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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | [A blue and white logo  Description automatically generated](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW65wm_Ps9hN8FnuxruCRJ9hKh_tOjF34FplVQ-BmPdRNOwuzr6sdhKyYzjg_wKY9Fh0kTtftSsabC4sELYCF5ZOE2wj9wMwsvWhw==&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A street with buildings and trees  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **July 2024** | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | Medium shot of a person wearing a red suit  Description automatically generated |   **A Note from Your**  **People's Counsel**  **Sandra Mattavous-Frye**  **OPC Fighting for Ratepayer Rights & the Right to Hearings**  As the advocate for utility consumers in the District of Columbia, OPC’s mission is to vigilantly protect the interests of DC ratepayers. We fight to ensure affordable utility rates, safe and reliable service, and a clean environment. Our advocacy in the ongoing Pepco rate case is no exception. Pepco is seeking to increase your rates by $191 million over three years. We believe Pepco’s request is unreasonable and places an undue energy burden on consumers.    More than 15 months ago, Pepco filed an application for what it styles as a Multiyear Rate Plan (MYP). This MYP is a radical departure from historical rate cases that the DC Public Service Commission (PSC), and most states and jurisdictions, have used to determine whether a utility’s request for a rate increase is “just and reasonable.” In a traditional rate case, the PSC, OPC, and the other parties review the testimony submitted by Pepco’s expert witnesses and cross-examine the witnesses in an *evidentiary hearing.*Testifying under oath, witnesses on both sides can present testimony, and attorneys can cross-examine the other side.    The process is sometimes laborious, but this form of regulatory scrutiny is fundamental to creating a solid record for the PSC, the parties, or a reviewing court to evaluate whether the utility has met its burden of proof. In essence, it levels the playing field, by constraining the utility from filing tons of unverified testimony as it seeks the PSC’s stamp of approval. Unfortunately, in the Pepco rate case, the PSC is convening a “legislative-style hearing,” scheduled for Tuesday, July 30 at 10 am. During the legislative-style hearing, attorneys for OPC, Pepco, and other parties will merely present 30-minute oral arguments. The attorneys will not be sworn-in and will be questioned by the Commissioners only. OPC believes this vehicle for deciding the case is not in the best interest of ratepayers. OPC opposed a similar legislative-style hearing in Formal Case 1169, where the PSC ultimately approved a $25 million rate increase for Washington Gas on December 22, 2023. The Commission has left open the door for a possible evidentiary hearing in the Pepco case, but for now, one is not scheduled.    Nonetheless, while OPC is gravely concerned with the PSC’s apparent desire to move toward a lighter form of regulatory review - especially during a period of industry transition - OPC will zealously advocate for the best outcome for DC ratepayers. We highly encourage consumers to tune in or attend the July 30 hearing. For more information, see [**Legislative-Style Hearing.**](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW65-R_xgkQSxGDNnJ3I1txRD3geWABb9PKuKHM53ssiB5Cu7tF4S8UymHX0yrasKERArHelTFUvEJ4KdUyiC9b4EDKEG-ij2y9AMsmQctIidi36Rwm1OCcB5nwOBOgOBBN1GNqtCx6DmbdRAkewHvRJwO97KqCENjaiYXKrxl25XzC&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==) |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | A group of people holding signs  Description automatically generated | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence |   **SAVE THE DATE!**  **﻿OPC Youth Environmental Justice & Advocacy Workshop**  **September 25 - 26, 2024**  The Office of the People's Counsel will host an exciting workshop for DC high school seniors after school bells ring again. The workshop will equip students with essential skills in environmental justice advocacy, community organizing, and engaging with government officials. Sessions will empower youth to become effective advocates for their own communities and prepare them to become tomorrow's leaders. Participants will have a chance to connect with speakers and leaders from the environmental and advocacy communities, as well as other youth activists. For more information, DC educators can contact OPC Assistant People's Counsel Adam Carlesco at [acarlesco@opc-dc.gov.](mailto:acarlesco@opc-dc.gov.) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | A black and white logo  Description automatically generated |   **The Water Connection *Pay Attention!***  When our monthly utility bills arrive, many of us don't always review them closely. But it pays to pay attention!  A case in point is a 93-year-old consumer, who, in February, walked into OPC offices distraught and frustrated, seeking our help. The Ward 3 resident and her caretaker explained that she had complained to DC Water about a billing error in December 2023 and they were anxiously awaiting an update. Marchim Williams, an OPC Water Services Division (WSD) Consumer Outreach Specialist, did some investigating and found that she had been over-charged. Not only was the charge about $1,000 more than her average bill, but payments had also been automatically deducted from her checking account, leaving the consumer in dire financial straits.  She informed OPC that as a senior on a fixed income, the unexpected fluctuations of her water bill had hampered her ability to pay other critical expenses. DC Water offered the Glover Park resident a bill credit on her account, but she still had to come out of pocket to pay for a bill several times higher than usual. She remained unsatisfied with DC Water's plan to correct its error and make her whole.  ﻿As the financial mishap remained unresolved for weeks, OPC WSD Attorney Adam Carlesco went to work on a resolution and was able to arrange for the consumer to be reimbursed funds to cover her bills from a DC Water assistance program. For the frustrated senior, there was finally relief due to OPC's intervention.  In the aftermath of the ordeal, she sent OPC this message:  **“Thank you, Marc, I really appreciate all that you and Adam have done for me. I cannot believe it took so long!”**  If you see an unsubstantiated overcharge on your water, electric, gas, or local phone bill, contact OPC at (202) 727-3071 to see if we can assist you in addressing it. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | A seal of the district of columbia  Description automatically generated |   **The DC Council Connection *Working Summer***  The DC Council will be on summer recess until September, when Councilmembers reconvene for their next legislative meeting. Official business paused on July 15. However, Council offices will be busy providing constituent services, reaching out to neighborhoods, and developing new policies and legislation.  OPC and Council staff will continue to connect, including in working groups on crucial environmental justice legislation. This includes addressing historical inequalities in energy and utility access and minimizing environmental burdens on residents. Communities like Brentwood and Ivy City, which have faced disproportionate environmental pollution, will be a priority in these efforts.  OPC is also championing protections for water and energy utility consumers over the summer months. We will be working with the Council and community advocates to:   * **Strengthen consumer protections:**Improve the process for resolving consumer disputes with DC Water, ensuring residents have a fair and effective way to address any billing or service issues. * **Prevent disconnections during weather emergencies:**Advocate for policies that prevent utility shutoffs during extreme weather, protecting residents' health and safety.     Stay tuned for updates on environmental justice initiatives and our work protecting water and energy consumers in the OPC Connection, on social media, and at [**opc-dc.gov**](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW65-t2SVMe7eldVEut2gZMp-uocqZXGQo7q4zzMJoGMQJqxzTjhePzk6x24grLFXIL82AGyeEyOJVQyWOKSEOe9DmQSu-WnPevag==&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==). | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | |  |  |   **Employee Spotlight: Claire Shibelski**  **﻿**  **﻿**Claire Shibelski has been a valued member of OPC's Water Services Division since October 2023. As a Consumer Outreach Specialist, Claire is advocating for DC water consumers, handling their casework, connecting them to vital assistance programs, and working with other staff to address community concerns.    Claire received a bachelor's degree in history from Towson University. Her professional experience includes serving as a Community Liaison and later as the Director of Civic Engagement for the Baltimore City Council. Most recently, she worked as a Liaison Officer in Baltimore’s Department of Public Works Bureau of Water and Wastewater. Claire's background expertise made her a good fit for OPC's Water Services Division.    On weekends, Claire plays co-ed recreational soccer, loves attending concerts, and cherishes time spent with family and friends. And speaking of music, she played the bassoon for six years.  Claire says she has a passion for public service. OPC and DC consumers are the better for it. We are glad to welcome Claire to the OPC team. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **OPC is Advocating for Consumers in the**  **Following Cases:**  **PEPRADR2023 & 2024 - Pepco’s Compliance Filing for Residential Aid Discount Surcharge (RADS) Guidelines and Participants**  On June 18, OPC filed comments on Pepco’s Response to Order No. 21957, in which the PSC directed Pepco to propose a way to stop the wide fluctuation of RADS revenue.  **Formal Case No. 1176 - Pepco's Application to Increase Rates through a Multiyear Rate Plan--also referred to as the “Climate Ready Pathway”**  **﻿**  On June 24, OPC filed a Motion to Suspend the Procedural Schedule and Request for Clarification of PSC’s June 13 Notice, which scheduled a legislative-style hearing in this rate case. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A black background with a black square  Description automatically generated with medium confidence | | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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.  Information Table Outreach  Anacostia Library  1800 Marion Barry Avenue SE  Tuesday, July 30 and Tuesday, August 13  10:30 am - 3:30 pm  National Night Out 2024  Kennedy Recreation Center  1401 7th Street NW  Tuesday, August 6  ﻿5:30 pm - 8:30 pm  New York Avenue Recreation Center  Department of Parks & Recreation  Back To School Event  100 N Street NW  Monday, August 19  12:00 pm- 4:00 pm  Information Table Outreach  Northwest One Library  155 L Street NW  Thursday, August 22  10:30 am- 3:30 pm  7th Annual Raymond & Tubman Elementary  Back 2 School Block Party  1400 Parkwood Place NW  Saturday, August 24  12:00 pm- 8:00 pm | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Photo Gallery** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A group of people standing under a tent  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | OPC staff with attendees at the community fair hosted by the Federal City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. at the Southeast Tennis and Learning Center in Ward 8. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person and person standing next to a table with purple bags  Description automatically generated | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | OPC's Jason Starks and Alya Solomon are ready to greet residents at the Multi-Agency Utility Resource & Job Fair hosted by DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson and At-Large Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie at Arena Stage. |  |  | | --- | | A group of people sitting in chairs  Description automatically generated |  |  | | --- | | OPC's Chief of Staff Eric Coard and Chief Operations Officer Michael Smalls (blue shirts) listen to remarks by At-Large Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie, Chairman of the DC Council Committee on Business and Economic Development. They attended the annual Supplier Diversity Hearing held by the DC Public Service Committee to review the efforts of utility companies to voluntarily do business with minority, women, and veteran-owned contractors. |  |  | | --- | | A group of women posing for a photo  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | OPC's Jean Gross-Bethel, Linda Jefferson, and Doxie McCoy with Fox 5 TV Anchor Marissa Mitchell, who was the Mistress of Ceremonies for a program hosted by the Eleanor Holmes Norton Legacy Fund. The nonprofit organization provides scholarships to University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke Law School students. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | A person and person holding a glass award  Description automatically generated | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | OPC Litigation Assistant Dwayne Houston with his wife, Tammy Rucker Houston. He received the "Truth and Service Award" from the North Carolina Central University Alumni Association for "dedicating time, energy, and effort to helping NCCU...He is an inspiration to all the members and continues to encourage all to give back." | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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**](mailto:info@opc-dc.gov) or X/tweet us [**@DCOPC**](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW655BfhSpGBAXmLziZ_Q6IGfk2JfDZI6DZmHMdLYmCu4z77DXDsNMmz_MAlNHpyhMEWBiwfvf3fjYJ9KSbQXz3O9411Im7l4rKwvUZ4DAXzfNu&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==). | |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **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, Adam Carlesco,  Bryan Rhoades, Kinteshia Scott, Jason Starks  ﻿ | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | 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](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0011bi2AXmbTNia2POPE8Thx66z0UW40UrNB7Y9n3iID4UlcVP0y-Tjb2kjSk0Qxw3k60rFow-ULRxcQi4BuZpW1gVXLtC3ZMUCfHRmBRYtOSJF1gYkRPmPrVxg1buRTWrBbnn9IrNtkqDVZPruyiapM0ILLslZZKsTapThaeKxBv8=&c=AXxFWOzZphDTT347Ce8miLzzyWOw7FV_G8XVstjyHgCy-7O1K7wGvA==&ch=QFOmhamG9hT24NVJm8b0RXQt3hAwkOd-HwM_4KVYOJwNxeKcb-DIkA==) | [info@opc-dc.gov](https://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0011bi2AXmbTNia2POPE8Thx66z0UW40UrNB7Y9n3iID4UlcVP0y-Tjb259CRer0WyXb_97UPDjc_JOzMef5YPSXm8TZNi2xmHp9znUPeSdSy-B8rXFwwMN_Z9lEWW1Shc2ezmDVxSa-Ccjg_b_hKF7cNyZoytx423jIURjqgvkRsw=&c=AXxFWOzZphDTT347Ce8miLzzyWOw7FV_G8XVstjyHgCy-7O1K7wGvA==&ch=QFOmhamG9hT24NVJm8b0RXQt3hAwkOd-HwM_4KVYOJwNxeKcb-DIkA==) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **STAY CONNECTED** |  |  | | --- | | [Facebook](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW650esgzpaAUDQEkFZ1kQo4-AObUu-mmNrFM6nb154sZWyau9bjzRnBk3pVSM1FVAvR3_ujE_Bs_ju6MSz5VcUV7Qo0ybkdPIB21sklrujO--bTVQfx52eIP-4K2iSHno1oA==&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==)  [Twitter](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW657HatNUVjWnQiRKgQ1Lgxd8_cQUU3N6c4K5DuzJqOMtqv88H29FbhrGLcyxJ4aBE4M_NBi0Td5l8Ab0UeTT9zNpA_aMpjawYSlzEx3Q4gITL&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==)  [Instagram](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW65w4FCUwWin1EPA4Zq-6Tm96VfbdN1SHfihPaBMb9rOsfGAdpX3hBKMpvFhtM_ZSUjrglLPw0CFJvEWs9dkybXdYW4daNIFBOuQZY3b1y6-4ADwWDUYYXG98=&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==)  [Youtube](https://pdcmwrdab.cc.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001PHBuFgksFdJiqvcnvH0hSUMsbZ6hJvYw7RGhhq9zaPildMw27oW657X5qpXOPOasVL4_1VfVpGIuS9CB9eV1479-NexwLnxI41uPkVWIAeDFk1jLRSZ423Vc9i0MVYherdbuDgU2kUqpFtf-7PfMrFSgXy4rV0LoLOUvX2h_fiTy6yTk51eCZqnXWbHEw5s3Vlk7K9I3SwM=&c=AWuabyLeh6PfYmMexHCOgHQaT97XMJ3frsva8UgrxnsSC73HomgwXA==&ch=iyH6W5S36AhSU3YX5PWKR0SAbQE8lccnH7hIwzwzaCvDYYE-s5tCog==) | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | | | |