

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Executive Office of Mayor Muriel Bowser



Office of the City Administrator

January 15, 2021

Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 was an unprecedented year for all DC residents, businesses and the District Government. In March 2020—the second quarter of the fiscal year—Mayor Bowser declared a public health emergency and District government quickly pivoted to respond to the COVID-19 global health pandemic. To align with recommended social distancing and public safety guidelines, in just one day, over 60 percent of District government employees transitioned to a telework posture. In addition, many District agencies limited or temporarily ceased most in-person activities and services.

The global health emergency required the District to significantly reallocate financial and personnel resources to respond to the pandemic. With the change in operations and a substantial decrease in revenues, the District's response required all agencies to determine how to best provide services to District residents, visitors and employees, while maintaining the necessary protocols to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

As such, the global health pandemic greatly impacted some agencies' abilities to meet their FY20 key performance indicators (KPIs) and strategic initiatives established prior to its onset as agencies shifted resources to respond to COVID-19. Therefore, outcomes for KPIs and strategic initiatives reflect a shift in District priorities and efforts during this crisis. While we continue to believe strongly in performance tracking to improve District services, the data for FY20 is not fully indicative of agencies' performance and should be reviewed factoring in the unprecedented challenges encountered in FY 2020.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kevin Donahue'.

Kevin Donahue
Interim City Administrator



Office of the People's Counsel FY2020

Agency Office of the People's Counsel

Agency Code DJ0

Fiscal Year 2020

Mission The mission of the Office of the People's Counsel ("OPC" or "Office") is to advocate for the provision of safe and reliable quality utility service and equitable treatment at rates that are just, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory.

Summary of Services OPC is a party to all utility-related proceedings before the DC Public Service Commission and represents the interests of DC ratepayers before local and federal regulatory agencies and courts. The Office assists individual consumers in disputes with utility companies about billing or services and provides consumer education and outreach to community groups and associations on emerging issues impacting the quality, reliability and affordability of their utility services and associated environmental issues. The Office provides technical assistance to consumers, the Consumer Utility Board (CUB), as well as other D.C. community groups. OPC also provides legislative analysis for, assistance to and testimony before the D.C. Council on utility matters.

2020 Accomplishments

Accomplishment	Impact on Agency	Impact on Residents
OPC developed new consumer complaint database standard operating procedures which incorporate both the Consumer Services and Water Services Division's processes and procedures in a comprehensive and streamlined approach resulting in more efficient consumer complaint resolution process.	The agency continues to see increases in the efficiency complaint resolution and closures.	The new consumer database will help streamline the complaint process which will be an even higher quality of customer service to DC consumers.
OPC successfully advocated for sufficient WGL compliance with federal safety requirements for replacement of mercury service regulators to ensure DC consumer safety from gas explosions.	The agency is pleased to work zealously to continue to effectively advocate on behalf of District ratepayers.	This is a major accomplishment for the residents of the District, as it denotes OPC's commitment to safe natural gas delivery in the District.
OPC's rigorous community outreach and education on significant utility issues resulted in extraordinary public participation (168 statements) in the PSC's public hearing on the Pepco rate case.	OPC is proud of its work thus far in the Pepco rate case. The public participation demonstrates the positive impact our consumer advocacy has had on the community at large.	OPC's vigorous advocacy has given a voice to the District ratepayers and has served to demonstrate OPC's staunch resolve to protect the interests of District ratepayers.

2020 Key Performance Indicators

Measure	Frequency	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Target	FY 2020 Quarter 1	FY 2020 Quarter 2	FY 2020 Quarter 3	FY 2020 Quarter 4	FY 2020 Actual	KPI Status	Explanation for Unmet FY 2020 Target
1 - Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric and telephone utilities. (2 Measures)												
Percent of consumer complaints closed annually	Quarterly	88%	84.8%	63.3%	90%	79.1%	70%	94.9%	88.2%	81.7%	Nearly Met	We experienced a significant decline in our complaint closure rate during the 2nd quarter, due to a sudden change in working systems, as a result of national health emergency.
Number of consumer outreach meetings	Quarterly	510	650	1031	660	293	186	254	601	1334	Met	
2 - Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District. (1 Measure)												
Number of proceedings initiated by OPC	Quarterly	2	4	5	4	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available	2	Unmet	OPC's efforts have been focused on consumer rate cases and consumer advocacy in the wake of the COVID health crisis.

2020 Workload Measures

Measure	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Actual	FY 2020 Quarter 1	FY 2020 Quarter 2	FY 2020 Quarter 3	FY 2020 Quarter 4	FY 2020
1 - Consumer assistance (3 Measures)							
Number of Consumer Complaints	1593	1252	316	307	188	279	1090
Number of Consumer Inquiries	1182	1150	394	105	423	470	1392
Number of NEP/LEP persons served by the agency	2871	3113	150	896	16	15	1077

2020 Operations

Operations Header	Operations Title	Operations Description	Type of Operations
1 - Provide consumer education, outreach and technical assistance to District ratepayers and consumers on matters relating to natural gas, electric and telephone utilities. (2 Activities)			
CUSTOMER SERVICE	Consumer assistance	On a daily basis, OPC provides consumers with pertinent information for city services, not provided by OPC. The agency receives many misdirected calls, and strives to ensure that residents needing assistance are referred to the correct city agency for service.	Daily Service
CONSUMER EDUCATION	Daily Consumer Education Activities	OPC's consumer services division provides daily consumer education and outreach activity by attending and conducting various community meetings on a weekly and monthly basis.	Daily Service
2 - Ensure effective advocacy on behalf of consumers and ratepayers of natural gas, electric and telephone services in the District. (1 Activity)			
CONSUMER ADVOCACY & REPRESENTATION	OPC Consumer Advocacy	This operation describes the mission critical work OPC conducts in advocating for consumer regulatory issues.	Daily Service

Operations Header	Operations Title	Operations Description	Type of Operations
3 - Enhance agency operational efficiency to improve agency efficiency and productivity, service delivery and cost reduction. (1 Activity)			
Daily Operations	Enhancing Agency Operational Efficiency	OPC is working efficiently and effectively to assist District consumers with individual inquiries and complaints regarding their utility services and billing on both an informal and formal basis. OPC staff is continuing its comprehensive consumer education program, which includes outreach to non-English speaking and senior consumers. OPC has a robust seniors outreach and education program that is a vital component of its consumer education and outreach program. OPC has enhanced its partnerships with AARP, the Office on Aging and Commission on Aging. OPC staff educates seniors through presentations at community and mini-commission on aging meetings and at senior centers throughout the District. OPC staff also regularly updates the "Seniors Resource Guide" about home energy efficiency tips and changes in the District's utility markets. OPC's seniors outreach and education program is designed to assist seniors in managing their utility services costs.	Daily Service

2020 Strategic Initiatives

Strategic Initiative Title	Strategic Initiative Description	Completion to Date	Status Update	Explanation for Incomplete Initiative
Consumer assistance (1 Strategic Initiative)				
Community forum featuring representatives from Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon and DC Water. The utilities will provide an update on issues affecting their industry.	Community forum featuring representatives from Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon and DC Water. The utilities will provide an update on issues affecting their industry.	0-24%	This initiative was not completed due to COVID-19.	This initiative was not completed due to COVID-19.
Daily Consumer Education Activities (1 Strategic Initiative)				
Commissioned Consumer Studies	OPC has commissioned four consumer-focused studies that will provide empirical data on topical issues directly impacting utility consumers to facilitate our ability to provide tangible solutions to reoccurring problems, including the following: 1.) Affordability study; 2.) Pre-paid Electric study; 3.) Third-Party Supplier study and 4.) Clean Energy study.	75-99%	All of the studies have been completed except the Third Party Supplier Study. This study will be completed by January 31, 2021.	
Enhancing Agency Operational Efficiency (1 Strategic Initiative)				
Utility Regulatory Attorney Mentor Program	Develop a mentor protegee program for attorneys to encourage CBE participation within the utility regulatory arena.	0-24%	This program has been cancelled due to COVID-19.	This program has been cancelled due to COVID-19.
OPC Consumer Advocacy (5 Strategic initiatives)				
Pepco Rate Case, Multi-Year Rate Plan	On May 30, 2019, Pepco filed its rate case including a proposal for a multi-year rate plan. OPC will actively litigate every phase of this proceeding to ensure the new ratemaking model produces just and reasonable rates and provides other benefits for DC consumers.	25-49%	Hearings were completed on October 27. Briefs are due December 9 and Reply Briefs are due on December 23, 2020.	
Mercury Service Regulator Replacement	Washington Gas Light has been mandated by the National Transportation Safety Board and the DC Public Service Commission to replace all mercury service regulators, a device mounted on the natural gas meters, in the District of Columbia, and to its plan with the Commission by August 30, 2020. OPC will carefully analyze the plan and advocate for a project implementation plan, consumer education plan and project costs that are reasonable and provide the benefit of enhanced safety to DC consumers.	Complete	Formal Case 1157 is complete. The Commission issued Order No. 20608 on August 14, detailing the Updated Implementation Plan for the removal of certain mercury service regulators. Specifically, WGL must comply with five recommendations. WGL asked for reconsideration and OPC filed comments in response. WGL's reconsideration was denied on October 15.	
Project Pipes 2	Washington Gas Light has completed its first five-year phase of replacing underground natural gas pipes in various areas of the city and the second phase is before the Commission for approval. OPC will review the results of the first phase of the program and provide recommendations to the Commission that ensure the second phase of pipe replacements will be performed in a manner that enhances safety and holds Washington Gas accountable for adhering to the annual budgets approved by the Commission.	Complete	OPC filed its brief on October 23. Awaiting a Commission decision.	
Washington Gas Rate Case	In the first quarter of 2020, Washington Gas Light will file a rate case which is likely to include a multi-year rate plan. OPC will actively analyze and litigate this rate proceeding to advocate on behalf of DC consumers for rates that are just, reasonable, and affordable and the rate proposal is consistent with and promotes recently enacted clean energy laws.	0-24%	OPC is preparing for hearings which will be set for a date in November.	
DC Water Audit	OPC shall conduct a comprehensive audit of DC Water's billing practices, meter reading accuracy and customer service operations, and make recommendations for improvement of DC Water's operations based on the findings and conclusions of the audit.	0-24%	Due to lack of funding by the DC Council, this initiative is now cancelled.	Lack of funding.