

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OUR Grants NWC’s Request for suspension of four (4) Guaranteed Standards**

**(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2020 May 4):** The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has granted a request by the National Water Commission (NWC) to suspend four (4) Guaranteed Standards for three months as a result of Government imposed guidelines in response to COVID-19 which has impacted its operations.

The NWC wrote to the OUR requesting a three (3) month suspension of four (4) of its seventeen (17) Guaranteed Standards because of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its resources.

The NWC cited the constraints caused by the measures implemented by the Government to curtail the spread of COVID-19, and its own precautionary islandwide measures to address staff and public health and safety concerns. It said these factors have impaired its ability to meet these four Guaranteed Standards.

The OUR reviewed the request and accepted that it is reasonable in the prevailing circumstances, and as such granted a three month suspension from 2020 April 1 to 2020 June 30.

These Guaranteed Standards are:

<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT</b>
WGS1	Connection to Supply	Maximum time of ten (10) working days to connect supply and install meter after establishment of contract.
WGS 7	Meter Installation	Maximum of thirty (30) working days to install meter on customer’s request.
WGS 8	Meter Installation	Maximum of twenty (20) working days to verify and repair or replace meter after defect is identified by or reported to the NWC.
WGS 10(a)	Meter Reading	Should not be more than two (2) consecutive estimated bills (where company has access to the meter).

The OUR asked the NWC to immediately notify its customers of the suspension of these Guaranteed Standards.

The OUR continues to encourage customers to become familiar with all Guaranteed Standards implemented for the NWC, JPS and private water providers, so they can hold their utility providers more accountable for quality of service.

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The Guaranteed Standards are minimum service level requirements of utility companies imposed to ensure value to customers. A breach of a Guaranteed Standard results in a compensatory payment to affected customers as a credit on their next bill. Breaches attract automatic compensation by the utility provider or compensation based on a claim submitted by the affected customer.

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