

About Us

The Delaware Public Service Commission (PSC) was established in 1949 to provide oversight of investor-owned public utilities in the state.

The Commission works to ensure safe, reliable and reasonably priced electric, natural gas, water and wastewater services. The Commission also has limited regulatory authority over telephone and cable television rates and services. The Commission does not regulate the Delaware Electric Cooperative or utilities that are owned by municipalities.

The PSC is made up of five part-time Commissioners, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. The Commissioners are supported and assisted by a staff of full-time state employees. Public hearings regarding rate changes, regulations, and complaints are conducted throughout the year. In addition, the Commission's engineering staff, through an agreement with the Federal Department of Transportation, inspects underground natural gas and propane pipelines for compliance with Federal Pipeline Safety Regulations.

Cases involving changes to a utility's rates can last up to a year and can generate thousands of pages of documents; including financial reports, written testimony, data responses and legal briefs. Customers are encouraged to participate in rate cases by either speaking at an evening public comment hearing or submitting written comments to the PSC (by letter or email). Public comment may relate either to the utility's quality of service or to its proposal for new rates.

The Commission makes its decisions at formal meetings that are open to the public. Dates and times for all meetings and proceedings are posted on the PSC website.

depssc.delaware.gov

If You Have a Complaint

► First Step:

Any time you have a problem with the utility services you receive, you should first contact the utility directly. Most problems can be effectively handled by working directly with the utility company. If your problem concerns a bill for services, it is very important that you contact the utility **immediately**. If you believe you have been overcharged, ask to have the charges investigated. ***If there is a good faith dispute, your service cannot be terminated during the investigation.***

► Second Step:

If the resolution to your problem or complaint offered by the company is unsatisfactory to you, or you believe it to be at odds with the company's agreed upon practices, contact the Division of the Public Advocate for assistance. One of the DPA's complaint investigators will work as a liaison between you and the company to resolve any outstanding issues. If you are still not satisfied that your complaint has been addressed adequately, you can file a formal complaint with the PSC and request an evidentiary hearing. Fortunately, most complaints are resolved without a formal filing.

Reporting Service Problems

It is important to contact the Commission if you are experiencing service problems. The information you provide is recorded and may be used in future proceedings involving the utility. It can also be used to identify trends that may result in a Commission investigation.



Contact Information:

Call: (302) 736-7500 or (800) 282-8574

TDD: (302) 736-7500 • Fax (302) 739-4849

For more information please visit:

depssc.delaware.gov

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Delaware



Public



Service



Commission



Regulating
Investor-Owned Utilities
Since 1949

Electric

The PSC regulates Delmarva Power's distribution service (i.e., the delivery of electricity) and its Standard Offer Service (SOS) supply service, which is provided to customers who have not selected an alternative supplier. A list of the certified alternative suppliers can be found on the PSC website.

Natural Gas

Chesapeake Utilities and Delmarva Power are the regulated natural gas providers in Delaware. The charge for delivering natural gas is determined in a rate change proceeding. The rate the customer pays for the natural gas itself, however, is determined in a separate proceeding to reflect the actual wholesale cost the utility pays to purchase the gas it provides to customers. As a result of this process, rates for natural gas will ordinarily change at least once per year.

Renewable Energy

The PSC also certifies green energy facilities, such as rooftop solar installations, so that the owner can earn renewable energy credits (RECs). RECs can be sold to Delmarva Power or other electricity suppliers who must meet the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard.

Water

The PSC regulates water service territories for most water utilities in the state and it regulates water service practices and rates for the following water companies:

Artesian Water Company, Broadkilm Beach Water Company, Cantwell Water Company, Long Neck Water Company, Pickering Beach Water Company, Prime Hook Water Company, Slaughter Beach Water Company, Southern Shores Water Company, Sussex Shores Water Company, Tidewater Utilities, United Water Delaware and Wilkerson Water Company.

However, other state and federal agencies regulate the quality of the water itself.

Wastewater

Legislation passed in June 2004 granted the PSC authority to regulate non-governmental wastewater systems serving fifty or more customers. This legislation authorizes the Commission to regulate these wastewater systems in a manner similar to the way in which water utilities are presently regulated.

The following utilities are among the wastewater systems regulated by the PSC: Artesian Wastewater Management, Inc., Chapel Green Homeowners Association, Excel Property Management, LLC, The Hamlet at Dirickson Pond, LLC, Inland Bays Preservation Co., Moore Grant Sanitation Inc., Oak Crest Farms, Tidewater Environmental Services, Inc., Wastewater Utilities, Inc., and YMG Corporation.

Cable Television

Federal law permits the PSC to regulate rates for cable television equipment and for basic cable service, which is the lowest tier of cable service offered. The extent of the PSC's authority over equipment and basic service rates is to verify that the rates were developed in compliance with the rules of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The regulated cable television providers include Atlantic Broadband, Comcast Cablevision, Verizon, and Mediacom, where they serve the unincorporated areas of Delaware.

Telecommunications

There are dozens of local and long distance telephone providers under the jurisdiction of the PSC and the FCC. The PSC does not set rates for these companies, but it has implemented requirements for certification in Delaware to ensure companies have the financial, managerial, and technical means to provide telephone services. The PSC also resolves interconnection disputes between wireline carriers and handles many customer complaints against these carriers.

Wireless and cell phone services and internet-based telephone services are outside the jurisdiction of the Commission.



The Public Advocate

Pursuant to state law, the Public Advocate appears before the PSC to advocate for the lowest reasonable rates for consumers, consistent with an equitable distribution of rates among all classes of consumers and the maintenance of adequate utility service. Although the DPA represents all consumers of regulated utility services, it focuses on residential and small business consumers.

For more information, please visit
publicadvocate.delaware.gov
or call
(302) 577-5077