

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**OUR Investigating JPS customer Complaints of High Bills**

**(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2020 June 16):** The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) is investigating complaints by Jamaica Public Service Company Ltd. (JPS) customers about receiving high electricity bills since 2020 March.

Specifically, customers complain that they have seen drastic spikes in their bills even though they did not increase consumption, or where there was an acknowledgement of increased consumption, customers feel the level of increase is too high.

The OUR has been receiving complaints via its social media pages and through direct contacts with its Consumer Affairs Unit by calls, letters and emails. The OUR has also noted complaints posted on JPS’s social media pages.

The table below shows the number of complaints received by the OUR regarding high consumption and disputed charges during the period.

<b>Contact Method</b>	<b>2020 Jan. – March</b>	<b>2020 April – June 12</b>	<b>Variance (%)</b>
Calls, letters, emails	126	390	209%
Social Media	5	89	1,680%

The OUR wrote to JPS on 2020 April 21 on the matter, requesting information including:

- Whether JPS had received complaints regarding significant increases in consumption between 2020 March – April and if so, the number of complaints and areas affected;
- JPS’s findings into investigations into these complaints; and,
- Whether there has been an increase in the number of estimated bills for 2020 March – April compared to previous billing cycles since 2020 and the corresponding period in 2019.

JPS, in its response on 2020 May 20, acknowledged, *inter alia*, that there was a 44% increase in complaints by customers of high bills and consumption between 2020 April and March, compared to the 2019 corresponding period, with most of the complaints coming from residential customers.

The information provided by JPS also gave rise to additional questions. The OUR therefore, wrote to the company again on 2020 June 9, for further clarification and additional information. JPS is expected to respond by 2020 June 23.

In the meantime, the OUR continues to monitor the situation and takes note of additional complaints including those being discussed in various media. -30-

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