



Department of
Public Service

Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223-1350
www.dps.ny.gov

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January 20, 2023

Dear Community Leader/Elected Official:

The New York State Department of Public Service (DPS) and Consumer Advocate are seeking public comment regarding alleged billing, meter reading, and customer service issues affecting customers of New York State Electric and Gas Corporation (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation (RG&E). NYSEG and RG&E (collectively, the Companies) serve customers in 46 counties in upstate and western New York.

To ensure full public participation, the Public Service Commission will hold virtual public forums on **January 31, 2023**, and in-person forums on **February 1, 7, and 8, 2023** to solicit input and comments from your community regarding the issues. The enclosed announcement provides detailed information on how to participate in the forums and how to submit comments. Information regarding this matter, including a copy of the issues, can be found at www.dps.ny.gov. From the homepage, click on "Search," and enter the associated matter number (23-00068) in the "Search by Case Number" field.

I would appreciate your assistance with informing your constituents about the public forums and encouraging them to provide comments. It is the Commission's intent to facilitate and encourage active and meaningful participation throughout all its proceedings. We hope you will consider joining us.

Regards,

Richard Berkley
Consumer Advocate and Director
Office of Consumer Services

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STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

MATTER 23-00068 - In the Matter of Staff's Investigation into billing, customer service, and meter reading issues affecting customers of New York State Electric and Gas Corporation and Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation.

NOTICE INVITING PUBLIC COMMENT AND ANNOUNCING PUBLIC FORUMS

(Issued January 23, 2023)

INTRODUCTION

Public comment is sought by the New York State Department of Public Service (DPS) and the DPS Consumer Advocate, regarding alleged delayed or erroneous billing, delayed or inaccurate meter reading, and customer service problems affecting customers of New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (NYSEG) and/or Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation (RG&E) (the companies). Comments submitted will become part of the official record for this matter.

To monitor utility performance, DPS Staff tracks utility customer service metrics and compiles monthly complaint statistics. DPS staff has observed a significant increase in complaints against the companies and a deterioration in the companies' customer service performance metrics in 2022 and especially since August 2022. Among other issues, customers have reported high, inaccurate, or delayed bills, which they assert are inordinately based on estimated meter readings. These problems have been compounded by the inability of customers to timely reach the companies' customer service representatives by telephone.

As a result of the clear indications of unusual amounts of complaint activity and delayed responses to customers and consumer complaints, DPS staff and the DPS Consumer Advocate

will hold in-person and virtual forums in multiple locations in the companies' service territories to gather information about these issues directly from customers. In addition, DPS staff and the DPS Consumer Advocate solicit public comments via virtual public forums and through other channels.

The purpose of the public forums is for NYSEG and RG&E customers to provide comments on billing, customer service, meter reading, and other service quality issues they have experienced, and to add to the record DPS is compiling regarding these issues. DPS staff and the DPS Consumer Advocate seek public comments responsive to the following questions:

- Have you received delayed bills or no bills for extended periods of time (e.g., more than one month)?
- If you did not receive a bill for one month or more, how long did it take to receive a bill, and did you possibly receive more than one bill as a "catch-up"?
- If you called your utility to inquire why you did not receive a bill, did you receive timely, accurate and adequate information from your utility about why you were not receiving your bill(s) and when normal billing would resume?
- If you are a customer receiving renewable energy services from a community distributed generation (CDG), have you had any issues with receiving bills, credits, or with inaccurate, delayed, or non-existent credits and billing reconciliations?
- If you are a customer with solar panels or another form of renewable energy, have you had any issues with receiving bills, credits, or with inaccurate, delayed, or non-existent credits and billing reconciliations? Or have you had troubles with demand metering?
- If you receive supply service through an Energy Service Company (ESCO), have you had any issues with receiving bills, credits, or with inaccurate, delayed, or non-existent credits and billing reconciliations?

This list is not exhaustive, and comments may be made on other issues related to the companies' performance. Please do not make personalized complaints publicly at a public forum so that you do not inadvertently reveal confidential personal

information. Instead, make any and all complaints in the manner(s) set forth below.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that **public forums** before DPS staff will be held to receive comments regarding billing, meter reading, and customer service problems that have affected customers of the companies since 2022, as follows:

1. VIRTUAL:

Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2023
Time: 1:00 p.m.

Electronic Access: www.webex.com
Event number: 2343 229 4895
Event password: Jan31-1pm

Phone-only Access: 518-549-0050
Access code: 2343 229 4895

Date: Tuesday, January 31, 2023
Time: 6:00 p.m.

Electronic Access: www.webex.com
Event number: 2333 158 8627
Event password: Jan31-6pm

Phone-only Access: 518-549-0050
Access code: 2333 158 8627

2. SOMERS (In-Person):

Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2023
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Location: Heritage Hills Society
8 Heritage Hills Drive
Somers, NY 10589

3. ROCHESTER (In-Person):

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location: Rochester City Hall - Council Chambers
30 Church St.
Rochester, NY 14614

4. BINGHAMTON (In-Person):

Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2023
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location: Binghamton State Office Building
First Floor Conference Room
44 Hawley St.
Binghamton, NY 13901

At the public forums, those wishing to comment on the companies and the questions presented above will have an opportunity to do so on the record. Commenters may be asked follow-up or clarifying questions by DPS staff. Members of the public may attend whichever forum is convenient and attendance is not limited to customers of the utilities.

Any person wishing to provide a public comment on the record at the virtual forums must pre-register by 12:00 p.m. on January 30, 2023.

To register electronically: Participants who would like to provide a comment and will log in to a virtual forum electronically may register at www.webex.com and then click "Join A Meeting" at the top right-hand corner of the screen and enter the appropriate event number listed above and provide all requested information.

To register by phone: Any participant who is unable to participate electronically, may participate by phone. Call-in participants wishing to provide a statement must register to do so in advance by calling **1-800-342-3330** and provide the requested information.

On the date and time of the virtual forums, electronic participants should visit www.webex.com and enter the

appropriate event log in number. All call-in users should dial **518-549-0500** and enter the relevant access code listed above.

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations should call the DPS' Human Resources Management Office at (518)474-2520 as soon as possible. TDD users may request a sign language interpreter by placing a call through the New York Relay Service at 711.

Individuals that may need a language accommodation are encouraged to call the Department at 1-800-342-3377 for free language assistance services regarding this notice.

Other Ways to Comment:

For those who cannot attend or prefer not to speak at a public forum, there are several other ways to provide your comments. Comments should refer to Matter 23-00068, NYSEG/RG&E Billing Investigation.

Via Internet or mail: The Department of Public Service will launch a dedicated comment form on www.dps.ny.gov by January 31, 2023. Alternatively, comments may be mailed to Hon. Michelle L. Phillips, Secretary, New York State Department of Public Service, 3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. All written comment will become part of the record considered by the Commission in this matter and may be accessed on the Department's website in Matter 23-00068.

Toll-free Opinion Line: Comments may be submitted by calling the Department of Public Service's Opinion Line at 1-800-335-2120. This number is designed to take comments about pending matters from in-state callers 24 hours a day. These comments are not transcribed verbatim, but a summary is provided to the Commission.

Filing a Consumer Complaint

If you wish to file a complaint about your utility service, you may contact DPS at www.dps.ny.gov/complaints, 1-800-342-3377 (Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.) or by writing to Office of Consumer Services, 3 Empire State Plaza, 4th Floor, Albany, New York 12223. Please include as much information as possible with your complaint.

(SIGNED)

MICHELLE L. PHILLIPS
Secretary