



ILLINOIS
COMMERCE
COMMISSION

CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION
2010 ANNUAL REPORT



ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION
Consumer Services Division
www.icc.illinois.gov

2010 Annual Report

ANNUAL REPORT
CONSUMER SERVICES DIVISION
2010

ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Consumer Services Division (CSD) of the Illinois Commerce Commission provides the agency's principal contact with utility ratepayers throughout the State of Illinois. Utility customers are connected to an experienced team of CSD counselors who work exclusively to field questions about utility service and resolve their issues. Consumers are also served through recorded information about a number of utility topics. CSD's integration of its Automated Complaint Tracking System (ACTS) and Automated Call Distribution System (ACD) allow for our staff to efficiently track the types of inquiries and complaints that were received and how they were resolved, monitor resolution times, and identify trends by investigating consumer complaints.

In addition to managing consumer contact, CSD staff participates in consumer education efforts, rulemakings, certification cases, informal investigations into industry practices, and formal cases before the Commission. This report provides a descriptive overview of CSD and an annual review of our consumer contact information.

In 2010, CSD assisted more than 25,200 consumers with questions and complaints, the majority of which focused on energy issues. Approximately, 20,800 complaints and inquiries were received by phone while another 4,400 consumers contacted the division via alternative methods including our online complaint system, letters and email. Through these various channels of customer communication the Consumer Services team successfully worked with utilities to provide approximately \$2.3 million in savings directly to individual consumers. Examples of savings calculated by CSD include, but are not limited to: correction of billing errors and rate classifications, waivers of service fees for reconnection, and removal of late charges and deposit requirements.

The Consumer Services Division would like to thank you for your interest and express our commitment to continue to provide quality services in assisting and educating Illinois consumers. CSD will also continue to develop and implement innovative solutions for providing utility related consumer services to the State of Illinois.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter A. Muntaner".

Peter A. Muntaner
Director



CONSUMER EDUCATION/COMPLAINT ACTIVITY

The Commission's Consumer Services Division (CSD) is the agency's principle contact with the utility consumers in the state. CSD is uniquely positioned to provide important information to the Commission. Our Staff consists of management; administrative support; consumer counselors, whose primary responsibility is to interface with consumers; and members involved in consumer programs, which includes consumer education, development of rules, carrier/supplier certification, and compliance issues.

Dialog with consumers, utilities, and service providers allow us to provide useful information to other divisions within the ICC and to the Commission concerning issues that develop. On an informal basis, CSD contacts regulated utilities and alternative gas and electric suppliers when issues of compliance and potential problems are raised by trends identified through consumer contacts.



CONSUMER EDUCATION

The role of Consumer Services as educator increases as the regulated utility industry changes, particularly as competition develops. CSD responds to consumer questions about regulations, services and products. In assisting consumers, Program Staff and Consumer Counselors reference laws, Commission orders, company tariffs, new services and products, marketing and consumer opinions on regulatory issues. CSD has the important responsibility of helping consumers understand choices.

Counselor Staff answers consumer inquiries regarding customer rights and responsibilities, Commission programs and rules, telecommunication carrier options and alternative energy supplier options. Staff also informs consumers of information available on the Commission's website and when necessary provides directions.



CONSUMER EDUCATION/COMPLAINT ACTIVITY

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A law that took effect in August, 2007 requires the Commission to provide a website and a toll-free telephone number to accept comments from Illinois residents regarding any matter under the auspices of the Commission or before the Commission. Public comments are reported by staff to the full Commission prior to all relevant votes of the Commission. The Consumer Services Division records all public comments submitted by telephone and reviews all comments submitted electronically. The ICC received 1,477 public comments in 2010. Of that total, 949 comments were posted directly to docketed cases by consumers via the ICC website and 528 comments were posted to docketed cases with the assistance of CSD via telephone, written and e-mail submissions.

To File a Public Comment

ICC toll-free number 800-524-0795

ICC Website: www.icc.illinois.gov

NON-PUBLIC CONSUMER COMMENTS

Contacts are recorded as “consumer opinion” when a consumer expresses an opinion but does not want the opinion made available to the public. Observations and opinions regarding utilities include cost of service, rate case protests, utility policy and practices, customer service issues, location of transmission lines, and utility service territories.



CONSUMER EDUCATION/COMPLAINT ACTIVITY RESOLVING DISPUTES

In addition to education, a primary responsibility of CSD is to provide assistance to consumers in the resolution of informal complaints and disputes with regulated utilities and other entities. Informal complaints, as the designation implies, are those handled by Staff, not formally considered by the Commission, and which do not result in an order by the Commission. The formal complaint process, which requires Commission action, is available when complaints cannot be satisfactorily resolved through Staff intervention.

The following is a description of methods used by counselors in addressing complaints and inquiries.

Three-Way Calling

Three-Way Calling is a process which permits a direct interface with the company while the consumer is still on the phone. Certain problems and requests for assistance are well suited to this type of resolution. These include requests for payment arrangements, payment extensions, final notice prior to disconnection, repairs, medical certificates and billing issues that can be resolved during the initial contact. This method increases efficiency and, in most cases, results in a high degree of customer satisfaction. In 2010, more than 8,900 were handled in this manner.

Investigative Complaints

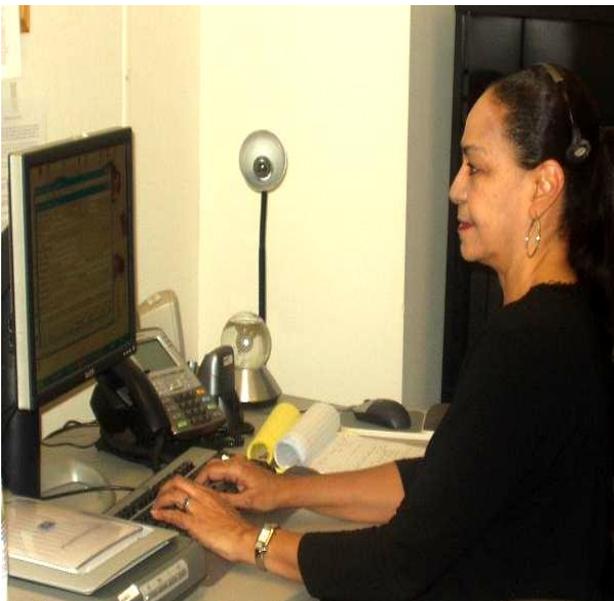
Using the Investigative Complaints method, counselors notify the company of an informal complaint filed by the customer with the Illinois Commerce Commission. The company must investigate the complaint and typically contacts the customer during the investigation. The company is required to furnish a report of the outcome along with supporting documentation. The counselor reviews the report to ensure that the company's action complies with Commission rules. CSD Staff may call on other divisions to provide answers to technical questions, getting advice from engineers, economists and financial experts. After review, the counselor contacts the consumer with an explanation of the results. In 2010, 11,200 complaints were handled in this manner.



CONSUMER EDUCATION/COMPLAINT ACTIVITY DISTRIBUTING CALLS, RECORDING, AND TRACKING DATA

Automated Call Distribution System (ACD)

The Consumer Services Division uses an Automated Call Distribution system (ACD) to connect callers to a counselor for assistance with their problem or inquiry. In addition, consumers are offered recorded informational messages on a variety of topics. Calls from TTYs are routed to counselors via Textnet, an interactive computer application. Monitoring, tracking, and reporting capabilities help management determine appropriate levels of staffing, facilitate scheduling, assist in training counselors, and identifying the needs of consumers.



Automated Complaint Tracking System (ACTS)

The ACD is integrated with Consumer Services' Automated Complaint Tracking System (ACTS), a computerized complaint tracking system that provides an accurate and readily available record of consumer contacts. Using ACTS, counselors categorize complaints by the general headings of billing, service, rates, etc. They are then further broken down into intermediate coding and more specific complaint classification. Our reporting capabilities allow flexibility in searching the records created in individual cases and compiling data. Reporting functions allow us to track information, identify problems and analyze trends.



CONSUMER EDUCATION/COMPLAINT ACTIVITY DISTRIBUTING CALLS, RECORDING, AND TRACKING DATA

e-ACTS

e-ACTS is a Web-Based electronic interface for utility companies to utilize in responding to complaints. With e-ACTS, a utility can view the status of its complaints, verify its responses to complaints that have been received by CSD, and submit information in a centralized location. e-ACTS was implemented to resolve consumer complaints more efficiently.

Consumer Services Online

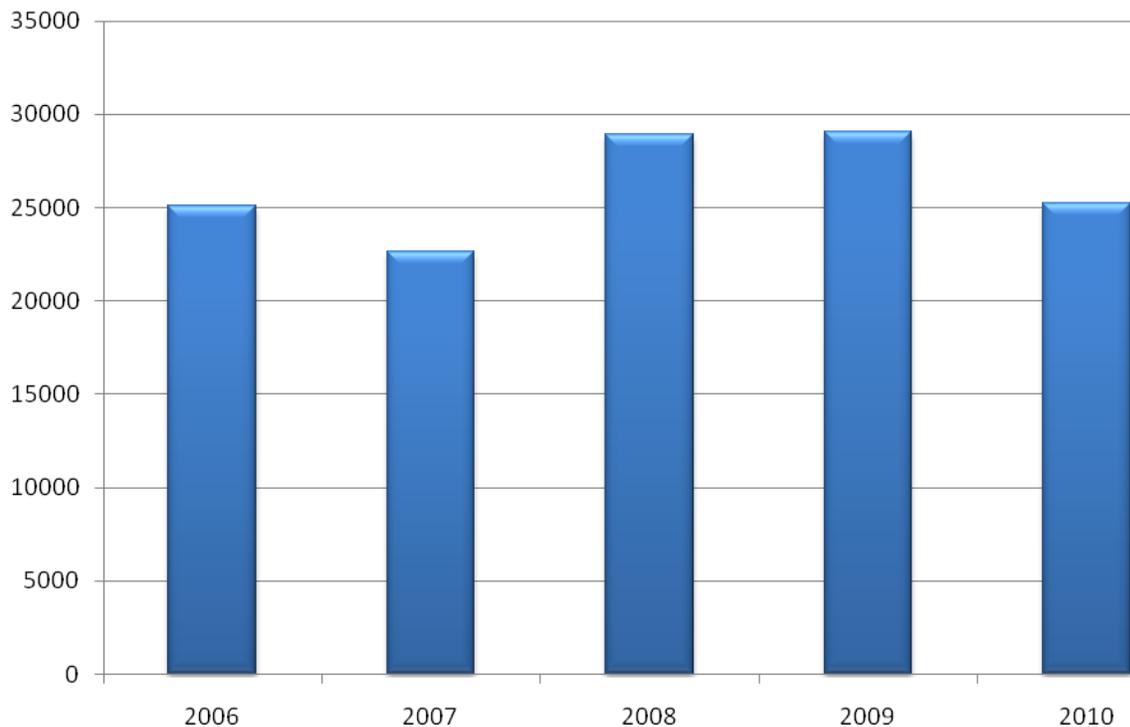
Through its online complaint system and e-mail address, CSD receives contacts from consumers concerned with a wide variety of non-emergency issues. Instructions advise consumers with a service related emergency to contact CSD by telephone. Electronic access to CSD provides a useful alternative to traditional mail and the toll free telephone hotline. Our records indicate that 3,527 consumer contacts were received electronically during 2010.





INFORMAL CONSUMER CONTACT DATA

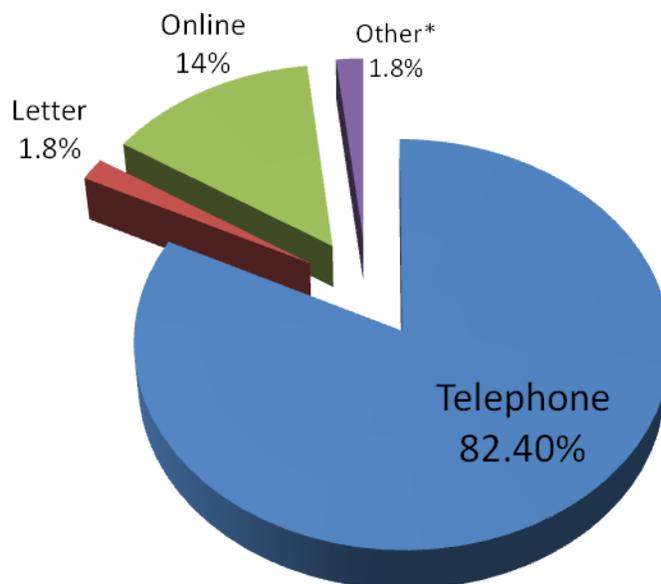
Counselors record informal inquiries, complaints, and opinions from consumers. Customer opinions and consumer education inquiries are typically answered during the initial contact. Based upon the nature of the problem, the counselor determines if there is a need for investigation requiring contact with the company.



During 2010, CSD Staff recorded 25,214 contacts. The graph depicts the number of consumer contacts received from 2006 through 2010.



INFORMAL CONSUMER CONTACT DATA ORIGIN OF CONTACTS

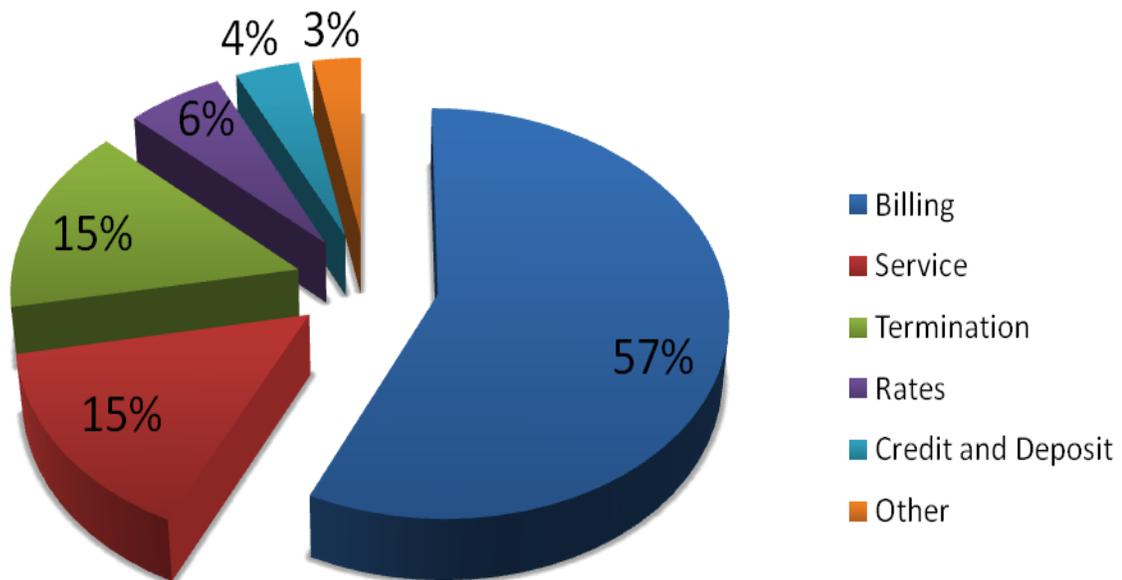


Most of the 25,214 cases recorded (82.4%) began with a telephone call to our toll-free number.

*Other contacts include those made via fax, teletypewriter and referrals.



INFORMAL CONSUMER CONTACT DATA PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION



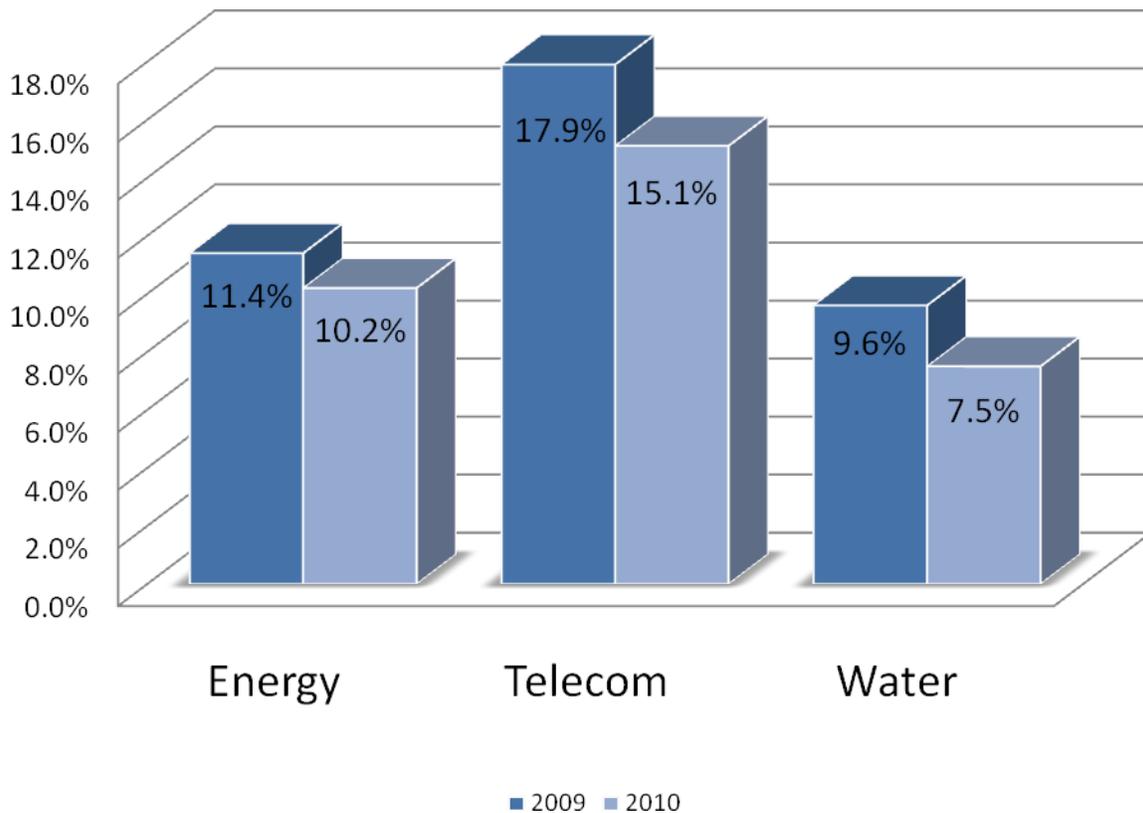
The graph above represents the total number of consumer contacts that were opened during 2010, categorized by problem type. These general categories include billing, credit and deposit, rates, service, termination and other. This graph illustrates that 57% of the contacts opened related to the consumer's bill.



INFORMAL CONSUMER CONTACT DATA JUSTIFIED COMPLAINTS

Counselors evaluate cases to determine if correct procedures were followed by the company in responding to the consumer’s complaint prior to CSD intervention. A case is justified when, in the counselor’s judgment, the company did not handle the dispute properly or effectively, or in handling the dispute, the company violated rules, regulations, orders, tariffs, or policy. Cases that are evaluated are those in which contact with the company is initiated and include 3-way and investigative cases. The following graph compares 2009 and 2010 percentages of complaints that were justified by industry type.

Number of Justified Complaints





FORMAL COMPLAINT DATA

MEDIATION

By law mediation is available to consumers to resolve telecommunication disputes. Residential consumers or business consumers with fewer than 20 lines have the right to request mediation when they have been unable to reach resolution through the informal complaint process. Telecommunication carriers are required to participate in mediation. The process must be completed within 45 days. If the parties are unable to reach agreement or after 45 days, whichever comes first, the consumer may file a formal complaint with the Commission.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



If a resolution is not reached through the informal process (including mediation), the consumer may file for a formal hearing. After the fully completed and notarized forms are submitted to the Commission, a hearing is scheduled. An Administrative Law Judge presides over the case in a manner similar to a court proceeding, considers testimony presented, reviews evidence and makes a recommendation to the Commission which renders a decision.

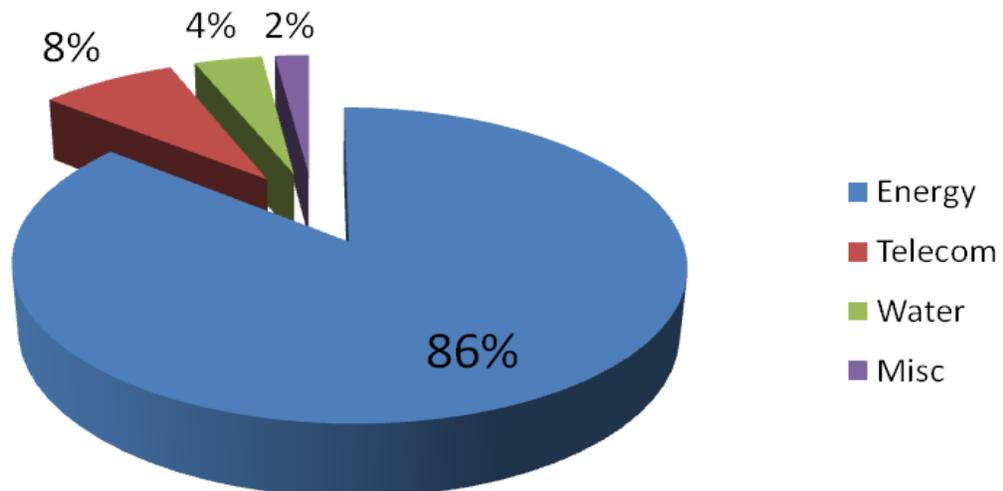
The Consumer Services Division makes every effort to achieve resolution of disputes between consumers and utilities in the informal process. Of the approximately 25,200 contacts from consumers in 2010, 401 consumers requested formal complaint forms and 87 formal hearings were actually docketed. Of the docketed cases, 42 were dismissed by the Commission, 44 are still pending and 1 request was denied.



REVIEW OF CONSUMER CONTACT DATA

This section addresses and highlights trends in the numbers and types of consumer contact for each industry. CSD categorizes the consumer contacts it receives according to the following industries: telephone, energy, water and sewer and miscellaneous.

2010 Consumer Contact by Utility Type



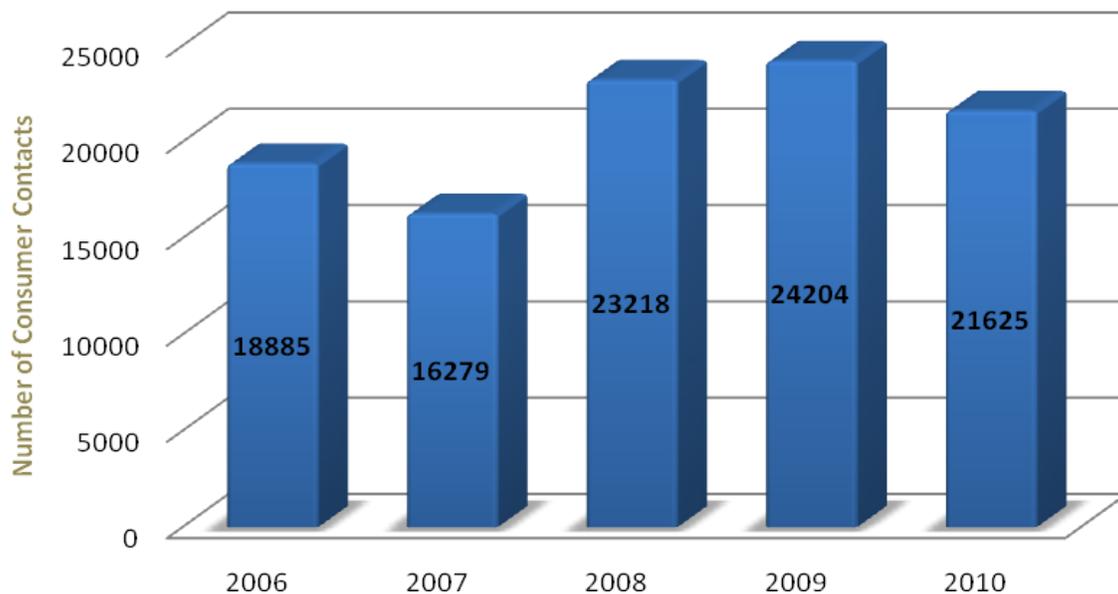
Gas and electric cases combined result in 86% of the total contacts. Contacts pertaining to telecom issues comprise 8% of the total number received during 2010. The water and sewer industry accounts for 4% of the consumer contacts.



ENERGY INDUSTRY

Contacts included in the “Energy Industry” category are those concerning companies that provide only electric service, companies that provide only gas service and companies that provide both gas and electric service.

Energy Industry Contacts

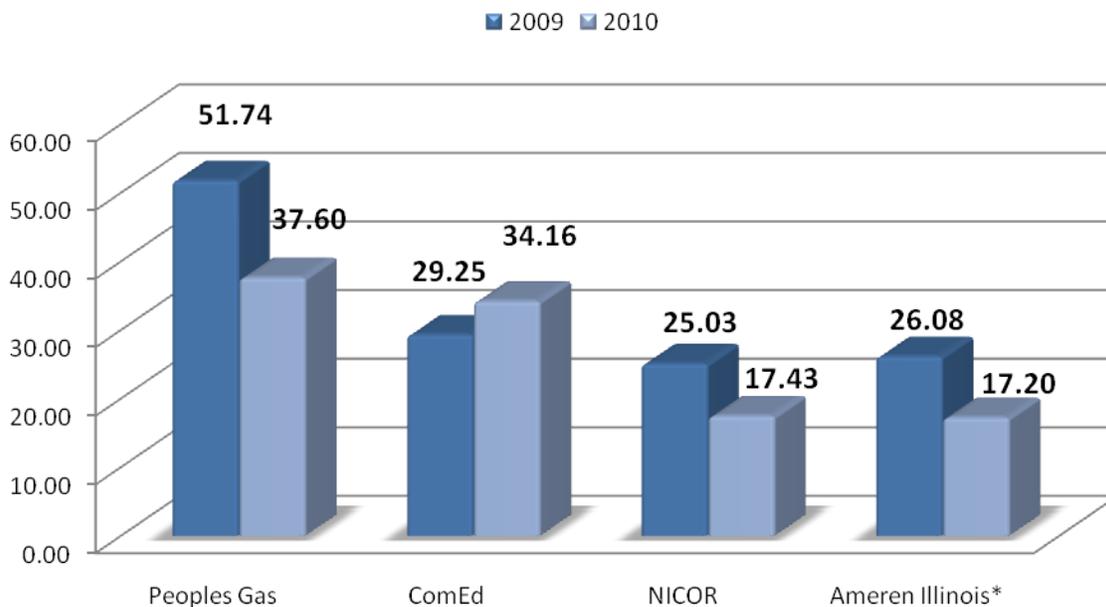


The graph above illustrates the number of consumer contacts that were received each year by CSD for the electric and gas companies from 2006 through 2010. The contrast in the number of contacts between 2007 and 2008 can be attributed to rate increases following the end of the electric restructuring transition period. During the course of rate relief settlement negotiations, in 2007, major electric companies did not disconnect customers for non-payment, which directly contributes to fewer contacts to CSD. In addition, large utilities that distribute both gas and electric service did not disconnect gas customers for non-payment during the same period, further decreasing contacts with CSD on that issue.



ENERGY INDUSTRY
2010 Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Customers

Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Customers



* In October 2010 AmerenCIPS, AmerenCILCO and AmerenIP officially merged to become Ameren Illinois.

The graph above illustrates the number of consumer contacts received per 10,000 customers for the major companies in the energy industry. Peoples Gas led in the number of contacts per 10,000 customers which is consistent with the high percentage of uncollectibles experienced by Peoples Gas and the access challenges in Peoples' service territory. Despite these challenges, there was a significant decrease in Peoples Gas contacts filed with CSD in 2010 as compared to 2009. There were significant improvements in most of the contact categories. In contrast, there was approximately a 16% increase in ComEd's contacts with a majority of the increase being attributable to contacts regarding estimated billing, timeliness of service performed, and tampering.



ENERGY INDUSTRY

2010 Energy Consumer Contacts for Smaller Electric and Gas Companies

Company	Customers*	Contacts
North Shore	147,200	162
Atmos Energy	22,500	19
MidAmerican	84,700	12
Mt. Carmel	5,500	3
Illinois Gas	9,700	0
Consumers Gas	5,500	0

*Estimated Number

The contact volume for electric and gas companies with less than 160,000 customers is shown in the chart above, beginning with the utility with the largest volume of contacts.



ENERGY INDUSTRY
 Justified Complaints

Counselors evaluate cases to determine if correct procedures were followed by the company in responding to the consumer’s complaint prior to CSD intervention. A case is justified when, in the counselor’s judgment, the company did not handle the dispute properly or effectively, or in handling the dispute, the company violated rules, regulations, orders, tariffs, or policy. The following table compares the energy companies’ justified complaints of 2009 to those in 2010. Only energy companies with more than 50 complaints are included in the table. The companies are listed in descending order, beginning with the company that has the largest percentage of justified complaints in 2010.

	2009 Complaints			2010 Complaints		
	Justified	Total	Percent Justified	Justified	Total	Percent Justified
ComEd	1,031	8,821	12%	1,235	10,897	11%
NICOR	516	4,137	12%	281	2,948	10%
North Shore	21	204	10%	12	137	9%
Peoples Gas	319	3,417	9%	183	2,548	7%
Ameren Illinois*	88	1,434	6%	57	957	6%

* In October 2010 AmerenCIPS, AmerenCILCO and AmerenIP officially merged to become Ameren Illinois.



ENERGY INDUSTRY

Response Time

The following table shows a comparison of the average response time for energy companies during 2009 and 2010. Response time is the number of days the utility takes to respond to CSD investigative complaints. The companies shown are those that received 50 or more investigative complaints during 2010. Investigative complaints are those, which are not suited to or are not resolved through three-way calling and are presented to the utility for investigation. The companies are listed alphabetically.

	2009 Response Time (in Days)	2010 Response Time (in Days)	Change in Days (2009 to 2010)
Ameren Illinois*	11.4	8.6	-2.8
ComEd	17.4	19.4	2.0
Nicor	12.9	13.7	0.8
North Shore	10.3	9.5	-0.8
Peoples Gas	10.3	8.7	-1.6

* In October 2010 AmerenCIPS, AmerenCILCO and AmerenIP officially merged to become Ameren Illinois.

Timely response is important to complaint resolution. Using e-ACTS, a web based version of ACTS, assists utilities in tracking and responding to open complaints. CSD contacts the utility when the number of days taken to address a complaint exceeds expectations.



ENERGY INDUSTRY

General Code Comparison

Consumer Contacts are first categorized in one of six general problem types. At the time of closing, more specific codes are added. The table below compares the general categories of the total number of energy contacts that were closed during 2009 and 2010.

Comparison of General Categories – 2009 and 2010

	2009	2010
Billing	12,551	12,042
Termination	4,082	3,543
Rates	1,642	1,112
Service	2,883	2,796
Credit and Deposit	1,350	1,009
Other	734	597



ENERGY INDUSTRY
 Detailed Reason for Contact

The tables below illustrate the breakdown of the most common issues raised by consumers. As the counselors close complaints, they are categorized by the general headings of billing, service, rates, etc. They are then further broken down into intermediate coding and more specific complaint classification. The following tables identify the most common of the specific categories in 2009 and 2010. CSD closed 21,188 Energy contacts in 2010.

BILLING	2009	2010
Payment Arrangements	6,304	5,476
Responsibility for Account	1,853	1,659
Meter – estimates and makeup bills	1,107	1,576
Usage/Consumption	1,031	1,197

CREDIT/DEPOSIT	2009	2010
Deposit Requirement	685	514
Service Denial	407	313
Deposit Amount/Conditions	148	105

RATES	2009	2010
Proposed Rate Change	1,339	879
Opinion- Rate in Effect	202	130



ENERGY INDUSTRY

SERVICE	2009	2010
Timeliness- General	916	1,028
Timeliness- Reconnection or Disconnection	892	782
Conduct of Personnel	490	317
Usage/Consumption	169	221

TERMINATION	2009	2010
Seeks Assistance	2,942	2,333
Medical Certificate	533	547



ENERGY INDUSTRY Supplier Choice

Residential Electric Supplier Choice

Since May 2002, residential customers have been eligible to choose their electric supplier and public utilities have the necessary tariffs and systems in place to provide delivery services. The first residential customers switched to alternative suppliers during 2008. By the end of 2010 approximately 1,260 customers had switched to alternative suppliers. In addition, several suppliers announced plans to expand their offers to residential customers in 2011. Detailed electric customer switching statistics can be viewed on the Commission's website. Legislation aimed at promoting electric choice requires certain electric utilities to offer consolidated billing and to purchase supplier receivables. When fully implemented, this may provide suppliers additional incentives to market their services to residential customers. The Commission maintains a consumer education website at: www.pluginillinois.org



Residential Natural Gas Supplier Choice

Unlike the electric industry, which by law restructured the state's electric industry to promote customer choice and create a competitive marketplace, natural gas supplier choice is not mandated. Nicor Gas, North Shore Gas and Peoples Gas voluntarily offer programs that allow their residential customers to choose their gas supplier. Customer participation is also voluntary; eligible customers are free to choose an alternative gas supplier or remain with the utility and receive bundled (delivery and supply) gas service.

The Commission has approved the choice programs and the utility tariffs that state the terms and conditions of the service. The Commission also required utilities offering residential choice to develop consumer education material. The tariffs governing suppliers include standards of conduct for participating alternative suppliers.

After the choice programs began, Article XIX was added to the Public Utilities Act. Under this law, alternative gas suppliers offering service to residential and small commercial retail customers are required to be certified by the Commission. In addition to certification, the law also provides for consumer protections and Commission oversight including consumer complaints. During 2009, comprehensive changes to the Alternative Gas Supplier Law significantly strengthened consumer protections and offered educational information to consumers. Among the important protections, the law ensures that residential and small commercial customers who choose to purchase natural gas from an alternative natural gas supplier have the right to rescind an agreement without penalty within ten business days. It also limits early termination fees to \$50, and protects consumers from unauthorized switching,



ENERGY INDUSTRY

or “slamming.” In addition to the other protections, the law requires the Commission to develop and maintain information to assist customers in understanding their gas supply options.

A list of certified suppliers and information regarding various product offerings and guidelines for comparing prices and terms can be found at the Commission’s website:

www.icc.illinois.gov.

Nicor Gas reports that approximately 206,350 residential and 34,100 non-residential customers chose alternative gas suppliers through the Customer Select Program during 2010. Peoples Gas indicates that approximately 54,780 residential and 9,400 non-residential customers chose alternative gas suppliers through the Choices For You Program. North Shore Gas reports approximately 11,450 residential and 1,000 non-residential customers chose alternative gas suppliers.



ENERGY INDUSTRY
2010 Consumer Complaints for Alternative Gas Suppliers

The Illinois Commerce Commission maintains a summary of consumer complaints it receives from residential and small commercial customers regarding Alternative Gas Suppliers. The summary provides the total number of informal complaints and formal complaints reported to the ICC quarterly. Complaints are organized in three categories: marketing and sales; contracts and billing; and customer service. All Alternative Gas Suppliers with certificates to serve residential and small commercial customers in Illinois are included in the summary, regardless of whether they are currently marketing to consumers or serving customers. The summary provides the total number of complaints received for each Alternative Gas Supplier and does not account for the number of customers served.

2010 Informal Alternative Gas Supplier Complaints

	Sales & Marketing	Contracts & Billing	Customer Service	Total
Just Energy	46	101	7	154
Nicor Advanced Energy, LLC	5	15	2	22
Santanna Energy Services	11	10	0	21
Spark Energy Gas, LP	3	15	0	18
Integrays Energy Services, Inc.	5	8	0	13
IGS Energy	1	4	2	8
Dominion Retail, Inc.	1	5	0	6
MxEnergy	0	5	0	4
Ambit Energy	0	2	0	2
Corn Belt Energy	0	0	0	0
Direct Energy Services, LLC	0	0	0	0
Nordic Energy Services, LLC	0	0	0	0



ENERGY INDUSTRY

2010 Consumer Complaints for Alternative Gas Suppliers

2010 Formal Alternative Gas Supplier Complaints

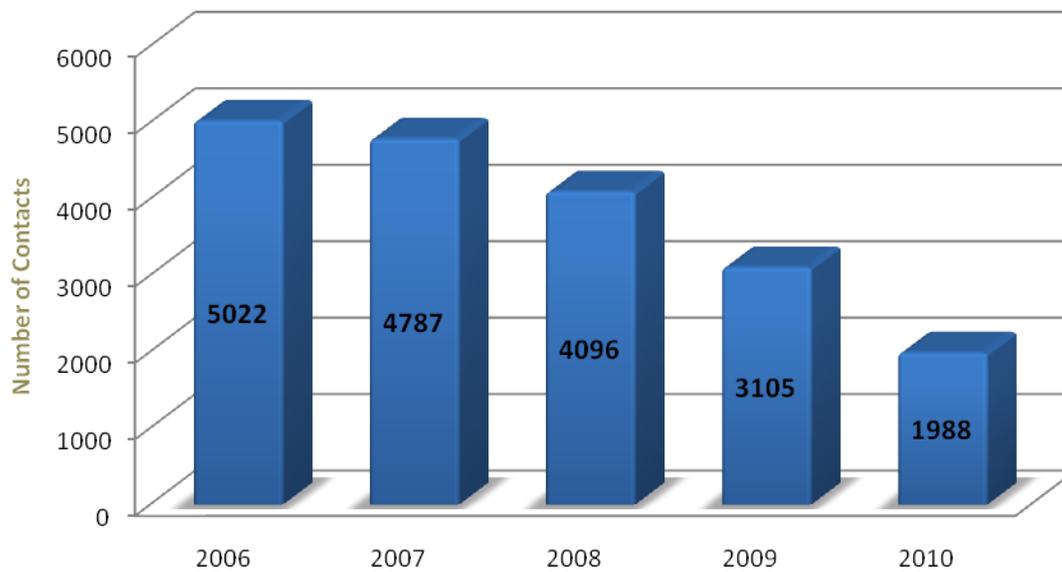
	Sales & Marketing	Contracts & Billing	Customer Service	Total
Just Energy*	1	2	0	3
Integrays Energy Services, Inc.	1	0	0	1
Nicor Advanced Energy, LLC	0	1	0	1
Ambit Energy	0	0	0	0
Corn Belt Energy	0	0	0	0
Direct Energy Services, LLC	0	0	0	0
Dominion Retail, Inc.	0	0	0	0
IGS Energy	0	0	0	0
MxEnergy	0	0	0	0
Nordic Energy Services, LLC	0	0	0	0
Santanna Energy Services	0	0	0	0
Spark Energy Gas, LP	0	0	0	0

*Formal complaint case Docket 08-0175 – In 2010, the Commission found Just Energy (formerly U.S. Energy Savings) violated the Alternative Gas Supplier Law and utility standards of conduct tariff. The Commission imposed monetary penalties, required Just Energy to implement corrective measures, established reporting requirements, and ordered a compliance and management audit of the company.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Telecommunications Industry Contacts



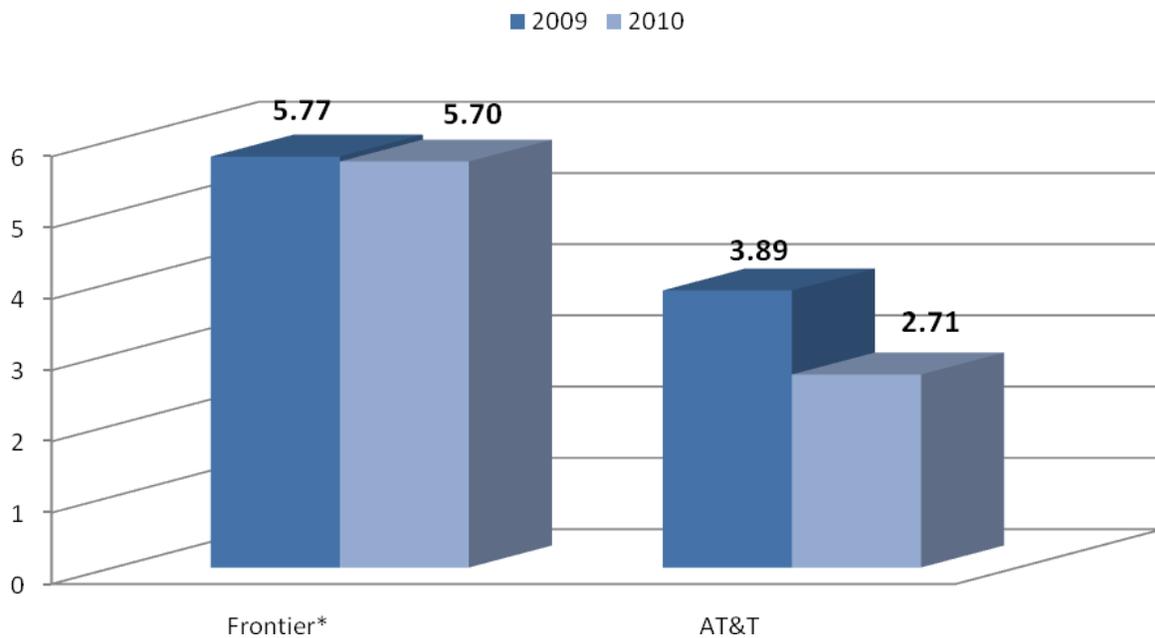
The graph above shows the number of consumer contacts concerning the telecommunications industry that were received each year by CSD from 2006 through 2010.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

2010 Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Access Lines

Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Access Lines



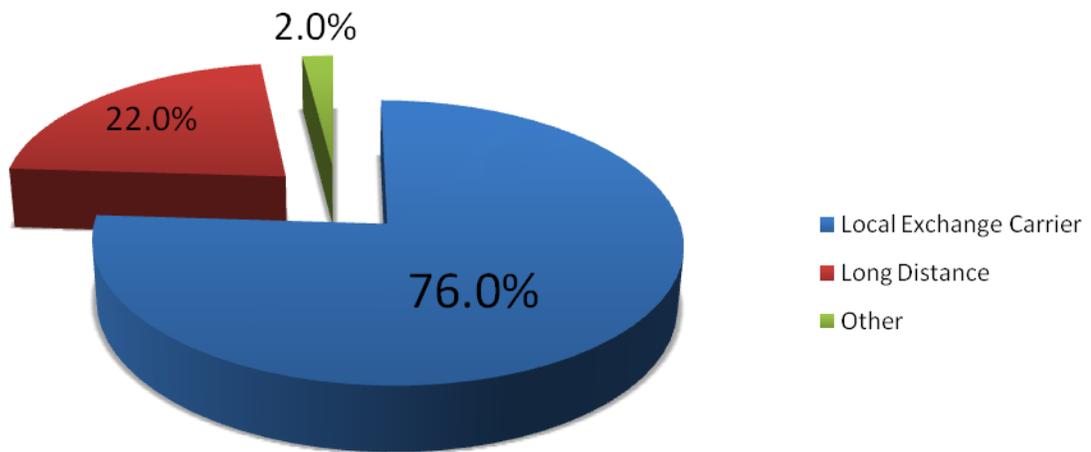
*was Verizon in 2009
2010 includes Verizon and Frontier

The graph above illustrates the number of contacts per 10,000 access lines that were received for major local exchange carriers for 2010. Access lines include the number of residential and business phone lines used.



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY
Consumer Contact by Company Type

2010 Telecommunications
Consumer Contact by Company Type





TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Justified Complaints

Counselors evaluate cases to determine if correct procedures were followed by the company in responding to the consumer's complaint prior to CSD intervention. A case is justified when, in the counselor's judgment, the company did not handle the dispute properly or effectively, or in handling the dispute, the company violated rules, regulations, orders, tariffs, or policy. The tables on the following page compare the telecommunications carriers' justified complaints closed in 2009 to those closed in 2010. The charts are divided by the type of service provided: local exchange carriers and those that provide long distance service.

The Local Exchange Carrier chart includes those companies that received 50 or more investigative complaints during 2010. The Long Distance Carrier chart includes companies that received 20 or more investigative complaints. Investigative complaints are those that are not suited to or are not resolved through three-way calling and are presented to the utility for investigation. The carriers are listed in descending order beginning with the company that had the largest percentage of justified complaints in 2010.

Local Exchange Carriers

	2009 Complaints			2010 Complaints		
	Justified	Total	Percent Justified	Justified	Total	Percent Justified
Frontier*	77	237	32%	59	211	28%
AT&T	161	1,158	14%	106	769	14%

*was Verizon in 2009
 2010 includes Verizon and Frontier

Long Distance Carriers

	2009 Complaints			2010 Complaints		
	Justified	Total	Percent Justified	Justified	Total	Percent Justified
Frontier*	15	41	37%	2	20	10%
AT&T	108	492	22%	27	287	9%

*was Verizon in 2009
 2010 includes Verizon and Frontier



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

Response Time

The following tables compare the average response time for telecommunications carriers during 2010. Response time is the number of days the utility takes to respond to CSD. The Local Exchange Carrier table includes those companies that received 50 or more investigative complaints during 2010. The Long Distance Carrier table includes companies that received 20 or more investigative complaints. Investigative complaints are those, which are not suited to or are not resolved through 3-way calling and are presented to the utility for investigation. The carriers are listed alphabetically.

Local Exchange Carriers

	2009 Response Time (in Days)	2010 Response Time (in Days)	Change in Days (2009 to 2010)
AT&T	10.1	10.4	0.3
Frontier*	11.2	14.8	3.6

*was Verizon in 2009
 2010 includes Verizon and Frontier

Long Distance Carriers

	2009 Response Time (in Days)	2010 Response Time (in Days)	Change in Days (2009 to 2010)
AT&T	9.9	9.3	-0.6
Frontier*	11.1	11.9	0.8

*was Verizon in 2009
 2010 includes Verizon and Frontier



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

General Code Comparison

Consumer Contacts are first categorized in one of six general problem types. At the time of closing, more specific codes are added. The following table compares the number of telecommunications contacts in each of the general categories for the contacts that were closed during 2009 and 2010. Billing continues to be the most frequently identified issue.

Comparison of General Categories – 2009 and 2010

	2009	2010
Billing	1,541	958
Service	992	677
Termination	136	87
Rates	76	44
Credit and Deposit	35	10
Other	285	188



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY
 Detailed Reason for Contact

The tables below illustrate the breakdown of the most common issues raised by consumers. As the counselors close complaints, they are categorized by the general headings of billing, service, rates, etc. They are then further broken down into intermediate coding and more specific complaint classification. The following tables identify the most common of the specific categories. CSD closed 1,972 Telecommunications contacts in 2010.

BILLING	2009	2010
Accuracy- General	235	200
Payment- General	177	129
Dispute- Rate Classification/Plan	163	116
Disputed Bill by Other Company	209	111
Responsibility for Account	171	104
Bill Statement	143	87
Payment Arrangements	120	82
Bill for Feature Not Ordered	138	80
Usage/Consumption	76	47

CREDIT/DEPOSIT	2009	2010
Deposit Amount/Conditions	26	6



TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

RATES	2009	2010
Rate Structure	36	25
Rate Inquiry	26	12

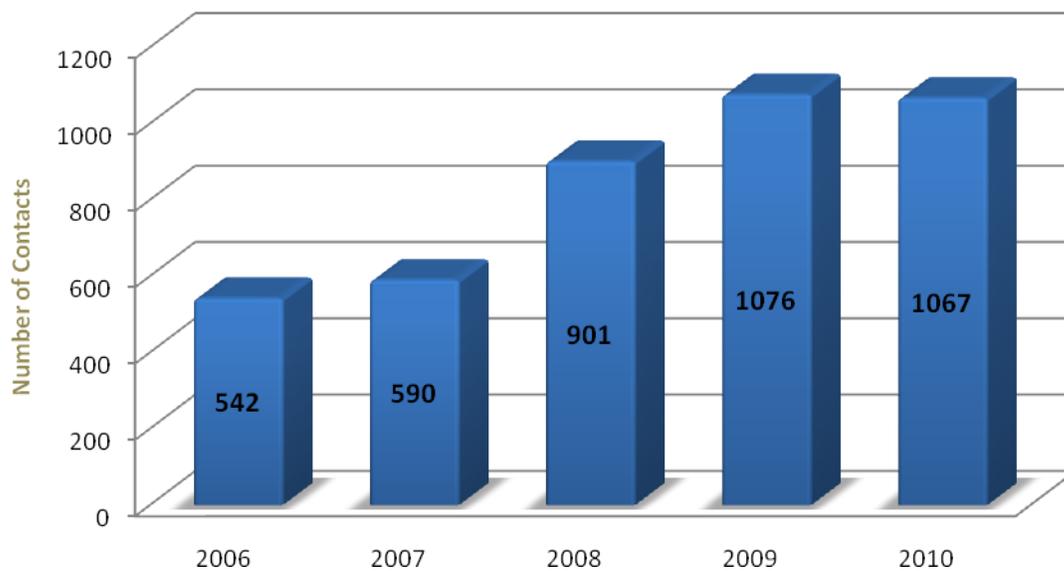
SERVICE	2009	2010
Timeliness of Performed Work	388	225
Quality	185	160
Conduct of Personnel/Reps	202	93
Availability of Features & Equipment	97	69
Service Interruptions	64	69

TERMINATION	2009	2010
Seeks Assistance	98	54



WATER & SEWER INDUSTRY

Water and Sewer Industry Contacts



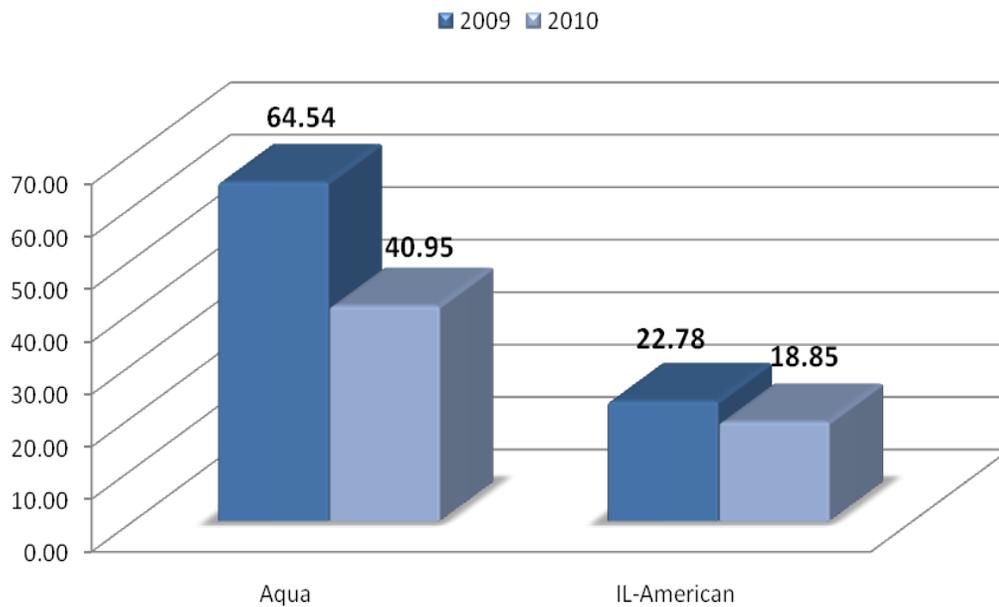
The graph above illustrates the number of consumer contacts that were received each year by CSD for the water and sewer industry from 2006 through 2010. Contacts regarding proposed rate changes increased by 216 contacts in 2009 and 232 contacts in 2010 when compared to 2008. Additionally, the water and sewer industry experienced a significant increase in contacts regarding termination of service and consumers seeking payment arrangements when comparing 2007 with years 2008, 2009 and 2010.



WATER & SEWER INDUSTRY

2010 Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Customers

Consumer Contacts per 10,000 Customers



The graph above shows the number of consumer contacts per 10,000 customers that were received for the major companies in the water and sewer industry for 2010. Aqua led in the number of contacts per 10,000 customers with a majority of their contacts being issues concerning termination of service, availability of payment arrangements, estimated bills and user consumption. In 2010, there was a significant decrease in most of Aqua's contact categories. Most notably were reductions in customers seeking payment arrangements, estimating billing, termination of service and service related issues.



WATER & SEWER INDUSTRY

Response Time

The table below shows a comparison of the average response time for those water and sewer utilities that received 20 or more investigative complaints during 2010. Response time is the number of days the utility takes to respond to CSD. Investigative complaints are those, which are not suited to or are not resolved through three-way calling and are presented to the utility for investigation.

	2009 Response Time (in Days)	2010 Response Time (in Days)	Change in Days (2009 to 2010)
Aqua	14.6	13.3	-1.3
Illinois-American	6.6	14.4	7.8

General Code Comparison

Consumer Contacts are first categorized in one of six general problem types. At the time of closing, more specific codes are added. The following table compares the number of water and sewer contacts in each of the general categories for the consumer contacts that were closed during 2009 and 2010.

Comparison of General Categories – 2009 and 2010

	2009	2010
Billing	444	431
Termination	151	120
Rates	337	378
Service	97	104
Credit and Deposit	9	6
Other	36	26



WATER & SEWER INDUSTRY

Detailed Reason for Contact

The tables below illustrate the breakdown of the most common issues raised by consumers. As the counselors close complaints, they are categorized by the general headings of billing, service, rates, etc. They are then further broken down into intermediate coding and more specific complaint classification. The following tables identify the most common of the specific categories. CSD closed 1,065 Water and Sewer contacts in 2010.

BILLING	2009	2010
Payment Arrangements	140	136
Usage/Consumption	104	129
Accuracy	131	110

CREDIT and DEPOSIT	2009	2010
Service Denial	8	4

RATES	2009	2010
Proposed Rate Change	293	309



WATER & SEWER INDUSTRY

SERVICE	2009	2010
Timeliness of Performed Service	57	51
Conduct of Personnel	15	11

TERMINATION	2009	2010
Seeks Assistance	95	66



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

CONSUMER OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Staff develops consumer information that can be accessed through the ICC's website or can be mailed to consumers. Staff is available to participate in meetings associated with rate increase requests of small water companies when community interest is demonstrated. To keep abreast of consumer issues and concerns, CSD Staff is represented on the Chicago Energy Council, the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Policy Advisory Council, and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs.

REORGANIZATION AND MERGERS

Where Commission approval for reorganization and mergers is required, Consumer Services Staff members participate both informally and when necessary through the formal process. Participation by CSD Staff helps ensure that quality customer service is maintained and that communications to customers are stated in plain language and style to minimize customer confusion especially with respect to any changes or decisions customers might be required to make.

REVIEW OF SALES MARKETING AND CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION

Statements concerning prices, terms and conditions of service must disclose information accurately and adequately. Written information adequately disclosing prices, terms and conditions must be provided before switching a customer. Formally, at the Commission's direction and informally CSD Staff reviews sales and marketing materials and when appropriate makes recommendations to correct deficiencies and improve material. When directed by the Commission, Staff has reviewed sales and marketing materials in telecommunications and alternative gas supplier cases and in complaint cases filed by telecommunications carriers.

In addition to reviewing materials, CSD Staff investigates sales practices such as the unauthorized change of carrier or supplier (slamming).



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

RULEMAKING

During 2010 Staff continued efforts to rewrite 83 Illinois Administrative Code 280 that establishes procedures for gas, electric, water, sewer utilities governing eligibility for service, deposits, payment practices and discontinuance of service.

During 2010 the General Assembly amended Section 16-115C of the Public Utilities Act which required the Commission to revise 83 Illinois Administrative Code 454. CSD Staff is participating in the revision. Part 454 establishes licensing and code of conduct rules for “agents, brokers and consultants” (generally called “ABCs”) that operate in a competitive retail electric market environment.

83 Illinois Administrative Code 735 sets forth procedures governing the establishment of credit, billing, deposits, termination of service and issuance of telephone directories for local exchange carriers in the State of Illinois. During 2010, the Commission adopted changes to telecommunication rules in Part 735 that updated postmark requirements for bills and disconnection notices. CSD Staff led efforts to amend outdated provisions.

Also during 2010 in cooperation with the Commission’s Telecommunications Division, CSD Staff participated in a further revision of Part 735 made necessary by significant changes to the telecommunications law. Among these significant changes, the revised law (Public Act 96-0927) allows local exchange carriers (LECs) to elect market regulation for their competitive retail telecommunications services. Currently, Part 735 does not apply to LECs that elect market regulation for their competitive retail telecommunications services. Staff proposes to update Part 735 to specify that the provisions of Part 735 apply to the stand-alone residential network access lines and packages (required pursuant to Section 13-506.2 of the Public Utilities Act) of LECs that elect market regulation.

During 2010 CSD Staff participated with members of other divisions in a review of several administrative codes that establish preservation of records requirements for utilities. This effort will continue in 2011 and is expected to result in the initiation of a rulemaking.

CSD Staff also participated in cases involving requests for waiver of certain provisions in existing rules. In considering whether to grant a waiver, the Commission must find that



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

the provision is not statutorily mandated, that no party will be injured, and whether the provision of the rule could be unnecessarily burdensome. The role of CSD Staff in these proceedings is to help ensure that the waiver does not remove important consumer protections.

CERTIFICATION CASES

In 2010, CSD Staff participated in the review of certification applications of alternative gas suppliers and alternative retail electric suppliers seeking to serve residential and small commercial retail customers.

COMPLAINT CASES

During 2010, the Commission found that Just Energy (formerly U.S. Energy Savings Corp.) had violated the Alternative Gas Supplier Law and utility standards of conduct tariff. The Commission imposed monetary penalties, required Just Energy to implement corrective measures, established reporting requirements, and ordered a compliance and management audit to be paid for by Just Energy. CSD Staff is leading the ongoing implementation of the Commission's order in the case.

LEGISLATION

During 2010, CSD Staff participated in the implementation of consumer education provisions of the Alternative Gas Supplier Law. This included participating in the development and maintenance of information to assist customers in understanding their gas supply options and various product offerings to allow consumers to compare prices and terms. The information is available at the Commission's website: www.icc.illinois.gov.

Also during 2010, Staff continued to participate in efforts led by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to implement revisions to the Illinois Energy Assistance Act. Revisions required certain utilities to offer a percentage of income payment plan (PIPP) and an arrearage reduction plan. The PIPP will be fully implemented by September 2011. In addition, the utilities were required to offer bill payment assistance programs through the end of 2011. Staff participated in the review of those programs.



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



Assistive Telecommunications Equipment Distribution and Telecommunications Relay Service

Through a program designed by the Commission telecommunications carriers provide assistive telecommunications equipment to persons with hearing and speech disabilities or organizations whose primary purpose is serving persons with hearing and/or speech disabilities.

The telecommunications carriers also provide a telecommunications relay service (TRS), which links people using assistive equipment and people who use a standard telephone. A Commission approved surcharge is assessed on each subscriber line to offset the costs incurred by the telecommunications carriers.

The distribution program and relay center are administered by the Illinois Telecommunications Access Corporation (ITAC), a not-for-profit corporation that includes all the telecommunications carriers in Illinois. An Advisory Council comprised of seven members who are participants of the distribution program and TRS users provides input to ITAC as well as to the Commission Staff Liaison.

Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program (UTSAP) Lifeline and Link-Up Programs

The FCC requires states to implement Link-Up and Lifeline Programs to ensure the delivery of affordable telecommunications service to all Americans, including low-income consumers.

Federal Telephone Assistance Programs

Link-Up America helps income-eligible consumers initiate telephone service. The program pays one-half (up to a maximum of \$30) of the initial installation fee for a traditional, land-line telephone or activation fee for a wireless telephone for a primary residence. It also allows participants to pay the remaining amount owed on a deferred schedule, interest-free.

Lifeline Assistance provides discounts on basic monthly service for qualified telephone customers. These discounts can be up to \$10 per month. A deposit may be required unless the consumer voluntarily chooses toll blocking that will prevent outgoing long distance calls.



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

State Telephone Assistance Program

The Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program (“UTSAP”), funded by voluntary contributions from Illinois telephone consumers, provides supplemental assistance to individuals who receive assistance from the Link-Up and Lifeline Programs. The amount of supplemental assistance is reviewed on an annual basis by the Commission according to the level of voluntary contributions.

UTSAP is administered by a not-for-profit group, Universal Telephone Assistance Corporation (UTAC). The UTAC Board of Directors has nine members consisting of five representatives from local exchange companies, two members representing ratepayers, and two members representing low-income consumers.

The Illinois Commerce Commission determines the amount and form of supplemental assistance to be provided by the Illinois local exchange carriers to each eligible subscriber or eligible new subscriber under the Universal Telephone Service Assistance Program.



www.linkupillinois.org

Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

The Energy Assistance Act provides for a Policy Advisory Council consisting of 20 members who advise the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) on the administration of the Illinois Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). A member of CSD staff is a member of the Policy Advisory Council. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity administers the program through thirty-five agencies that operate in all Illinois counties. Financial assistance is available to low income households in Illinois for energy bills. A household is eligible if its income is at or below 150% of the federal poverty guideline. Funding for the program comes from two sources. One source is a federal government block grant through the Department of Health and Human Services. Beginning in January 1998, state funding has been made available as a result of a surcharge, which is added to the electric, and gas bills of all customers of investor owned utilities. Electric cooperatives,



PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

CONSUMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

municipally owned gas, and electric systems have a choice of whether to assess the surcharge. If the charge is not assessed, the customers do not benefit from the assistance. The amounts, which are collected, are added to the federal LIHEAP funds. A portion of LIHEAP funds is also used for weatherization and program administration.

In July 2009, Public Act 96-003 amended the Illinois Energy Assistance Act (305 ILCS 20) adding Section 18 entitled "Financial Assistance, Payment Plans" that establishes a Percentage of Income Payment Plan ("PIPP") for low-income residential customers of utilities serving more than 100,000 retail customers as of January 1, 2009. The law requires a statewide PIPP be fully implemented by September 1, 2011. However, the statute also allows for a phased-in program to begin prior to that date to the extent reasonably possible. DCEO is coordinating efforts to implement this important program. Information about LIHEAP is available at: www.LIHEAP.illinois.gov

Illinois Restricted Call Registry

Illinois law adopts the National Do-Not-Call Registry, which is managed by the Federal Trade Commission, giving Illinois consumers the benefit of being included in both state and national registries with the convenience of free one-step enrollment. Illinois residential subscribers can register their telephone numbers by Internet @donotcall.gov or telephone 1-888-382-1222 according to methods established by the FTC. Since its inception, nearly 8,726,000 registrations have been submitted by Illinois consumers. More information about the Illinois Restricted Call Registry is available on the Commission's website.



CONSUMER INFORMATION INTERNET INFORMATION

The Consumers Section of the Commission's website offers useful information that is readily accessible to consumers at their convenience. CSD Staff is available during business hours to assist consumers in locating information and navigating the site.

Alternative Retail Electric Supplier Choice

www.pluginillinois.org

This site offers information regarding electric choice, how to choose a supplier, rights of customers, ways to save energy, a list of alternative suppliers, a glossary of terms, and frequently asked questions.

Natural Gas Supplier Choice

www.icc.illinois.gov/ags/consumereducation

This site offers information about natural gas choice, how to choose a supplier, rights of customers, a glossary of terms, and frequently asked questions. In addition, the site provides alternative gas supplier offers along with a product comparison worksheet to help consumers compare offers. The site also contains procedures for addressing complaints and a summary of Alternative Gas Supplier complaints by provider.

Telephone Assistance Programs – Lifeline and Link-Up

www.icc.illinois.gov/Consumer/LifelineAndLinkUp.aspx

This site offers information about federal and state telephone assistance programs that provide financial assistance to income-eligible consumers initiating telephone service.



CONSUMER INFORMATION INTERNET INFORMATION

Additional Information

In addition to information about public utility service, the Commission's website offers useful consumer information regarding JULIE, household goods moving firms, towing relocation, rail crossing safety, and 9-1-1 emergency services systems.

The Commission's website has links to legal authority including the Public Utilities Act, other state and federal laws, as well as administrative rules.

A wealth of information about formal cases considered by the Commission is available on *e-Docket*, the electronic docket system of the Illinois Commerce Commission. *e-Docket* was developed to process and manage public information about the Illinois Commerce Commission's official cases and rule-making proceedings. Anyone interested in case proceedings conducted by the Illinois Commerce Commission may visit the *e-Docket* website at www.icc.illinois.gov/e-docket and view information about cases initiated on or after January 3, 2000. All documents that are not confidential are available electronically to case participants and to the public.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

The Illinois Commerce Commission has developed a series of publications for consumer education and outreach. Following is a listing of those, which may be of interest to both utility consumers and individuals needing information about the Commission. Printed copies may be requested by calling our Consumer Services toll free number 1 800-524-0795. This and other information are available through the Commission's website at: www.icc.illinois.gov

Consumer Issues and Assistance: describes the services provided by the Consumer Services Division.

Your Quick Reference Guide to Preparing for a Formal Complaint Hearing: is a consumer's "how-to" guide for preparing for a formal complaint hearing with topics such as: setting the hearing date, obtaining witnesses, supplying the necessary documentation, following the hearing procedures, accepting or appealing the Commission's decision, and filing for a rehearing.



CONSUMER INFORMATION PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Energy and Water/Sewer

InfoPac: Offers consumers practical information pertaining to rules for electric, gas, and water/sewer utilities in an easy-to-read format. The topics covered in this brochure address consumers' rights and responsibilities with regard to: utility bills; payment plans for service; disconnecting service; reconnecting service; deposits for service; and resolving utility problems.

Understanding Natural Gas Prices: provides an explanation of why prices fluctuate, what charges are regulated, and some energy saving tips.

Bill of Rights for Water and Sewer Customers: provides information regarding rights pertaining to rates, billing and payment, make-up bills, disconnection of service, and dispute procedures.

Telecommunications

Smart Shoppers Guide to Using Phones Away from Home: is a postcard that provides the maximum rates per minute for intrastate calls and the maximum surcharges for making operator-assisted calls. In addition, it explains what consumers can do if they have been overcharged. This is updated annually based on the approved rates.



HOW TO CONTACT CSD

Our Staff of Consumer Counselors is available to assist consumers with questions or complaints regarding utility service from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- Toll Free Hotline number is: 1-800-524-0795 (calls initiated within Illinois)
- Toll Free TTY number is: 1-800-858-9277 (calls initiated within Illinois)
- Our facsimile line is: 217-785-7413
- Our mailing address is: 527 East Capitol Avenue, Springfield, Illinois 62701
- Consumer complaints and public comments can be placed online at: www.icc.illinois.gov
- Consumers initiating calls from outside of Illinois, utilities and others with an interest in Illinois regulations may contact the ICC's Consumer Services Division at: 217-782-2024.