	128	233	416	79%			

¹Infraction Rate = Number of Infractions per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix H - Table 3

1998-2000 Infraction Statistics Major Water Utilities

Company	2000 Residential Customers	Infractions				Infraction Rates ¹		
		1998	1999	2000	% Change in 1999-2000	1998	1999	2000
PA-American	503,215	27	91	63	-31%	0.05	0.18	0.13
Phila. Suburban	324,000	45	86	88	2%	0.16	0.29	0.27
Other "Class A"	185,116	58	27	46	70%	0.33	0.16	0.25
Major Water	1,012,331	130	204	197				

¹Infraction Rate = Number of Infractions per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix H - Table 4

1998-2000 Chapter 64 Infraction Statistics Major Local Telephone Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Infractions				Infraction Rates ¹		
		1998	1999	2000	% Change in 1999-2000 #	1998	1999	2000
ALLTEL	179,267	99	108	57	-47%	.56	.61	.32
Commonwealth	237,406	26	33	27	-18%	.12	.15	.11
United	286,620	124	243	789	225%	.43	.86	2.75
Verizon North (GTE)	491,869	323	179	153	-15%	.67	.37	.31
Verizon PA	3,942,329	908	690	617	-11%	.24	.18	.16
Major Telephone	5,137,491	1,480	1,253	1,643	31%	.40	.43	.73

¹Infraction Rate = Number of Infractions per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix H - Table 5

1999-2000 Chapter 63 Infraction Statistics Major Local Telephone Companies

Company Name	2000 Residential Customers	Infractions			Infraction Rates ¹	
		1999	2000	% Change in 1999-2000 #	1999	2000
ALLTEL	179,267	38	50	32%	.21	.28
Commonwealth	237,406	12	26	117%	.05	.11
United	286,620	109	187	72%	.38	.65
Verizon North (GTE)	491,869	407	484	19%	.84	.98
Verizon PA	3,942,329	4,846	10,476	116%	1.25	2.66
Major Telephone	5,137,491	5,412	11,223	107%	.55	.94

¹Infraction Rate = Number of Infractions per 1,000 Residential Customers.

Appendix I - Table 1

1999-2002 EDC Universal Service Funding Levels¹

Company Name	1999		2000		2001		2002	
	LIURP	CAP	LIURP	CAP	LIURP	CAP	LIURP	CAP
Allegheny Power	\$1,016,000	\$1,750,000	\$1,450,000	\$3,130,000	\$1,900,000	\$4,510,000	\$2,202,000	\$5,880,000
Duquesne	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,250,000	\$2,245,000	\$1,500,000	\$3,850,000	\$2,700,000	\$5,275,000
Met-Ed	\$1,231,000	\$1,481,000	\$1,400,000	\$2,500,000	\$1,600,000	\$3,500,000	\$1,826,000	\$4,564,000
PECO	\$5,600,000	\$44,400,000	\$5,600,000	\$44,400,000	\$5,600,000	\$51,407,239	\$5,600,000	\$52,179,547
Penelec	\$972,000	\$2,420,000	\$1,320,000	\$3,300,000	\$1,640,000	\$4,100,000	\$1,962,000	\$4,900,000
Pennsylvania Power ²	\$180,000	\$500,000					\$645,250	\$1,613,125
PPL Utilities	\$4,700,000	\$5,875,000	\$4,700,000	\$8,000,000	\$4,700,000	\$10,000,000	\$4,700,000	\$11,700,000
UGI - Electric	\$124,750	\$150,000	\$124,750	\$150,000	\$124,750	\$150,000	\$124,750	\$150,000
Total	\$14,823,750	\$57,576,000	\$15,844,750	\$63,725,000	\$17,064,750	\$77,517,239	\$19,760,000	\$86,261,672

¹Final EDC restructuring orders and Commission-approved settlement agreements have established these projected funding levels.

²The Commission specified beginning and ending funding levels only.

Appendix I - Table 2

1999-2002 CAP Enrollments Per EDC Restructuring Final Orders¹

Company Name	1999	2000	2001	2002
Allegheny Power	5,000	8,943	12,886	16,800
Duquesne	3,000-4,000	6,378	10,938	15,000
Met-Ed	2,275	3,840	5,376	7,000
PECO	80,000	80,000	91,000	93,000
Penelec	3,457-5,831	4,714-7,952	5,857-9,880	7,000-11,800
Penn Power	Program Start-up	1,133-1,500	2,266-3,000	3,400-4,500
PPL Utilities	9,296	11,000	14,000	17,000
UGI-Electric	100	100	100	100
Total	103,128 – 106,502	116,108 – 119,713	142,423-147,180	159,300-165,200

¹The projected enrollment figures are estimates based on final EDC restructuring orders, Commission-approved settlement agreements, and universal services plan filed at §54.74.

**Appendix I - Table 3
NGDC Universal Service Funding & Enrollment**

NGDC	Proposed CAP Enrollment				CAP Funding				LIURP Budget After Restructuring
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2001	2002	2003	2004	2001-2004
Columbia ¹	7,000	13,000	19,500	22,000	Included in \$6.5 m annual residential uncollectible costs				\$1,369,203
Dominion Peoples	3,000 by 10/01	6,000 by 10/02	9,000 by 10/03	9,000	\$1,600,000	\$2,500,000	\$3,900,000	\$4,200,000	\$610,000
Equitable	7,000	7,500	9,000	10,000	Included in residential rates and transition cost surcharge.				\$635,732
NFG ²	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	Included in residential rates.				\$1,004,871
PECO	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	Defer recovery until 6/30/02. May recover costs in future rate proceeding.				\$874,000
PG Energy Energy ³	1,000 by 4/1	2,500 by 4/1	3,500 by 4/1	5,500 by 4/1	\$479,214	\$479,214	\$479,214		\$328,230
PPL Gas	1,100	1,650	2,200	2,200	Included in residential rates.				Program not required.
TW Phillips	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1500 enrollment or \$400,000 whichever comes first.				\$187,000
UGI	1,333	2,666	4,000	4,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$613,212
Total	44,433	57,316	71,200	76,700					\$ 5,622,248

¹CAP enrollment levels are averages. By the end of 2003, Columbia is to have enrolled 2,000 customers. Columbia must enroll 90% of the target level or place into a deferred account \$300/customer multiplied by the number of customers below the 90% targeted level.

²NFG enrollment limit is 8,500. NFG may argue that 5,000 is adequate.

³LIURP funding established in rate case at R-00005119; Order approved 12/7/00.

Appendix J

CARES Programs

The fourteen electric and gas utilities all have CARES programs that reflect the guidelines in the Commission's Secretarial letter. Utilities report that CARES programs serve households whose average annual incomes are below \$10,000. NGDCs report that these households generally receive their incomes from Social Security or pensions. While, EDCs report that CARES participants generally receive their incomes from wages.

The table below shows the number of CARES participants for each of the utilities that sponsors a CARES program. Companies generally have not set limits on the number of participants in their CARES programs. As Customer Assistance Programs (CAPs) expand, utilities will enroll customers with long term payment difficulties into their CAPs rather than into their CARES programs.

1999-2000 CARES Participants

Utility	# of CARES Participants		Short Term Assistance Recipients	
	1999	2000	1999	2000
Allegheny Power	213	538	N/A	N/A
Duquesne	N/A	N/A	3,656 ¹	4,158
GPU	11	N/A	30	N/A
Penn Power	N/A	100	N/A	64
PECO	432	N/A	1,000	23,999 ¹
PPL Utilities	160	97	95	N/A
UGI-Electric	N/A	N/A	468	855
Columbia	95	40	1,175	6,810
Dominion Peoples	835	615	2,578	3,219
Equitable	338	159	2,869	2,842
NFG	13	19	13	N/A
PG Energy	73	37	24	18
TW Phillips	7	9	51	3
UGI-Gas	404	306	N/A	N/A
Total	2,581	1,920	11,959	41,968

¹Includes both long-term and short-term assistance.

N/A – Company is unable to report this information.

For more information about CARES programs, readers may contact Janice K. Hummel at (717) 783-9088 or by e-mail at hummel@puc.state.pa.us.

Appendix K

LIURP SPENDING

	1998	1999	2000	Cumulative Funding Total 1988-2000
Allegheny Power	\$604,341	\$636,958	\$1,700,000	\$11,788,329
Duquesne	\$790,455	\$853,202	\$1,059,166	\$9,557,079
Met-Ed	\$1,413,946	\$1,186,062	\$1,262,788	\$15,965,857
PECO*	\$3,292,514	\$5,633,906	\$6,079,000	\$46,735,273
Penelec	\$997,558	\$877,845	\$1,205,540	\$12,190,776
Penn Power	\$123,100	\$152,700	\$346,366	\$2,110,473
PPL Utilities	\$3,061,100	\$4,375,449	\$5,713,649	\$43,270,170
UGI-Electric	\$109,508	\$87,886	\$170,403	\$1,065,239
Electric-Total	\$10,392,522	\$13,804,008	\$17,536,912	\$142,683,196
Columbia	\$1,219,238	\$1,313,019	\$1,404,714	\$13,591,459
Dominion Peoples	\$575,418	\$373,093	\$584,845	\$8,178,017
Equitable	\$574,952	\$297,944	\$598,040	\$7,188,777
NFG	\$867,008	\$932,966	\$1,041,168	\$8,920,384
PG Energy	\$380,185	\$297,769	\$391,982	\$3,957,143
TW Phillips	\$240,000	\$121,082	\$123,098	\$2,076,362
UGI-Gas	\$618,334	\$541,851	\$483,461	\$6,348,624
Gas-Total	\$4,475,135	\$3,877,724	\$4,627,308	\$50,260,766
Overall Total	\$14,867,657	\$17,681,732	\$22,164,220	\$192,943,962

*Combined electric and gas

Appendix L

LIURP Production Levels

	Heating Jobs				Water Heating Jobs				Baseload Jobs				Cumulative 13 Yr. Total
	1998	1999	2000	13 Yr. Total	1998	1999	2000	13 Yr. Total	1998	1999	2000	9 Yr. Total	
Allegheny Power	179	2	223	6,167	343	15	808	10,044	0	0	320	626	16,837
Duquesne	2	2	0	1,968	5	15	23	1,019	791	988	1,260	6,430	9,417
Met-Ed	382	419	330	7,088	381	327	295	5,642	350	269	334	1,552	14,282
PECO*	1,344	1,701	2,113	18,177	0	0	0	7,644	4,218	6,809	6,650	34,155	59,976
Penelec	188	171	241	4,930	705	581	855	12,956	136	153	289	1,353	19,239
Penn Power	11	19	40	602	74	75	284	2,066	60	75	270	599	3,267
PPL Utilities	1,619	1,209	1,713	24,744	323	537	735	6,776	387	750	425	3,666	35,186
UGI-Electric	26	9	9	278	1	0	0	13	23	50	136	333	624
Electric-Total	3,751	3,532	4,669	63,954	1,832	1,550	3,000	46,160	5,965	9,094	9,684	48,714	158,828
Columbia	255	234	181	3,473									3,473
Dominion Peoples	167	117	200	2,998									2,998
Equitable	163	52	179	1,867									1,867
NFG	195	192	207	2,598									2,598
PG Energy	133	112	182	2,120									2,120
TW Phillips	19	18	25	737									737
UGI-Gas	231	205	183	2,466									2,466
Gas-Total	1,163	930	1,157	16,259									16,259
Overall Total	4,914	4,462	5,826	80,213	1,832	1,550	3,000	46,160	5,965	9,094	9,684	48,714	175,087

*Combined electric and gas

Appendix M

Utility Hardship Funds

Company	Hardship Fund Name
Allegheny Power	Dollar Energy Fund
Duquesne	Dollar Energy Fund
Met-Ed	Dollar Energy Fund
PECO*	Matching Energy Assistance Fund (UESF and others)
Penelec	Dollar Energy Fund
Penn Power	Project Reach
PPL Utilities	Operation Help
Columbia	Dollar Energy Fund
Dominion Peoples	Dollar Energy Fund
Equitable	Dollar Energy Fund
NFG	Neighbor for Neighbor
PG Energy	Project Outreach
T.W. Phillips	Dollar Energy Fund
UGI*	Operation Share
PA-American	Dollar Energy Fund

*Includes electric and gas

Appendix N

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Appendix O

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Consumer Access to the Public Utility Commission

The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission provides access to consumers through three toll free telephone numbers:

Termination Hotline: 1-800-692-7380

Complaint Hotline: 1-800-782-1110

Utility Choice Hotline: 1-888-782-3228

General Information Line: 717-783-1740 (not toll free)

- ✍ Consumers can also reach the Commission by mail at the following address:**

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
P.O. Box 3265
Harrisburg PA 17105-3265

- ✍ Information about the PA PUC is available on the internet:**

<http://puc.paonline.com>

- ✍ Information about Electric Choice is available on the internet:**

www.electrichoice.com