



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
Board of Public Utilities
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www.nj.gov/bpu/

ALL UTILITIES

IN THE MATTER OF THE NEW JERSEY BOARD)
OF PUBLIC UTILITIES' UTILITY CUSTOMER BILL) ORDER UPDATING CUSTOMER
OF RIGHTS) BILL OF RIGHTS AND
) RULING ON WAIVER REQUEST
)
DOCKET NO. AX21091111

Parties of Record:

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- Phillip J. Passanante, Esq.**, Atlantic City Electric Company
- Deborah Franco, Esq.**, Elizabethtown Gas Company and South Jersey Gas Company
- Joshua Eckert, Esq.**, Jersey Central Power and Light Company
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- Matthew Weissman, Esq.**, Public Service Electric and Gas Company
- John L. Carley, Esq.**, Rockland Electric Company
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- David G. Ern**, Gordon's Corner Water Company
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- Wendy Stewart**, Atlantic City Sewer Company
- J. Bryce Mendenhall**, Montague Water Company
- Jeffrey Fuller**, Lake Lenape Water Company
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- Robert H. Oostdyk, Jr., Esq.**, of Murphy McKeon P.C., on behalf of the Borough of Butler
- Peter J. King, Esq.**, King Moench et al, on behalf of the Dover Water Commission
- Janine G. Bauer, Esq.**, AARP New Jersey State Office
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BY THE BOARD:

BACKGROUND

On February 3, 1986, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board” or “BPU”) established a Utility Customer Bill of Rights (“Bill of Rights”).¹ The Board subsequently made revisions to the Bill of Rights (“Revised BOR”)² to reflect changes in the Board’s regulations and to include consumer protections issued by Governor Phil Murphy (“Governor”) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (“Executive Order Protections”).³

On October 16, 2021, the Board issued a clarifying order that incorporated the notice requirements of the legislation signed by the Governor on May 12, 2021 (“Notice Requirements”).⁴ The Clarifying Order requires the utility companies (“Utility” or “Utilities”) to provide residential utility customers (“Customer” or “Customers”) monthly notice of their rights to utility services (“Service” or “Services”), along with additional requirements on the Utilities to report compliance to the Board.

Subsequently, the Board received several waiver requests from various Utilities seeking to be excused from certain sections of the Notice Requirements. The Board addressed these requests at its December 15, 2021 agenda meeting (“December Agenda”) when it also updated the Revised BOR to remove Executive Order Protections that had a December 31, 2021 expiration date (“Updated BOR”).⁵

Extension of Grace Period under L. 2021, c.317

After the December Agenda, the shutoff grace period and payment plan provisions were extended by legislation⁶ for residential water, sewer, and municipal electric Customers to March 15, 2022.⁷

¹ In re Utility Customer Bill of Rights, BPU Docket No. CO8602155, Order dated February 3, 1986.

² In re the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ Utility Customer Bill of Rights, BPU Docket No. AX21091111, Order dated September 14, 2021.

³ All Executive Orders signed by Governor Murphy are published in the New Jersey Register and are also available online at: <https://nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/>.

⁴ L. 2021, c.97 <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2020/PL21/97 .PDF>. (“May 2021 Legislation”) The relevant portions of this legislation require the utility companies to send a notice of customer protections to customers on a monthly basis for a period of 18 months from the date of EO 103, in an English and translated version, if applicable.

⁵ In re the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ Utility Customer Bill of Rights, BPU Docket No. AX21091111, Order dated December 15, 2021 (“Updated Revised Bill of Rights”). The Board granted waiver requests from Mount Olive Villages Water Company and Mount Olive Villages Sewer Company, and Village Utility, LLC; denied in part and granted in part Butler Electric’s requests; granted Montague Sewer Company’s request; and denied Shore Water Company’s (“Shore”) request. The Board later granted Shore’s request to provide monthly notice using an alternative method of delivery and denied its request to allow the customer to opt-out of receiving the monthly notice in response to Shore’s Motion for Reconsideration. See In re the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ Utility Customer Bill of Rights, BPU Docket No. AX21091111, Order dated January 26, 2022.

⁶ L. 2021, c.317 <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2020/PL21/317 .PDF> (“December 2021 Legislation”).

⁷ Customers participating in the Winter Termination Program (“WTP”) have existing protection from service discontinuation through March 15, 2022, therefore no grace period extension was necessary for these

Under the December 2021 Legislation, the Utilities are required to offer a deferred payment plan to Customers who are facing disconnection due to non-payment. The plan would allow payments over a minimum of a 12-month period (or shorter if requested by the Customer) of any unpaid balance (“Balance” or “Balances”) accrued prior to March 15, 2022 without requiring a down payment, deposit, payment for reconnection costs, interest, or penalties (“No Money Down Plan”). Customers then have 30 days from the date the No Money Down Plan is offered to agree to the plan; otherwise, the Utilities are permitted to resume appropriate enforcement action, including disconnection of Services (“Enforcement Action”). The Board issued an order on January 12, 2022 revising the Updated BOR to correspond with the language of this statute.⁸

March Amendment of L. 2021, c.317

On March 25, 2022, an amendment to the December 2021 Legislation was signed into law.⁹ The March Amendment extended protections for certain Customers and amended various sections of the December 2021 Legislation. The relevant changes made by the March Amendment include the following:

1. Sewer utility companies are required to offer eligible Customers a No Money Down Plan on any sewer utility charges accrued prior to March 15, 2022.¹⁰
2. A Customer who, prior to June 15, 2022, has submitted an application to a State agency for benefits from a State-administered utility assistance program¹¹ (“Application”) shall continue to receive Services for 60 days after the submission of the Application provided that no decision has yet been made on the Application (“Pending Period”).¹²
3. A Customer who, prior to June 15, 2022, has submitted a fully completed Application, either at the time of submission or within the 60-day period referenced above, shall continue to receive Services until the appropriate State agency has approved or rejected the Application (“Decision Date”).¹³
4. Any Customer who has submitted an Application and whose Services were discontinued between the period of March 15, 2022 and March 24, 2022 shall have Services restored immediately.¹⁴

Customers. The December 2021 Legislation also required the WTP, administered by BPU, be available to water and sewer public utilities customers effective in the 2022-2023 winter season and instructed the Department of Community Affairs to create a WTP for water, sewer, and electric municipal utilities customers.

⁸ In re the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ Utility Customer Bill of Rights, BPU Docket No. AX21091111, Order dated January 12, 2022 (“January 2022 BOR Order”). The Secretary of the Board issued an erratum on January 13, 2022 to include missing footnote language on the January 2022 BOR Order and accompanying Updated BOR.

⁹ L. 2022, c.4, https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2022/S2500/2356_R2.PDF (“March Amendment”).

¹⁰ Section 2(e) of the March Amendment.

¹¹ Universal Service Fund (“USF”), Low Income Home Energy Assistance (“LIHEA”), Low Income Household Water Assistance (“LIHWA”), or any other utility assistance program administered by the State.

¹² Section 2(k)(1) of the March Amendment.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.*

5. Once the Pending Period ends or after the Decision Date, which are determined by the Customer's Application status ("Termination of Protection"), the Utilities shall offer the Customer a No Money Down Plan for any Balance accrued up until either the date the Pending Period ends or the Decision Date, as applicable.¹⁵

In addition to the amendments stated above, the March Amendment included Application processing and notice requirements for the respective State agencies administering the utility assistance programs.

DOVER REQUEST FOR WAIVER

By letter dated February 17, 2022, the Dover Water Commission ("Dover") requested a waiver of the monthly notice requirement of the January 2022 BOR Order. Dover explained that because bills are mailed quarterly to Customers, compliance with providing notice on a monthly basis and the translation requirement would significantly increase its expenses. Dover stated that Customers have access to the BOR through its website. Consequently, Dover requested the Board approve its waiver request to reduce the monthly notice requirement to quarterly.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

As discussed herein, the Board has issued a number of orders revising the Bill of Rights to reflect the numerous changes in law relative to the moratorium on disconnection of Services to Customers. The Board, in fulfilling its role to ensure Customers are aware of their current rights to receive these essential Services, provides below a newly revised Updated BOR in conformity with the recent amendments made to the December 2021 Legislation. The Board, in issuing these directives to the Utilities, establishes standards upon which each must comply in the service of their Customers. In this respect, the Board **FINDS** it necessary to revise the most recently Updated BOR to remove expired dates and include protections granted under the December 2021 Legislation and extended protections granted to certain Customers under the March Amendment, respectively.

The Board **HEREBY REVISES** the Updated BOR and **DIRECTS** the Utilities under its jurisdiction to apply the newly revised Updated BOR retroactively effective March 15, 2022, as follows:

1. You have the right to utility service if you are a qualified applicant.
2. You have the right to budget billing if you are a utility customer.
3. You have the right to apply for utility assistance programs, which may include arrearage forgiveness. Learn more by calling your utility company or by calling 2-1-1. Information is also available online at www.nj211.org/utility-assistance-programs.
4. If you are an electric or gas utility customer who did not participate in the Winter Termination Program ("WTP"), current law requires the utility company to offer you a deferred payment plan payable over a minimum of 12 months with no down payment, deposit, reconnection costs, interest, or penalties ("No Money Down Plan") on any unpaid balances accrued prior to December 31, 2021 or longer if you meet the requirements of

¹⁵ Section 2(k)(3) of the March Amendment.

numbers 7 and 8 below. You have the right to 30 days to agree to the payment plan before the utility company may begin the collections process.

5. If you are a water, sewer, or municipal electric utility customer or a WTP participant, current law requires the utility company to offer you a No Money Down Plan on any unpaid balances accrued prior to March 15, 2022 or longer if you meet the requirements of numbers 7 and 8 below. You have the right to 30 days to agree to the payment plan before the utility company may begin the collections process.
6. If for any reason you are not eligible for a No Money Down Plan, you are entitled to a deferred payment agreement under BPU's regulations ("DPA"). You have a right to at least one DPA within a 12-month period with a maximum down payment of 25 percent or less of your unpaid balance, unless current law states otherwise. The utility company shall offer you the same budget plan year, which will last 10, 11, or 12 months, except that the budget plan year for customers protected under the WTP shall be 12 months. Any deferred payment plan or agreement offered by the utility company to you must follow the current law and/or regulations of the BPU.
7. If you submit an application to a State agency for utility bill aid, but still need to provide documents or take some other action requested in the application, you have the right to 60 days from the date you submitted your application to provide the documents and take the necessary steps to complete the application process. During this 60-day period, the utility company may not discontinue your service. These rights apply only if you submitted your application to the State agency before June 15, 2022.
8. If you submit an application to a State agency for utility bill aid with all the necessary documentation, either at the time you submitted the application or within 60 days from the date you submitted your application, and there is no other action required by you to complete the application process, you are protected from discontinuance of service from the date you submitted your application until the date after a decision of eligibility has been made on your completed application. This right applies only if you submit your application to the State agency before June 15, 2022.
9. If you are an electric, gas, water, and sewer utility customer whose service has been disconnected, but you can show you have applied to the Universal Service Fund, Low Income Home Energy Assistance, Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric, or Low Income Household Water Assistance for available benefits, the utility company must reconnect your service upon request and may not require a down payment, deposit, reconnection costs, interest, or penalties to do so.
10. You have the right to have any complaint you make against your utility company handled promptly by that utility company.
11. You have the right to have your utility complaints and concerns investigated. Your service may not be terminated for non-payment of disputed charges during a BPU investigation.
12. You have the right to have your meter tested free of charge once a year by your utility company if you suspect it is not working properly. For a \$5 fee, the meter test will be conducted under the supervision of the staff of the BPU.

13. You have the right to a written notice of termination from your utility company at least 10 days prior to the discontinuance of service and only after the utility company has offered you a deferred payment plan based on current law and regulations of the BPU.
14. If you are a participant in an energy assistance program or an electric, gas, water, and/or sewer utility customer having financial difficulties paying your bill, you can request the company enroll you in a budget plan based on your ability to pay. Provided you make good faith payments toward all reasonable bills for service, you have the right to electric, gas, water, and/or sewer utilities service from **November 15 to March 15** without fear of termination of such services if you are a participant under the WTP.
15. You have the right to receive posted notice of any impending shutoff if you live in a multi-family dwelling. This notice must be posted in a common area and/or sent individually to occupants of that dwelling.
16. You have the right to have a "diversion of service" investigation if you suspect the level of consumption reflected in your utility bill is unexplainably high.
17. Service may not be shut-off for non-payment of repair or merchandise charges. A utility company may not send you notice threatening discontinuance of your utility service based on these charges.
18. You have the option of having a deposit refund applied to your account as a credit or having the deposit refunded by separate check.
19. A utility may not add late fees, interest, or liens on your account for late payments.
20. Your service may be shut-off only after proper notice has been given to you by the utility company and only on Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A utility may not shut-off your service on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, a holiday or the day before a holiday, or if a valid medical emergency exists in your household.
21. You have the right to notification regarding any moratorium on rate increases.

Customers with questions may contact the Board at 1-800-624-0241.

This Order and the newly revised Updated BOR supersede all previous versions of the Bill of Rights. The Board notes that no new regulations are created nor are any existing regulations changed by the establishment of the newly revised Updated BOR. Rather, the newly revised Updated BOR herein is wholly consistent with existing Board regulations. See N.J.A.C. 14:3-7 et seq. To the extent there is ambiguity in this Order or a conflict exists between the Board's Order and current law or regulations, the Board **HEREBY DIRECTS** the Utilities to comply with the current law or regulations. All protections granted by the Board through its regulations and reflected in this Order are **DECLARED** in full effect until such time as the Board enters a new Order.

As to notice to Customers under the May 2021 Legislation, the Board **HEREBY ORDERS** the Utilities under its jurisdiction (to include in this case telecommunications companies) to continue to comply with the following Notice Requirements relative to the newly revised Updated BOR:

1. Provide all current Customers with a copy of the newly revised Updated BOR in its next billing cycle. Current Customers who receive a printed version of their bills shall be provided with the newly revised Updated BOR in a printed format on a monthly basis. Current Customers who receive their bills electronically shall be provided with the newly revised Updated BOR electronically on a monthly basis. Regardless of which delivery method employed, all Utilities shall, on a monthly basis for 18 months after the termination of EO 103, provide the newly revised Updated BOR to Customers in a form and manner that would maximize receipt by the Customers;
2. Provide all new Customers with a copy of the newly revised Updated BOR upon initiation of service;
3. Provide a translated version in addition to an English language version of the newly revised Updated BOR on a monthly basis in a printed format if the Customer currently receives bills in a printed format or for electronic billing Customers, the monthly email should include a link to the translated version of the newly revised Updated BOR along with access to the required English language version, where applicable.¹⁶
4. In addition to providing the newly revised Updated BOR to the Customer in an appropriate format as set out above, the newly revised Updated BOR must also be prominently displayed on the Utilities' website, if applicable;
5. The Notice Requirements apply to all electric, gas, water, and incumbent local exchange telephone public utilities within the jurisdiction of the Board;
6. The Utilities shall report compliance with the Notice Requirements delineated in this order by May 1, 2022, detailing the method of distribution to Customers and describing all changes made to billing and collections operations in compliance with the applicable laws, and provide the Board with a copy of the English version of the newly revised Updated BOR that was sent by the Utilities to the Customers; and
7. For those Utilities required to provide a translated version of the newly revised Updated BOR, a copy of the translated version shall be included with the requirements set out in number 6 above.

As to Notice Requirements from the Utilities under the March Amendment, the Board **HEREBY ORDERS** the Utilities under its jurisdiction to provide information regarding the WTP, USF, LIHEAP, LIHWAP, and any other utility assistance programs administered by a State agency in any communication the Utilities have with a Customer in connection with an overdue utility bill.

As to the Termination of Protections, the March Amendment provides certain Customers protection from discontinuance of their Services; however, the Board recognizes that the possibility exists where a Utility may erroneously discontinue a Customer's Service notwithstanding the law. Accordingly, to address this possible inadvertency and consistent with the language of the law, the Board **HEREBY DECLARES** the Utilities shall not be deemed in violation of the March Amendment where it can show the discontinuance was a direct result of:

¹⁶ "For a municipality served by a public utility or local utility in which the primary language of 10 percent or more of the population is a language other than English, the public utility or local utility shall provide notification in that other language or languages for use by customers in that municipality." See L. 2021, c.97, <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/Bills/2020/PL21/97 .PDF>

- a. A State agency or the Customer failing to provide notice to the Utility of the submission or completion of an Application made by the Customer; or
- b. When a Utility determines in good faith the existence of a utility emergency that requires the discontinuance or interruption of Services to the Customer.

The Board further notes that the December 2021 Legislation does not provide a No Money Down Plan for electric and/or gas Customers who were not participants of the WTP (“Non-participating Customers”) on the Balances accrued after December 31, 2021 or for water and sewer Customers and WTP participants (“Water, Sewer & WTP Customers”) on the Balances accrued after March 15, 2022. However, the March Amendment has extended the No Money Down Plan to Non-Participating Customers for the period from March 15, 2022 through the date of the Termination of Protection, as applicable to the individual Customer based on the Customer’s Application Status, provided these Customers have submitted an Application prior to June 15, 2022. Moreover, for Water, Sewer & WTP Customers who have submitted an Application prior to June 15, 2022, the March Amendment has extended the No Money Down Plan for the period from March 15, 2022 through the date of the Termination of Protection, as applicable to the individual Customer based on the Customer’s Application status.

Consequently, the Board **HEREBY CONCLUDES**, as to Non-participating Customers, the Utilities are permitted to require Money Down on any Balances accrued during the period of January 1, 2022 through March 14, 2022, as well as the period after the Termination of Protection, in the case where the Non-Participating Customer submitted an Application prior to June 15, 2022 but is no longer protected from discontinuation because the Application remained incomplete after the 60-day period or a decision has been made as to the Application, and the Non-Participating Customer was offered a No Money Down Plan but failed to accept the offer within 30 days. Any Money Down required by the Utilities shall conform with N.J.A.C. 14:3-7.7.

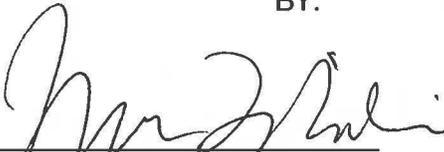
Similarly, the Board **HEREBY CONCLUDES**, as to Water, Sewer & WTP Customers, Utilities are permitted to require Money Down on any Balances accrued after the date of the Termination of Protection in the case where the Water, Sewer & WTP Customer submitted an Application prior to June 15, 2022 but is no longer protected from discontinuation because the Application remained incomplete after the 60-day period or a decision has been made on the Application, and the Water, Sewer & WTP Customer was offered a No Money Down Plan but failed to accept the offer within 30 days. Any Money Down required by the Utilities shall conform with N.J.A.C. 14:3-7.7.

Lastly, the Board has considered the waiver request of Dover seeking a reduction in the frequency of the notice from monthly to quarterly, which is a requirement set out in the January 2022 BOR Order. Dover seeks this waiver in order to save on the expense associated with the additional mailings and translation requirements. In reviewing Dover’s request and the January 2022 BOR Order, the Board notes that the January 2022 BOR Order contains language taken from the May 2021 Legislation, which expressly requires that monthly notice be sent to Customers. As the law is clear and unambiguous as to how often Utilities must send notice to Customers informing them of their rights, it would be inappropriate for the Board to grant this request. Therefore, Dover’s request seeking a waiver of the monthly notice requirement is **HEREBY DENIED**. Notwithstanding this ruling, should Dover wish to submit a proposal to the Board with an alternative method of monthly notice in compliance with the law, the Board will take such proposal into consideration consistent with its prior rulings.

This Order shall be effective April 6, 2022.

DATED: April 6, 2022

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
BY:



JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO
PRESIDENT



MARY ANNA HOLDEN
COMMISSIONER



DIANNE SOLOMON
COMMISSIONER



UPENDRA J. CHIVUKULA
COMMISSIONER



ROBERT M. GORDON
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST: 

CARMEN D. DIAZ
ACTING SECRETARY

**IN THE MATTER OF THE NEW JERSEY BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES' UTILITY
CUSTOMER BILL OF RIGHTS**

DOCKET NO. AX21091111

SERVICE LIST

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Water/Wastewater Companies

<p>Gordon's Corner Water Company 27 Vanderburg Road Post Office Box 145 Marlboro, NJ 07746</p> <p>David Ern, President dgern@gordonscornerwater.com</p> <p>Eric Olsen eolsen@gordonscornerwater.com</p> <p>Aqua NJ, Inc. 10 Black Forest Road Hamilton, NJ 08691</p> <p>Lawrence Carson, President Lrcarson@aquaamerica.com</p> <p>Adam Burger Aburger@aquaamerica.com</p> <p>Kimberly Joyce kajoyce@aquaamerica.com</p> <p>Bill Packer wcpackerjr@aquaamerica.com</p> <p>NJ American Water Company One Water Street Camden, NJ 08102</p> <p>Cheryl Norton Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Cheryl.norton@amwater.com</p> <p>Mark K McDonough, President Mark.mcdonough@amwater.com</p> <p>Debbie Albrecht, Esq. Debbie.Albrecht@amwater.com</p> <p>Christine Soares, Esq. Christine.soares@amwater.com</p>	<p>Middlesex Water Company 481 C Route 1 South, Suite 400 Iselin, NJ 08830</p> <p>Dennis W. Doll ddoll@middlesexwater.com</p> <p>Jay Kooper jkooper@middlesexwater.com</p> <p>Suez Water NJ, Inc. 461 From Road, Suite 400 Paramus, New Jersey 07652</p> <p>Alan Weland Alan.weland@suez.com</p> <p>Gary Prettyman Gary.prettyman@suez.com</p> <p>Rodolphe Bouichou Rodolphe.bouichou@suez.com</p> <p>Jim Cagle jim.cagle@suez.com</p> <p>Midtown Water Company 1655 US Highway 9 Old Bridge, NJ 08857</p> <p>John J. Brunetti, President JBrunetti@Brunetti.com</p> <p>William Iannacone, Tax Director Wiannacone@Brunetti.com</p> <p>Jennifer Zappola, Tax Manager Jzappola@Brunetti.com</p> <p>Shore Water Company 105-23rd Avenue South Seaside Park, NJ 08752 shorewaterco@gmail.com</p> <p>Samuel Faiello, President Samsif@verizon.net</p> <p>Gloria Stuart gloriafstuart@gmail.com</p>
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<p>Fayson Lakes Water Company John Cannie, President 160 Boonton Avenue Kinnelon, NJ 07405 flwc@optonline.net</p> <p>Montague Water Company J. Bryce Mendenhall 2335 Sanders Road Northbrook, IL 60062 bryce.mendenhall@corix.com</p> <p>Lake Lenape Water Company Jeffrey Fuller, President 83 Eagle Chase Woodbury, NY 11797 JMF1294@yahoo.com</p> <p>Mt. Olive Villages Water Company Henryk Schwarz, President 200 Central Avenue Mountainside, NJ 07902 ZLN1@aol.com</p>	<p>Simmons Water Company David B. Simmons, Jr., President PO Box 900 Branchville, NJ 07826 dbsjr@simmonstransport.com</p> <p>Atlantic City Sewer Company 1200 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 300 Atlantic City, NJ 08401</p> <p>Wendy Stewart, President wstewart@acsewerage.com</p> <p>Carl Cordek cordekc@aol.com</p>
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Municipal Water Utilities*

*The municipals listed are regulated only in terms of the customers served outside of the municipality's limits and only for service issues, if the rates are equalized. Currently, the NJBPU-regulated municipal water systems all have equalized rates.

<p>Village of Ridgewood 131 N. Maple Ave #5 Ridgewood, NJ 07450</p> <p>Richard Calbi, Director rcalbi@ridgewoodnj.net</p> <p>Heather Mailander, Clerk hmailander@ridgewoodnj.net</p> <p>Borough of Park Ridge Water Chris O'Leary, General Manager 53 Park Avenue Park Ridge, NJ 07656 Coleary@parkridgeboro.com</p> <p>Clinton Water and Sewer Utility Art Dysart, Superintendent 43 Leigh Street Clinton, NJ 08809 artdysart@clintonnj.gov</p> <p>Richard Phelan Public Works/Business Administrator Clinton Municipal Building 43 Leigh Street Clinton, NJ 08809 rphelan@clintonnj.gov</p> <p>Town of Dover Water Commissioners Andrew-Dujack, President 100 Princeton Ave Dover, New Jersey 07801</p> <p>John Gross, Interim CFO 37 North Sussex Street Dover, NJ 07081 jgross@dover.nj.us</p> <p>Peter King, Esq. King Moench Hirniak & Collins 51 Gibraltar Drive – Suite 2F Morris Plains, NJ 07950 pjk@kmhmlawfirm.com</p>	<p>Borough of Berlin Water Department John Allsebrook, Superintendent 59 South White Horse Pike Berlin, NJ 08009 dpwsupt@berlinnj.org</p> <p>Borough of Berlin Stacey DiVello, Finance 59 South White Horse Pike Berlin, NJ 08009 Treasurer@berlinnj.org</p> <p>Debra DiMattia, CFO 59 South White Horse Pike Berlin, NJ 08009 ddimattia@berlinnj.org</p> <p>Trenton Water Works Kristin Epstein, Assistant Director 333 Cortland Street Post Office Box 528 Trenton, NJ 08604 kepstein@trentonnj.org</p> <p>Maria Kelly Assistant Municipal Attorney City of Trenton 333 Cortland Street Trenton, NJ 08638 mkelly@trentonnj.org</p> <p>City of Bordentown Water Department Patricia McGowan, Water Clerk 324 Farnsworth Avenue Bordentown, NJ 08505 Pmcgowan@cityofbordentown.com</p> <p>City of Bordentown John J. Walls Water Treatment Facility Operator Jwalls@cityofbordentown.com</p>
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<p>Town of Dover Water Robert Kinsey, Superintendent 37 North Sussex Street Dover, NJ 07081 rkinsey@dover.nj.us</p> <p>Collingswood Water Department Steve DiOrio, Superintendent 215 Hillcrest Ave Collingswood, NJ sdiorio@collingswood.com</p>	<p>Borough of Collingswood Kathy McCarthy, Revenue Collector 678 Haddon Ave Collingswood, NJ 08108 kmccarthy@collingswood.com</p> <p>Wildwood Water Utility Mike McIntyre, Director 3416 Park Boulevard Wildwood, NJ 08260 mmcintyre@wildwoodnj.org</p>
<p>AARP NJ State Office Evelyn Liebman, Directory of Advocacy 303 George St., Suite 505 New Brunswick, NJ 08901 ELiebman@aarp.org</p>	<p>NJUA Tom Churchelow, Esq. NJ Utilities Association 154 West State Street, 1st Floor Trenton, NJ 08608 tchurchelow@njua.com</p>
<p>Janine G. Bauer, Esq. 101 Grovers Mill Road, Suite 200 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648 jbauer@szaferman.com</p>	<p>Legal Services of NJ David McMillan, Esq. 100 Metroplex Drive, Suite 402 Edison, NJ 08818 DMcMillin@lsnj.org</p>
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<p>Anti-Poverty Network Renee Koubiadis, Executive Director 272 Dunns Mill Road, #327 Acme Commons Center Bordentown, NJ 08505 renee@antipovertynetwork.org</p>	<p>The Labor Management Fund of Operating Engineers Local 825 Gina Sullivan 65 Springfield Avenue, 2nd Floor Springfield, NJ 07081 GSullivan@elec825.org</p>

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<p>Food and Water Watch Matthew Smith, NJ Director 100 Bayard Street New Brunswick, NJ 08901 msmith@fwwatch.org</p> <p>New Jersey Shares, Inc. Cheryl Stowell, CEO 4 Walter E Foran Boulevard, Suite 105 Flemington, NJ 08822 cstowell@njshares.org</p> <p>Cullen and Dykman LLP Bruce V. Miller One Riverfront Plaza Newark, NJ 07102 bmiller@cullenllp.com</p> <p>Sarmili Saha 80 State Street, Suite 900 Albany, New York 12207 ssaha@cullenllp.com</p>	<p>Utility & Transportation Contractors Association of NJ Dan Kennedy, Director P.O. Box 728 Allenwood, NJ 08720-0728 kennedy@utcanj.org</p> <p>NJ Department of Human Services Louise Rush, Division Director Division of Aging Services P.O. Box 715 Trenton, NJ 08625-0715 Louise.rush@dhs.nj.gov</p>

Incumbent Local Exchange Telephone Providers

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RESIDENTIAL UTILITY CUSTOMER PROTECTIONS

(Effective retroactively from March 15, 2022)

Established by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU)

If you have questions about these consumer protections, you should contact your utility company at the number on your bill. If you have a complaint about your utility company or if your services are in jeopardy of being shut off, you should call the BPU at 800-624-0241 for assistance. Note: The BPU regulates only investor owned utility companies.

1. You have the right to utility service if you are a qualified applicant.
2. You have the right to budget billing if you are a utility customer.
3. You have the right to apply for utility assistance programs, which may include arrearage forgiveness. Learn more by calling your utility company or by calling 2-1-1. Information is also available online at www.nj211.org/utility-assistance-programs.
4. If you are an electric or gas utility customer who did not participate in the Winter Termination Program (“WTP”), current law requires the utility company to offer you a deferred payment plan payable over a minimum of 12 months with no down payment, deposit, reconnection costs, interest, or penalties (“No Money Down Plan”) on any unpaid balances accrued prior to December 31, 2021 or longer if you meet the requirements of numbers 7 and 8 below. You have the right to 30 days to agree to the payment plan before the utility company may begin the collections process.
5. If you are a water, sewer, or municipal electric utility customer or a WTP participant, current law requires the utility company to offer you a No Money Down Plan on any unpaid balances accrued prior to March 15, 2022 or longer if you meet the requirements of numbers 7 and 8 below. You have the right to 30 days to agree to the payment plan before the utility company may begin the collections process.
6. If for any reason you are not eligible for a No Money Down Plan, you are entitled to a deferred payment agreement under BPU’s regulations (“DPA”). You have a right to at least one DPA within a 12-month period with a maximum down payment of 25 percent or less of your unpaid balance, unless current law states otherwise. The utility company shall offer you the same budget plan year, which will last 10, 11, or 12 months, except that the budget plan year for customers protected under the WTP shall be 12 months. Any deferred payment plan or agreement offered by the utility company to you must follow the current law and/or regulations of the BPU.
7. If you submit an application to a State agency for utility bill aid, but still need to provide documents or take some other action requested in the application, you have the right to 60 days from the date you submitted your

application to provide the documents and take the necessary steps to complete the application process. During this 60-day period, the utility company may not discontinue your service. These rights apply only if you submitted your application to the State agency before June 15, 2022.

8. If you submit an application to a State agency for utility bill aid with all the necessary documentation, either at the time you submitted the application or within 60 days from the date you submitted your application, and there is no other action required by you to complete the application process, you are protected from discontinuance of service from the date you submitted your application until the date after a decision of eligibility has been made on your completed application. This right applies only if you submit your application to the State agency before June 15, 2022.
9. If you are an electric, gas, water, and sewer utility customer whose service has been disconnected, but you can show you have applied to the Universal Service Fund, Low Income Home Energy Assistance, Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric, or Low Income Household Water Assistance for available benefits, the utility company must reconnect your service upon request and may not require a down payment, deposit, reconnection costs, interest, or penalties to do so.
10. You have the right to have any complaint you make against your utility company handled promptly by that utility company.
11. You have the right to have your utility complaints and concerns investigated. Your service may not be terminated for non-payment of disputed charges during a BPU investigation.
12. You have the right to have your meter tested free of charge once a year by your utility company if you suspect it is not working properly. For a \$5 fee, the meter test will be conducted under the supervision of the staff of the BPU.
13. You have the right to a written notice of termination from your utility company at least 10 days prior to the discontinuance of service and only after the utility company has offered you a deferred payment plan based on current law and regulations of the BPU.
14. If you are a participant in an energy assistance program or an electric, gas, water, and/or sewer utility customer having financial difficulties paying your bill, you can request the company enroll you in a budget plan based on your ability to pay. Provided you make good faith payments toward all reasonable bills for service, you have the right to electric, gas, water, and/or sewer utilities service from **November 15 to March 15** without fear of termination of such services if you are a participant under the WTP.

15. You have the right to receive posted notice of any impending shutoff if you live in a multi-family dwelling. This notice must be posted in a common area and/or sent individually to occupants of that dwelling.
16. You have the right to have a "diversion of service" investigation if you suspect the level of consumption reflected in your utility bill is unexplainably high.
17. Service may not be shut-off for non-payment of repair or merchandise charges. A utility company may not send you notice threatening discontinuance of your utility service based on these charges.
18. You have the option of having a deposit refund applied to your account as a credit or having the deposit refunded by separate check.
19. A utility may not add late fees, interest, or liens on your account for late payments.
20. Your service may be shut-off only after proper notice has been given to you by the utility company and only on Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A utility may not shut-off your service on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, a holiday or the day before a holiday, or if a valid medical emergency exists in your household.
21. You have the right to notification regarding any moratorium on rate increases.