

New water and sewerage service rates for DEML customers

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has approved new water and sewerage service rates for all customers of Dynamic Environmental Management Limited (DEML). The new rates came into effect on January 09, 2012.

DEML is the water and sewerage services provider for Vineyards Estate in Bushy Park St. Catherine as well as Caribbean Estates, Portmore Country Club and Morris Meadows all in Portmore St. Catherine.

The new rates could result in customers in some communities experiencing a decrease in their average bill while others will see an increase. This assumption is based on the bill a typical residential customer who uses an average of 16,000 litres of water per month.

A feature of this Determination issued by the OUR, is that all customers in all the communities served by DEML will now have uniform rates. A monthly Price Adjustment Mechanism (PAM) will be applied to the rates of all customers.

The initial connection fee at the signing of a contract is now set at \$2,000 for all service areas while the reconnection charge has moved to \$2,954. Customers will also now benefit from a Guaranteed Service Standards programme which has been implemented for all service areas and will be in effect in another three months.

The full determination is available on the OUR's website at www.our.org.jm



Customers of DEML raise their concerns at the first OUR public consultation for the DEML tariff review held at the Portmore Missionary Church Hall.



DEML Executive Donovan Hayden addresses DEML customers at the second OUR public consultation for the DEML tariff review held at a Fi Wi Place in Gutters St. Catherine

STAKEHOLDERS' MEETINGS



Director General Ahmad Zia Mian (left) makes a point to JCC President Milton Samuda (centre) while at right is Deputy Director General Hopeton Heron.



Jamaica Gasoline Retailers Association President L. D. Trevor Heaven listens to arguments being put forward by Director General Ahmad Zia Mian (left) while at right Deputy Director General Hopeton Heron listens.



The now former Chairman of the National Housing Trust Howard Mitchell (centre) is part of the conversation with Director General Ahmad Zia Mian (left) and Deputy Director General Hopeton Heron at right.

OUR to examine protection for Claro customers

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) will be further examining what, if any, consumer protection can be afforded to customers of Claro following on the announcement by Digicel that it will be closing the Claro network come March 01.

Last Friday Digicel advised the OUR of its intention to cease the operation of the Claro network effective March 01, 2012 and says it has put in place measures to effect the transition of those customers who wish to migrate to its core network. The OUR is however concerned about the level of protection afforded to customers in light of the planned closure of the Claro network.

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) had summoned Digicel to the meeting last Friday to have the company provide a status report on the transfer of control of the Claro network and assets to Digicel. The OUR also wanted full details of Digicel's intended operation of the Claro assets and business.

The meeting followed a slew of complaints received by the regulator from customers of Claro.

OUR giving praise at Christmas

As part of the outreach at Christmas time the Public Affairs Department stages an annual Christmas Praise gathering. The gathering is held at the PCJ auditorium and representatives from the regulated entities as well as staff from all the companies on the PCJ building are invited to attend.

Here are some highlights from the OUR Christmas Praise 2011.



The Rev. Franklyn Jackson who delivered the sermon on the joys of giving of yourself.



The audience listened attentively to the messages being delivered at the yuletide gathering



Worship in song by the OUR Chorale



Guest performer Carey Sayles



Deputy General Counsel Cheryl Lewis delivered moments of meditation for Christmas



The Praise Academy of Dance worshipping in movement

OUR commences review of JPS' revised back-billing policy

The OUR has commenced review of the revised back-billing policy which was submitted by the Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd in December of last year. The revised policy was submitted to the regulator in compliance with a Directive issued to the Company on November 25, 2011.

The OUR has directed the JPS that within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the Office's approval, the Company must issue the amended back-billing policy and related issues such as a Code of Practice and make them publicly available.

THE GUARANTEED STANDARDS - YOUR RIGHTS

These are agreed service level standards by which the JPS and NWC should comply. If either company fails to meet these standards, the affected customer is entitled to compensation and should submit a claim to the service provider – where compensation is not automatic.

Example: Neither the JPS nor NWC should send you more than two (2) consecutive estimated bills.

Copies of the standards are available at JPS and NWC offices islandwide as well as on the OUR's website: www.our.org.jm.

