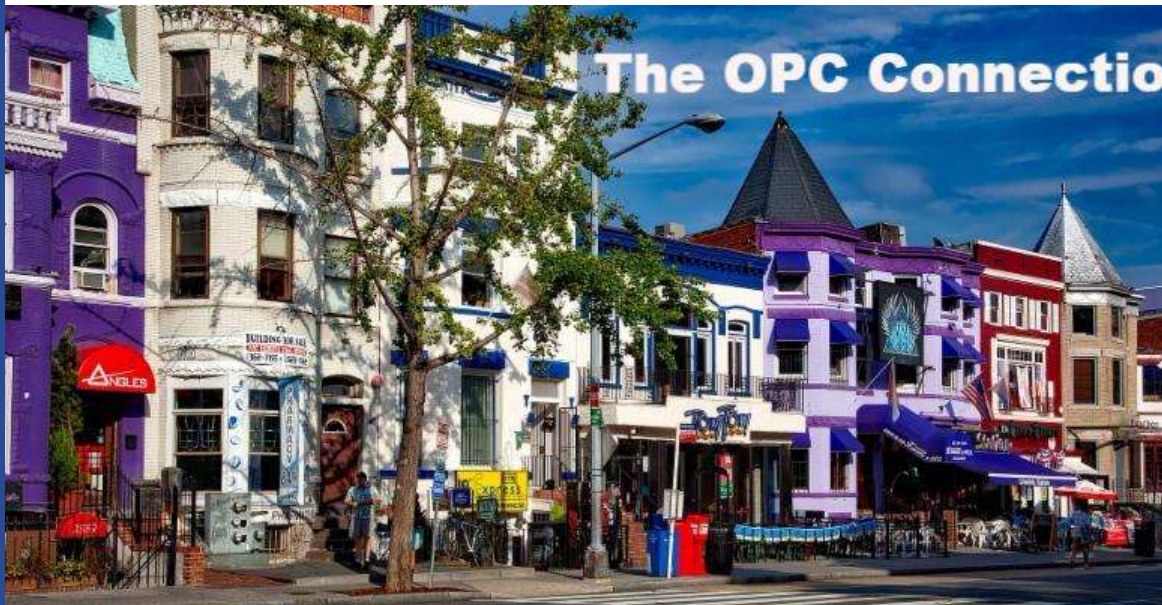




Office of the People's Counsel
ADVOCACY | EDUCATION | PROTECTION



August 2024

**A Note from Your
People's Counsel
Sandra Mattavous-Frye**

Let's Meet on Clean Energy

On September 25, 2024, the Office of the People's Counsel will host a virtual **"Citywide Clean Energy Forum: Programs and Funding,"** from 6:00 to 7:30 pm. DC



residents and representatives of small businesses, and community organizations are invited to attend the forum to learn about the District's efforts to achieve its ambitious renewable energy and climate goals and OPC's role in aiding those efforts. The forum furthers OPC's ongoing commitment to educate and empower consumers to learn and practice solutions that will help make the District a cleaner and healthier place to live.

Speakers will highlight federal funding available through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Special focus will be on energy efficiency programs designed to assist low-income communities and address environmental injustice. You will walk away with information on available federal grants and programs designed to promote clean energy.

As the statutory advocate for District utility consumers, OPC is mandated to include the preservation of DC's environmental quality, the effects of global climate change, and the city's climate commitments in developing its policies. The upcoming forum is yet another example of OPC's intentions to meet its obligations. It follows our Community Conversation on Climate Change in October 2021 and the Our Planet Our Future Youth Summit in April 2023. We will host a second youth-focused event on October 23. DC high school teachers are encouraged to email Adam Carlesco at acarlesco@opc-dc.gov to get your students involved.

Register for OPC's Clean Energy Forum by emailing info@opc-dc.gov. Please put "Clean Energy" in the subject. Zoom information will be sent to those who register.

I hope to meet you virtually on Wednesday, September 25.

ICYMI: OPC Challenges PSC Decision to Convene a Legislative Hearing in Pepco Rate Hike Case

At a Public Service Commission “Legislative Style Hearing” on July 30, OPC attorneys raised concerns about Pepco’s plans to move forward with its request for a \$190.7 million rate increase over a three-year period, despite new information from the company that it is earning more revenue than previously reported and without Pepco adequately explaining what it needs to deliver safe and reliable electric services to consumers.

The Commission review of Pepco's multi-million-dollar rate increase is a stark departure from the rigorous examination that the Commission has historically reserved for rate cases. OPC submits that a legislative hearing is an inappropriate substitute for a full-blown evidentiary hearing where the parties have an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses, under oath, to ensure the utility has met its burden of proof that its request for additional revenue is just and reasonable. OPC further believes that the legislative hearing does not adequately address all important consumer issues; and limits the ability of OPC and other parties to examine and challenge on the record, statements asserted by Pepco. The electric industry is undergoing a major transition. Now, more than ever, the Commission must facilitate increased scrutiny of Pepco's assertions, or risk irrevocably making the utility the only voice at the table.

In case you missed it, watch the hearing [here](#). OPC Assistant People's Counsel Ankush Nayar's comments begin around 55:00 on the link.

Federal Action Leads to Increase in Local Electric Bills

In addition to a rate increase submitted to the Public Service Commission (PSC), consumer rates also are affected by transmission rates approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. For example, FERC recently approved an increase in Pepco's transmission rates that will add about \$2.50 a month to the average residential customer bill beginning in September of this year. Utility rates have three components: Distribution--delivering the energy to your home; Generation--producing energy; and Transmission--moving energy across state lines to local distribution companies. The PSC regulates local distribution rates, FERC regulates transmission rates, and generation costs are driven by the market. FERC's recent approval of an increase in transmission rates is tied to new formula rates for distributing the cost of electric transmission projects among utilities in the Mid-Atlantic region.

PJM Interconnection is the regional transmission organization that coordinates the movement of wholesale electricity to the District and 13 states before it reaches local distributors like Pepco. PJM authors and submits to FERC a Regional Transmission Enhancement Plan. According to PJM, the plan "identifies transmission system upgrades and enhancements to provide for the operational, economic, and reliability requirements of PJM customers."

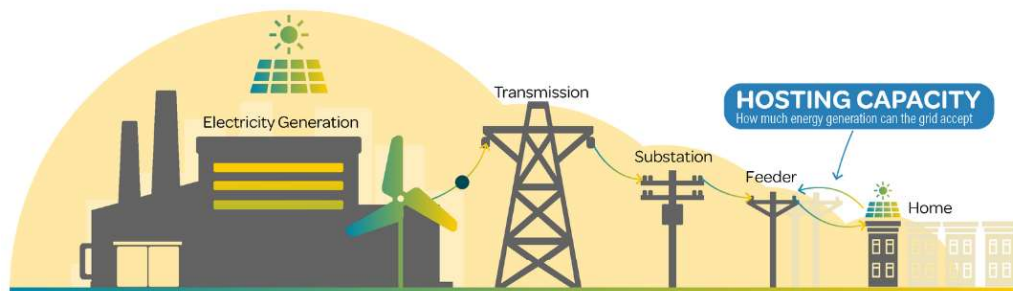
In turn, consumers pay a surcharge on their bills to compensate the transmission entities responsible for developing enhancement projects; and the costs of these projects are allocated across the region based on PJM's analysis of benefits to each utility and their customers.

The bottom line, OPC wants DC consumers to be aware of this jump in your electric bills coming soon.

Got Solar? Interested in Solar?

An OPC partner wants to hear from you for a solar study. Visit this [Electrify DC link](#).

HELP POWER A BRIGHTER FUTURE



Do you live in D.C.?

Have you installed solar?

Have you ever thought about installing solar?

Share your insights on solar energy by completing a five-minute survey and get a chance to win a \$20 gift card.



ELECTRIFYDC



The Water Connection

OPC WSD Monitoring Tropical Storm Patterns in Preparation for Potential Rainfall & Flooding



As we prepare to close the summer of 2024, OPC's Water Services Division notes that September is "DC Preparedness Month," as declared by Mayor Muriel Bowser. With DC lands at such a low elevation and surrounded by the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers, the area is particularly at risk for flooding. If the extreme flooding in September 2020 and 2021 taught us nothing else, it's that we must be proactive in preparing for any potential natural disaster.

Taking action to protect your property against flooding begins with understanding your risk. Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the District Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) have online tools to help you determine if your property is at risk and to identify potential flood impacts.

The amount of damage that a flood can cause can be both expensive and heartbreaking. Homes here seem to be especially susceptible to basement flooding. Residents have experienced soaked carpets, damage to furniture, and warped wooden baseboards, leading to expensive repairs.

Flood insurance is often not included in homeowner's or rental insurance, so considering the purchase of flood insurance is

paramount. Most policies have a 30-day waiting period, so OPC encourages you not to wait until a storm is approaching before deciding if additional insurance is best for your household or business.

For more information see two sources: [Flood Risk Management](#) and [FEMA Flood Map Center](#).



Intern Spotlight: Avery Featherson

Summers at OPC are happily marked by the presence of student interns. The Communications Division was pleased to welcome

Avery Featherson and found her visit to be mutually beneficial. By engaging colleagues in all divisions, Avery says she not only improved her communications skills, but she also sharpened her task management. Avery enjoyed being a part of the communications team and carrying out assigned daily duties. They included preparing a list of energy and utility-related news articles and sharing them with staff. She also valued observing outreach staff interact with consumers.

Avery's educational journey is impressive. After attending virtual school at Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr. High School, she was homeschooled and graduated from high school six months early. She plans to continue her studies at Northern Virginia Community College and focus on obstetrics and gynecology. Her long-term goal is to excel in the OB-GYN medical field.

“I really appreciate OPC giving me the opportunity to learn, to grow, and to see what it feels like to be a part of a healthy work environment. I hope the internship program never goes away. I would love to come back!” OPC wishes Avery well in reaching her goals and is confident she will be successful.

OPC Supports Working Groups



In our continuing series "Working Groups at the PSC," this month, we look at the Residential Aid Working Group. A Public

Service Commission order mandates Pepco to assist low-income residents with paying their bills. With this working group and through quarterly data reports, the PSC will monitor the progress of this program to see if Pepco is meeting the required goal.



PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

OPC is Advocating for Consumers in the Following Cases:

Formal Case No. 1154: The Application of Washington Gas Light Company for Approval of PROJECTpipes2 Plan;

Formal Case No. 1175: WGL's Application for Approval of PROJECTpipes3 Plan;

Formal Case No. 1179: The Investigation into WGL's Strategically Targeted Pipe Replacement Plan

On July 19, OPC filed Comments in Opposition to WGL's Request for Reconsideration of Order No. 22003, which rejected a PROJECTpipes3 application. OPC maintained its position that WGL's PROJECTpipes is poorly managed, consistently over-budget, and should not be continued.

The Petition for Investigation into WGL's System Leak Reduction Practices

On July 31, OPC filed Initial Comments Regarding WGL's Best Method for Leak Detection.

Formal Case No. 1176: Pepco's Application for Approval to Increase Rates through the Implementation of a Multiyear Rate Plan, also referred to as the "Climate Ready Pathway"

On July 23, OPC filed a Pre-Hearing Brief in preparation for the Legislative Style Hearing; On August 12, OPC filed Conformed Direct Testimony and Conformed Surrebuttal Testimony.

OPC In Your Neighborhood!

OPC welcomes opportunities to speak at your Advisory Neighborhood Commission, civic association, community group activity, or meeting, either onsite or virtually. We can give updates on utility issues, and trends, and highlight how we serve DC consumers. Call (202) 727-3071 if your group would

like our staff to make an onsite or virtual presentation.
Currently scheduled appearances are below.

Summer "In The Ward 4 You"
Georgia Avenue Walmart
5929 Georgia Avenue NW
Thursday, August 29
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
and

Corner of Georgia & Arkansas Avenues NW
Thursday, September 5
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Information Table
Anacostia Library
1800 Marion Barry Avenue SE
Tuesday, September 10
10:30 am - 3:00 pm

Celebrate Petworth
4618 14th St NW
Saturday, September 14
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Photo Gallery



OPC staff and Metropolitan Police at National Night Out at Emery Heights Community Center in Ward 4.



OPC Consumer Services Director Linda Jefferson with Alison Brooks, Chairman of ANC 4B at National Night Out.



OPC's Hispanic Coordinator Silvia Garrick (right) with neighbors at the Carlos Rosario Resource Fair in Ward 1.



OPC Consumer Outreach Specialist George Gilbert, Jr. at a back-to-school event in the Benning Heights community in Ward 7.

Connect With OPC!

Do you have feedback or an idea for an article that could be featured in an upcoming edition of the OPC Connection? We want to hear from you! Just drop our editorial team an email @ info@opc-dc.gov or X/tweet us [@DCOPC](https://twitter.com/DCOPC).

OPC Connection Editorial Team:

Doxie McCoy, Phillip Harmon, Quaneisha Glover,

Chawndise Battle, Dwayne Houston, Alya Solomon, Valca
Valentine

Contributors:

Sandra Mattavous-Frye, Karen Sistrunk, Laurence Daniels,
Antaeus Hayes, Linda Jefferson, George Gilbert, Jr., Ankush
Nayar, Kinteshia Scott, Marchim Williams

The Office of the People's Counsel, 655 15th Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005 | Tel: (202) 727-3071 | Fax: (202) 727-1014
| TTY-TTD: (202) 727-2876
www.opc-dc.gov | info@opc-dc.gov

STAY CONNECTED

