

ROLL CALL REPORT



Brenda K. Pennington, Esq.
Interim People's Counsel

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--|----|
| <i>PEPCO Reliability Woes</i> | 2 |
| <i>Selection of Sustainable Energy Utility</i> | 5 |
| <i>OPC-DC Support Funding for PJM</i> | 7 |
| <i>OPC-DC Opposes WG Decoupling</i> | 9 |
| <i>Joint Utility Discount Day</i> | 10 |
| <i>Expo "In A-Box"</i> | 11 |
| <i>FiOS Education Forum</i> | 12 |

SMART GRID DEPLOYMENT BEGINS IN D.C.

2010 is the year of Smart Grid deployment in the District of Columbia. Beginning in October, the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO) began deploying smart meters throughout the District of Columbia. PEPCO expects deployment will be completed by December 2011. OPC-DC focuses its advocacy efforts on three main areas – reliability of the new network, consumer education and the development of consumer protection rules.

Reliability

In June 2010, the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (DC PSC) approved deployment of two types of smart meters, GE and Landis + Gyr. OPC-DC requested the DC PSC hire a third party to conduct a Field Acceptance Test once a portion of the smart grid network is fully deployed to ensure the network operates properly. Unfortunately, the DC PSC denied the request, stating the Commission was confident the testing PEPCO will conduct is sufficient. OPC-DC maintains a third party independent test would provide consumers with the confidence that the new smart grid network will operate properly.

Consumer Education

OPC-DC's strongly advocates for early consumer education about the deployment of the smart grid, specifically, the benefits consumers should receive and the new challenges smart meters will bring. Currently, OPC-DC is in a collaborative working group with PEPCO, DC PSC staff,



and the D.C. Energy Office to develop a consumer education plan regarding the deployment of smart meters. OPC-DC and PEPCO are at odds about the manner in which consumer education should proceed. PEPCO

prefers to educate consumers by sending letters to those who are receiving meters shortly before actual installation. Conversely, OPC-DC prefers to make citywide announcements about the soon to be deployed smart grid, directing consumers to PEPCO's website and inviting them to community meetings where they can have their questions and concerns addressed. Both parties are conducting separate and joint consumer education throughout the District.

(See page 2, OPC-DC and PEPCO Host Joint "Smart Meter" Education Workshop)

Rules

In the early part of 2010, OPC-DC requested the Commission establish a proceeding to develop rules to protect consumers in the Smart Grid era. Specifically, OPC-DC's primary areas of protection focused on -- remote disconnections, privacy, data security and data management. The DC PSC denied the Office's request, but established a docket to handle policy issues related to these and other areas to develop comprehensive consumer protection rules. OPC-DC intends on using the NASUCA's whitepaper entitled "The Need for Essential Consumer Protections" as a basis for many of its consumer protection proposals.

PEPCO's Continuing Reliability Woes

Over the last couple years, OPC-DC has discussed the local electric distribution company's (PEPCO) reliability challenges with fellow NASUCANs, as well as in pleadings before the DC PSC, and testimony before the D.C. City Council. Unfortunately, there has been little to no improvement in PEPCO's performance this year. Not only do the lights continue to flicker and go out on "blue sky days," when weather is dry, sunny, windless, low humidity and low temperature, but the District also found itself in the midst of several snowstorms, a prolonged heat wave and a few summer storms which knocked the power out for tens of thousands of customers. These events lasted several days before power was restored. Needless to say, PEPCO customers and the District's City Council have become increasingly frustrated with the poor service provided by PEPCO.

OPC-DC has testified before the City Council, and filed pleadings before the DC PSC, recommending:

1. Strengthen and modify the DC PSC's current electric quality of service standards ("EQSS") for reliability. The current calculations for setting the reliability benchmarks are neither ensuring nor encouraging PEPCO to improve its reliability;
2. Adopt provisions for financial penalties in the EQSS. One way to ensure PEPCO invests in improving the

distribution system would be to tie its performance to financial penalties;

3. Reduce PEPCO'S authorized return on equity (ROE) due to its poor performance. When PEPCO's performance is poor, it is reasonable for it and its shareholders to be held responsible for that poor performance in the form of a reduced ROE. This is, after all, the keystone of the utility's public obligation. This would appropriately shift the burden of poor reliability from the consumers to PEPCO. At the same time, receiving a reduced ROE due to poor performance should spur PEPCO to perform better in the future;
4. Require a full management audit of all public utilities operating in the District so that the management, operations, emergency response, computing systems and every aspect of a utility's processes, in this case PEPCO, can be evaluated and improved;
5. Amend the provisions of the District Code to include the word "reliable" in order to clarify the obligation of the Commission to ensure public utilities provide reliable service; in other words, service that is "safe, reliable and adequate."

OPC-DC believes implementation of the above five items will substantially improve electric service to District residents.

OPC-DC and PEPCO Host Joint "Smart Meters" Education Workshop *October 14, 2010*

On Thursday October 14th, OPC-DC hosted its first joint education forum with PEPCO to extend education to the more than 280,000 District of Columbia electric customers slated to receive new electronic "Smart Meters" over the next 15 months.

*More than 280,000
District of Columbia
electric customers slated
to receive new electronic
"Smart Meters" over
the next 15 months.*

"OPC has been adamant about the fact that PEPCO has not educated consumers around the fundamentals of how and why we are moving toward automated metering infrastructure (AMI)," stated Interim People's Counsel Brenda Pennington. "While there is no doubt that we need to move forward with the technology, consumers have been kept in the dark regarding what it is, how it will be deployed, what are the costs and what are the benefits," added Ms. Pennington.

OPC-DC designed the first in a planned series of

community based forums to answer these questions. Working collaboratively with PEPCO, nearly 100 members of the community were able to engage PEPCO engineers, community affairs and executive staff in a broad ranging discussion of the meter installation and preparation to build out the smart grid in the District of Columbia.

Consumers asked questions regarding the timetable for meter deployment (October 2010 -December 2011), security features, data sharing with 3rd parties and PEPCO's control of data, connectivity for the purpose of net metering, meter reading process, dispute resolution and the anticipated rate design once the system is fully functional.

OPC plans to conduct these smart meter education forums throughout all eight wards of the city.

OPC-DC Testifies Before the Council of the District of Columbia on Power Outages and Recommends Legislative Action

July 14, 2010

There has been a tremendous amount of interest in the District of Columbia's electric distribution system not only from OPC-DC and District consumers, but also the District Council, the legislative branch of District government. In response to concerns raised by consumers following a severe heat wave this summer, the District Council convened a roundtable on July 14, 2010, to examine the cause of power outages, measures to prevent outages, the governmental response to outages, and accommodations for consumers affected by outages. Interim People's Counsel Brenda K. Pennington recommended the District Council: (1) approve legislation requiring the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (DC PSC) to

consider service quality and reliability in public utility proceedings for the purpose of determining a utility company's allowed return on equity; (2) clarify the DC PSC's authority to impose a civil penalty if a public utility violates any Commission rule, order, or regulation; (3) approve legislation requiring the DC PSC to impose a civil penalty if a public utility violates the Commission's quality of service standards; (4) conduct periodic oversight hearings to consider the performance of public utilities operating in the District of Columbia; (5) require public utilities to provide education on the process for submitting claims for damages sustained by a utility's operations; and (6) require the DC PSC to undertake a full management audit of PEPCO's distribution service operations in the District of Columbia.

OPC-DC Testifies on Electric Reliability and Recommends Legislative Action

September 30, 2010

Power outages continued to increase following severe thunderstorms. PEPCO's lengthy duration of power restoration failed to meet public expectations. In response the District Council convened a second public roundtable on September 30, 2010 to examine a study released by the DC PSC addressing the feasibility and reliability of undergrounding electric distribution lines in the District of Columbia and the reliability of the electric grid in the District of Columbia.

At the roundtable, Interim People's Counsel Brenda K. Pennington reiterated most of the same the recommendations made in July 2010. Namely the District Council should: (1) ensure reliability standards be strengthened and modified; (2) ensure PEPCO's performance is tied to financial penalties; (3) ensure PEPCO's poor performance is reflected in a reduction in its authorized return on equity; (4) amend the provisions of the District Code to include the word "reliable," (5) require a full management audit of all public utilities operating in the District.

OPC-DC Testifies on AMI Deployment

October 27, 2010

In June 2009, the District Council enacted the Advanced Metering Infrastructure Implementation and Cost Recovery Authorization Emergency Act of 2009, authorizing PEPCO to implement an advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and establish a regulatory asset for AMI costs, net of \$44.6 million in federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. authorized the DC-PSC to review the prudence of accrued The AMI Act costs, and required PEPCO to net any utility cost savings resulting from AMI deployment.

With the deployment of AMI underway in the District, the District Council convened a public roundtable on October 27, 2010 to discuss the implementation process of the

smart grid and allow the public to share their concerns about this new advancement. Interim People's Counsel Brenda K. Pennington asked the District Council to amend D.C. law to: (1) require the DC PSC to select a third party to conduct an end-to-end test of the AMI network prior to the implementation of dynamic pricing in 2013; (2) require the DC PSC establish a proceeding to set benchmarks to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with the deployment of AMI; (3) require the DC PSC to adopt enhanced consumer protections prior to the implementation of dynamic pricing in 2013; and (4) require the DC PSC to review the current net metering rules in light of the changing circumstances AMI presents to consumers who are investing in distributed generation facilities.

OPC-DC Attorney Laurence Daniels Discusses the Deployment of Smart Meters in D.C. at Connectivity Week and GridWeek



*OPC-DC Attorney
Laurence Daniels*

OPC-DC Attorney Laurence Daniels addressed a panel during Connectivity Week in Santa Clara, CA. The panel explored areas of concern for consumers and outlined the challenges utility companies will face when Smart Meter deployments begin. Attorney Daniels outlined the primary areas of concern for consumers: 1) how will the deployment of the Smart Grid be paid for and how will it impact consumers' bills; 2) privacy and security of data; and 3) the what's in it for me questions, an explanation of the benefits of smart grid. As for the challenges utility companies will face, he noted one of the biggest challenges will be the ability of the company to adjust to the new relationship the smart grid brings between it and its customers. Specifically, can utility companies effectively deliver their vision of the smart grid and can they respond in a timely fashion to the

demands consumers will have once they begin to adopt the technology?

Attorney Daniels also appeared on a panel during GridWeek 2010, held in Washington, D.C. The panel discussed the effective means by which utility companies deploying smart grid can empower consumers to effectively use dynamic pricing and in-home displays. Attorney Daniels discussed the experience of District consumers with *PowerCentsDC* and the educational methods used. Daniels focused on the need to begin to educate consumers when they receive their smart meters so consumers can begin to understand why the smart grid is being deployed and what benefits can be expected.

Undergrounding the Overhead Distribution Lines in the District

The DC PSC opened a docket in December 2003 to examine the feasibility of removing aboveground utility lines and cables and relocating them underground due to the government and public interest concerning power outages, safety and aesthetics regarding undergrounding. In February 2008, the DC PSC accepted OPC-DC's recommendation for the Commission to authorize an independent study to consider the feasibility and reliability of undergrounding. The DC PSC entered its Undergrounding Report, performed by Shaw Consultants International, Inc., into the record on July 9, 2010. OPC-DC filed its Comments addressing the Undergrounding Report at the end of October.

quantifiable benefits, particularly with regard to reliability improvements, to justify the significant cost to ratepayers, which is estimated to be more than \$5 billion dollars, associated with undergrounding the entire overhead system. OPC-DC acknowledges that undergrounding may be preferred for other reasons, such as the aesthetics of not seeing poles and wires and less trimming of the tree canopy. However, this type of decision should be made by the District as a whole, not by the Commission.

Regarding selective undergrounding, OPC-DC believes more analyses must be

OPC-DC believes there are insufficient

(Continued on page 5)

Undergrounding the Overhead Distribution Lines in the District

(Continued from page 4)

performed before the DC PSC mandates this alternative. The undergrounding of existing overhead electric facilities, even on a targeted basis, should not enable PEPCO to increase rate base and increase income from the ratepayers within the District without first requiring PEPCO to provide reliable services for its already significant revenue stream. PEPCO must first begin to meet its existing statutory responsibility to provide safe and reliable service to its electric customers.

If the DC PSC wants to consider targeting certain poorly performing overhead areas, OPC-DC believes it should undertake this type of resource planning, (which would incorporate PEPCO's planning, the DC PSC's directives and the impacts undergrounding will have on the District and its residents) in a separate docket subject to full discovery and evidentiary hearings. This docket should also include the consideration of less costly actions PEPCO can take to improve reliability.

OPC-DC Anticipates Selection of the Sustainable Energy Utility

In 2008, the Council of the District of Columbia (Council) established, through the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2008 (the Act), authority to contract with a private entity, known as the Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU), to administer sustainable energy programs in the District of Columbia. The SEU is required to, at a minimum, reduce energy consumption and peak electricity demand, increase renewable energy generating capacity, and increase the number of green-collar jobs in the District of Columbia. OPC-DC supports these efforts and is committed to ensuring the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund (SETF) is utilized efficiently to fund SEU operations in order that tangible benefits can be derived for the District of Columbia and its ratepayers and consumers.

The Act established a 13-member advisory board for the SEU which advises the District Department of the Environment (DDOE) on the procurement of the contract with the SEU and monitors the progress of the SEU under its contract. The Interim People's Counsel, is by law, one of the members of the SEU Advisory Board. OPC-DC has actively participated in the twice monthly board meetings held since August 31, 2009. The SEU contract is funded by the SETF, which is funded through assessments to PEPCO and Washington Gas. PEPCO and Washington Gas recover

their respective assessments through rates as a surcharge on consumers' bills.

The Act sets a number of obligations for the SEU Advisory Board that include adopting rules and procedures governing its meetings and decision making processes; recommending to the Mayor performance benchmarks for the SEU contract; submitting to the DDOE and Council comments on the draft Request for Proposal for SEU bids; submitting to the DDOE and Council comments on the bids submitted for the SEU contract; meeting quarterly with representatives from the SEU to monitor the performance of the SEU and programs operated by the SEU; and, presenting an annual report on the progress of the SEU to the Council. OPC-DC provides staff assistance to DDOE as necessary for the SEU Advisory Board to fulfill its mandate under the Act.

Following meetings that concluded in May 2010, the SEU Advisory Board recommended performance benchmarks and the contents of the Request for Proposal for SEU bids. DDOE released the RFP and received a number of bids in September 2010. An announcement of the winning bid is coming soon. The SEU is expected to commence operations in 2012.

The SEU is required to, at a minimum, reduce energy consumption and peak electricity demand, increase renewable energy generating capacity, and increase the number of green-collar jobs in the District of Columbia.

OPC-DC Supports DC PSC's Decision to Deny PEPCO Recovery of Costs Related to Divestiture

DC PSC denied PEPCO's recovery of \$6.1 million associated with internal labor costs that PEPCO included in transition costs, and certain costs PEPCO incurred in connection with the redemption of long-term debt, SFAS No. 88 charges and corporate reorganization charges.

In March 1999, PEPCO asked the DC PSC to allow it to divest its generating assets, including purchase power contracts so that it could become a transmission and distribution company, basically a wires only company. PEPCO's divestiture request was the single most significant event in the electric utility industry in the District since the inception of regulation. OPC-DC opposed PEPCO's proposed divestiture application because, among other things, it failed to provide residential ratepayers with substantial and significant up-front rate reductions or any meaningful long-term protections against future rate increases during the period when market volatility is most likely to result in increased rates.

Phase I of the proceeding concluded when the DC PSC approved the Non-Unanimous Agreement of Stipulation and Full Settlement (Settlement Agreement) in December 1999. OPC-DC was not a signatory to the Settlement Agreement because, similar to PEPCO's divestiture application, it contained no consumer protections. Under the Settlement Agreement, PEPCO is to share with District ratepayers profits (i.e., net proceeds) recovered from the sale of its generating assets.

In Phase II, the DC PSC had to resolve issues related to determining the proper methods for calculating ratepayers' share of PEPCO's net generation proceeds. On May 18, 2010, the DC PSC denied PEPCO's recovery of \$6.1 million associated with internal labor costs that PEPCO included in transition costs, and certain costs PEPCO incurred in connection with the redemption of long-term

debt, SFAS No. 88 charges and corporate reorganization charges. With respect to the latter charges, the DC PSC did not consider them transaction costs; therefore, they were ineligible for recovery from the divestiture proceeds.

PEPCO filed an Application for Reconsideration (Application) of the DC PSC's decision on June 17, 2010, and OPC-DC filed a response opposing PEPCO's Application. On reconsideration the DC PSC reaffirmed its decision. On September 7, 2010 PEPCO filed a petition for review with the D.C. Court of Appeals. OPC-DC will file an intervener's brief in support of the Commission on December 30, 2010. If the D.C. Court of Appeals does not affirm the DC PSC's Order on reconsideration, PEPCO would collect, at a minimum, \$15 million dollars from the divestiture proceeds. It is clear to OPC-DC that PEPCO simply disagrees with the DC PSC's decision and is attempting to extract every last dollar from the divestiture proceeds for its shareholders. OPC-DC is determined not to let that happen and will vigorously support the DC PSC in defending its decision.



OPC-DC Opposes PEPCO's Request For Approval of a Second Surcharge To Fund Its Energy Efficiency Programs in FY 2011

In March 2009, DC PSC approved PEPCO's five demand-side management programs: one for residential customers and four for non-residential customers. Under the Clean and Affordable Energy Act (Energy Act) of 2008, the programs approved by the DC PSC were to be funded by the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund (SETF) in the amount of \$6 million a year for fiscal years 2009 – 2011. However, on July 2, 2010, the Council of the District of Columbia enacted legislation that eliminated funding for these demand-side programs, effective September 30, 2010.

PEPCO responded to the loss of funding by terminating the programs and requesting the DC PSC approve, on an expedited basis, the Company's request to establish a Demand-Side Management surcharge to fund the continued operations of the five demand-side management programs during fiscal year 2011.

OPC-DC objected to PEPCO's proposed surcharge and filed pleadings in opposition to PEPCO's request in August and October 2010. First, OPC-DC asserts PEPCO's proposal to establish a second surcharge to continue

funding the Company's demand-side management programs would amount to double recovery for the same programs at ratepayer expense. District ratepayer funds, collected through the SETF surcharge, were used to pay for PEPCO's five demand-side management programs. Ratepayers are currently paying an existing surcharge authorized by the Energy Act for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. Second, OPC-DC observes PEPCO could have explored funding from federal funds, non-governmental sources, and its shareholders, among others, to ease the financial burden that will be placed upon District ratepayers, if the Company's request is granted. Finally, OPC-DC concludes PEPCO's proposal makes several assumptions about the Company's demand-side management programs that must first undergo the rigorous probing an evidentiary hearing would allow. Therefore, OPC-DC recommends PEPCO's surcharge proposal be examined in an evidentiary hearing if the DC PSC decides to consider the merits of PEPCO's proposal. A DC PSC final decision on PEPCO's request is still pending.

OPC-DC Supports Efforts for Funding of PJM Consumer Advocates

In September 2010, the PJM Members Committee voted against a proposal from the consumer advocate members of PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM), as presented by Bill Fields of the Maryland Office of People's Counsel. The proposal was for the members to approve funding for the Consumer Advocates of PJM States, Inc. (CAPS). This was a contentious matter which led to an unusual voting method requested by a segment of the PJM membership. While a majority of the members voted in favor of the proposal (2.6 out of 5), the proposal was unable to obtain a two-thirds super majority vote as needed for tariff filings.

This has been an issue consumer advocates have wanted resolved for a few years now. After much discussion, consumer advocate offices decided to pursue this with the first presentation made to the PJM Board of Managers at the PJM annual meeting in May 2010. The initial presentation to the PJM members was made on August

12, 2010 and was not received well. The Organization of PJM States, Inc. (OPSI), which is an organization of statutory regulatory agencies in the 13 states and the District of Columbia within PJM, indicated it supports the proposal. However, OPSI and its member commissions are not members of PJM.

CAPS was being proposed as a non-profit entity consisting of the state consumer advocate offices of states in the PJM region established to provide consistent presence and participation in the PJM stakeholder process on behalf of the consumer advocate offices. This would be accomplished by the work of a full-time executive director and funds budgeted to assist consumer advocate offices with travel expenses. The executive director would be tasked with attending major PJM committee meetings, as

(Continued on page 8)

OPC-DC Supports Efforts for Funding of PJM Consumer Advocates

(Continued from page 7)

well as, subcommittee and working groups that are pertinent to consumers' interests. The executive director would be a point of contact to provide on-going information on the PJM stakeholder process to the advocate offices and provide input into the process as directed by the offices. The organization would be funded through a new schedule in the PJM tariff which would apply a charge to all load in the region. This would assure that the efforts of the consumer advocate offices on these regional issues are supported evenly by customers throughout the region. The anticipated budget for the organization would be approximately \$350,000 per year and would cover approximately \$200,000 for compensation for an executive director

and administrative assistance, \$100,000 for office expenses, and \$50,000 for reimbursement of travel for consumer advocate office personnel. The tariff provisions would provide that any funds that were budgeted for a year but not required would be applied to the next year's budget. The proposed tariff language was changed to ensure that only native load within PJM pays the charge for CAPS.

Because the PJM Board of Managers has discretion to make a filing for the tariff change at FERC notwithstanding the results of the Members Committee vote, consumer advocates will request the Board of Managers proceed with the filing at FERC.



*OPC-DC Attorney
Brian O. Edmonds*

OPC-DC Attorney Brian Edmonds Speaks at the Institute of Public Utilities Advanced Regulatory Studies Program

In September 2010, OPC-DC attorney Brian Edmonds was the speaker at the Institute of Public Utilities Advanced Regulatory Studies Program held at Michigan State University. The Advanced Regulatory Studies Program is a series of specialized half-day and all-day workshops designed to provide public- and private-sector regulatory professionals a unique opportunity to interact and exchange ideas on advanced technical, methodological, and policy issues. Each workshop provides a unique and intensive immersion experience, emphasizing both discipline-based and sector-specific learning opportunities, interactive instruction and

peer-to-peer dialog, advanced analytical methodologies, and theoretical rigor coupled with practical hands-on problems and exercises. Mr. Edmonds presented a discussion of financial regulations and corporate governance, subjects he teaches as an adjunct professor at the University of Maryland University College.

OPC-DC Opposes Washington Gas' Proposed Decoupling Mechanism

Washington Gas Light Company (WGL) filed for a Revenue Normalization Adjustment (RNA). The RNA is a decoupling mechanism designed to retroactively change customer bills on a monthly basis to true up revenues to reflect the effects of weather and conservation. The Company testifies this adjustment is necessary to stabilize revenues the Company receives each month, arguing that the adjustment will better align its rate structure with its cost structure.

OPC-DC advocates the DC PSC should reject WGL's proposed RNA because the Company has failed to demonstrate that its proposal is just or reasonable.

OPC-DC proposed an alternative, under which the Company would be able to recover any revenues "lost" as a consequence of actual efforts by WGL to implement new energy efficiency or conservation programs. OPC-DC's proposal will achieve the purported "primary" objective of the RNA proposal -- elimination of the "disincentive" associated with Company-sponsored conservation -- while minimizing unfair risk shifting between the Company and its customers.

If the RNA is not rejected outright, and OPC-DC's alternative fails to gain approval, the OPC-DC proposes the DC PSC condition any acceptance of the RNA on certain modifications to the proposal. These include:

1. Imposition of a reduction to the Company's return on equity ("ROE"),
2. Deferral of the implementation date to after completion of the Company's next base rate case proceeding, and
3. An enforceable commitment by the Company to implement energy efficiency or conservation programs and report on the results that have been achieved.

Finally, any approval of the RNA should be on a three-year, "pilot" basis, with continued implementation subject to the outcome of DC PSC review. The OPC-DC is still awaiting a final decision by the DC PSC.

OPC-DC Supports Enhancements to Universal Service for District Residents

OPC-DC is a member of the D.C. Universal Service Working Group. This year, the Working Group considered new methods of qualifying consumers for Universal Service. One of the methods considered is a "one - stop method." District consumers who qualify for other social service programs would also qualify for Lifeline service. In addition, the District agency responsible for qualifying Lifeline participants (The District Department of the Environments' Energy Office), recently relocated into the same buildings with the Department of Human Services, the agency responsible for administering the social services programs. This move was made to make it easier for families seeking assistance to apply for all programs at one time in one place. The Universal Service Working Group will track the numbers of people subscribing to determine if the consolidation effort was worthwhile.

In addition to improvements in the administration of Lifeline, this year marks the first time more than one telecommunications provider offers Lifeline service in the District of Columbia. NationsLine began offering its Lifeline and basic service package to District consumers and the early response has been overwhelmingly positive. In October 2010, two representatives from NationsLine visited OPC-DC to discuss its service offerings and to provide OPC-DC with customer service contact information.



JOINT UTILITY DISCOUNT DAY 2010

“5,878 District residents applied for energy, water and telephone service assistance through Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Utility Discount Program.”

On Friday, September 3, the OPC-DC staff participated in Joint Utility Day (JUDD) 2010, as it has for the past 20 years. 5,878 District residents applied for energy, water and telephone service assistance through the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Utility Discount Program grants at the Washington Convention Center. The D.C. Department of the Environment’s Energy Office also processed 450 clients at its offices between September 8th and 17th. The District’s rising unemployment rate and utility costs have prompted an increase in applications completed at JUDD over the last two years. The event was co-sponsored by Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon DC, DC Water, NationsLine, the DC PSC and OPC-DC.

OPC-DC again helped make JUDD 2010 a “value added” event, inviting a variety of healthcare, social service and family counseling organizations to participate. Among the 17 exhibitors providing information for JUDD applicants were the Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs, the D.C. Office on Disability Rights, AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Change, Inc. and the D.C. Reach Housing Counseling Program.

Interim People’s Counsel Brenda K. Pennington spoke during the JUDD press conference and provided an overview of OPC-DC’s role as the utility consumer advocate and encouraged JUDD applicants to become more energy efficient as a way to reduce their home utility costs.



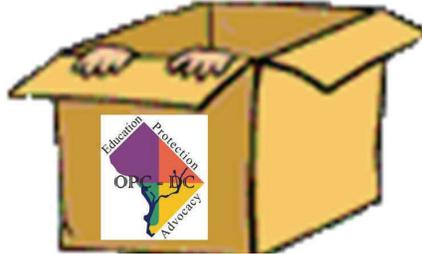
OPC-DC Sponsors “Energy Efficiency ‘Expo In-a-Box’”

On October 9, 2010, OPC-DC sponsored “Wards 6, 7 & 8 Energy Efficiency ‘Expo in-a-Box’” at Matthews Memorial Baptist Church’s in Southeast Washington.

Expo in-a-Box was designed by OPC-DC to directly address the energy efficiency needs of D.C. residents. As energy costs rise, District dwellers have shown a growing desire to use energy saving measures. In 2001, OPC sponsored its first energy efficiency expo and has been at the forefront in providing District residents with education and information on such measures so they can see actual savings on their energy bills.

Attendees welcomed presentations on solar and geothermal insulation projects in the District. Specifically, a Ward 7 resident spoke on his reasons for installing solar panels and cited the resulting energy savings he realizes. The president of the Capitol Hill Solar Co-op shared details on the formation of their solar co-op and the many energy saving benefits members are receiving. A Ward 8 energy efficiency

Energy Efficiency Expo “In-A-Box”



company discussed the energy savings the residents of Wheeler Creek, a multi-family building, are realizing from his company’s installation of geothermal insulation. This is the only geothermal insulation project of a low-income multi-family dwelling in the country. The Mount Pleasant Solar Co-op

addressed the nuts and bolts of going solar, including the cost and savings. The District Department of the Environment’s Energy Office discussed their weatherization, solar panel insulation, green roof, rain gardens grants and rebate programs.

Expo was further complemented by the “hands-on” exhibits of solar panels, tankless hot water heaters, rain barrels, strawbale insulation, energy efficiency windows and many other products and services. These demonstrations permitted residents to touch, feel and see alternative energy efficiency products, as well as have their questions answered.



OPC-DC and Verizon Co-sponsor FiOS Education Forum

During the past year, OPC-DC received an increasing number of consumer inquiries about FiOS, Verizon's fiber optic broadband system. Areas in suburban Maryland had been wired, but not District neighborhoods. In response to consumers' inquiries, OPC-DC began to explore the possibility of a strategic partnership with Verizon to educate District residents about FiOS. OPC-DC, through policy analyst Laurence Jones reached out to Verizon to get information about deployment of its fiber optic broadband system in the District. Through a series of meetings, OPC-DC and Verizon, decided to work together to educate D.C. telephone consumers to make informed choices about Verizon's new phone, Internet and cable TV service.

Many consumers wanted to find out when they can subscribe to FiOS, whether their copper Local Access Network (LAN) phone line connection will be removed if they selected FiOS and what specific features Verizon's new product actually offers.

On August 25, 2010, OPC-DC and Verizon held their first FiOS Education Forum. As

part of the forum, Verizon produced a "live" demonstration of FiOS cable television capabilities by installing a temporary fiber optic line in the room where the presentation was held and connecting the line to flat screen TVs and wireless routers. Audience members, then asked the panelists about FiOS neighborhood deployment, the system's reliability during power outages, whether the copper phone line remains after fiber optic connection, consumers' contractual obligations and FiOS features, packages and costs.

As the utility consumer advocate, a vital part of OPC-DC's role is to educate consumers about changes affecting the District's utility markets. The OPC-DC/Verizon FiOS consumer education partnership is intended to help District residents better understand Verizon's broadband fiber optic network services that are becoming available in more neighborhoods and the difference between it and Verizon's traditional copper landline telecommunications services.

Join our
Mailing List!
www.opc-dc.gov



The Office of the People's Counsel is the public advocate for natural gas, electric, and telecommunications ratepayers in the District of Columbia. By law, the Office represents D.C. utility ratepayers' interests before the Public Service Commission, FERC, FCC, other utility regulatory bodies and the courts. The Office is mandated to conduct consumer education and outreach and may represent individual consumers with complaints related to their utility service and bills.

Office of the People's Counsel of the District of Columbia

1133 15th Street, NW, Suite 500 • Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202.727.3071 • Fax: 202.727.1014 • TTY/TDD: 202.727.2876