

OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION



NEWS

DATE: September 12, 2008

TO: ALL NEWS EDITORS

MEDIA RELEASE

"OUR says JPS is in breach of its Terms & Conditions of service by issuing bills for 41 days"

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has noted the concerns of the general public regarding the recent issue of estimated bills by the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) to some of its customers for billing periods of up to forty-one (41) days.

Having reviewed some of the complaints, the Office has concluded that JPS has breached the conditions of the JPS All-Island Electricity Licence, 2001 by issuing bills for a period in excess of the time approved by the OUR.

The OUR is also of the view that JPS' actions in this matter are unreasonable and unfair to its customers regarding their cash flow and budgeting; while, at the same time, giving JPS an advantage with regards to its own cash flow.

As a consequence, the OUR has directed JPS to reduce the billing period for the actual and estimated bills for July – August 2008 for the affected accounts and provide a method for calculating the adjustments to the bills that will reflect consumption levels for the fewer days at the fuel rates which were applicable for that period.

The approved bill format, **based on actual readings**, for issue in the next billing period, should be accompanied by a bill stuffer explaining the meaning of the line items for the necessary adjustments.

In addition, between now and December 31, 2008, none of the affected customers should be disconnected for any outstanding balance arising from the issue of the disputed bills.

- more -

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3rd Floor, PCJ Resource Centre, 36 Trafalgar Road, Kingston 10
Tel: 1-888-CALL_OUR, (2255-687), (876)968-6053 • Fax: (876)929-3635

Website: www.our.org.jm

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The OUR has also issued the following specific directives:

1. JPS should provide, within seven (7) days, a detailed account of the circumstances that led to the issue of the bills reflecting the extended period; as well as a list of all affected customers and their geographical locations, and
2. JPS must ensure that:
 - a. As of November 2008, no estimated bills will be issued for a billing period exceeding thirty (30) days, and
 - b. As of January 2009, at least 99% of bills based on actual readings will not exceed a billing period of thirty-one (31) days

- 30 -

Contact: David Geddes, Director – Consumer & Public Affairs
361-0957 or 322-7181 (mobile)

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