



April 2016

INSIDE THE OUR

Office of Utilities Regulation

Regulating Utilities For The Benefit Of All

O.U.R. Celebrates Girls in ICT Day



Speakers at the Girls in ICT workshop: Brigitte Collins – University Chief Information Officer (UCIO), UWI, and Albert Gordon, Director General of the OUR.

The OUR will host about two hundred female students from across the island at a one day seminar and exhibition in celebration of International Girls in ICT Day on Thursday, April 28, 2016 at the Knutsford Court Hotel.

The aim is to promote opportunities and careers that can be pursued at the OUR and other agencies in the field on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) by young women.

The event is to be opened by Mr. Albert Gordon, OUR's Director General. The Honourable Dr. Andrew Wheatley, Minister of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET) will bring greetings. Feature presenters include: Dr. Lila Rao-Graham, Deputy Executive Director of Mona School of Business and Management; Ms. Lorna Green, Founder, Chairman and CEO of Digital Transtec Ltd; Dr. Moniphia Hewling, Cyber Security expert at MSET, Brigitte Collins, Group Chief Information Officer, UWI, and representatives from Digicel and FLOW. One of the highlights of the event will be an interactive session where students will be introduced to the concept of coding.

The agenda is chockful of exciting topics with some of the sessions to be moderated by students. Topics include: "ICT Skills and Jobs"; Innovation and Creativity: Opportunities in ICT"; "My love for ICT and why I chose it as a Career". There will also be an exhibition featuring booths from selected ICT stakeholders, including Spectrum Management Authority, Ericsson, Digicel, FLOW, UWI, UTech and OUR.

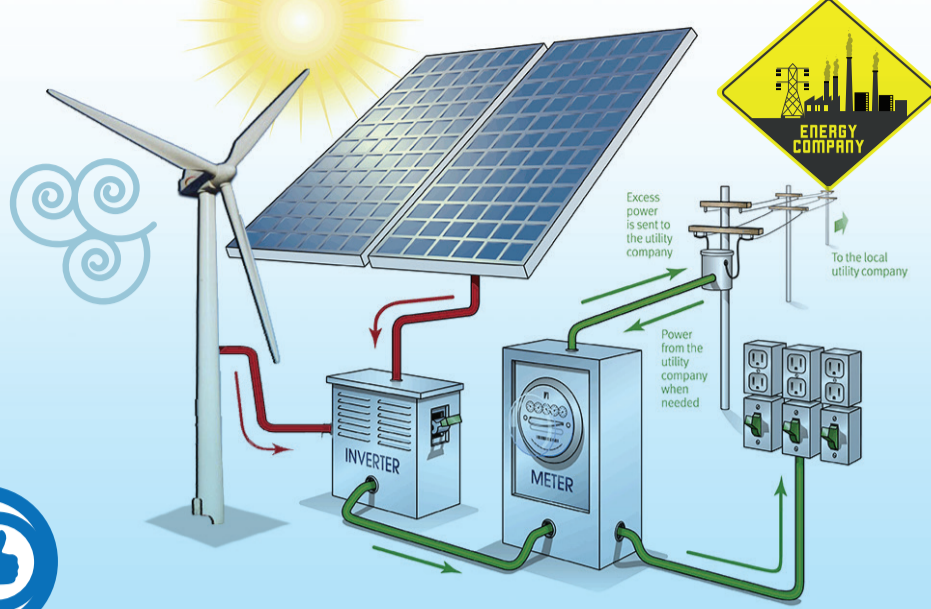
An initiative of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Girls in ICT is a global effort to raise awareness of ICT, empowering and encouraging girls and young women to consider studies and careers in ICT. The initiative also aims to raise awareness among parents, teachers and other influences in girls' lives. Girls in ICT Day is observed worldwide on the fourth Thursday of every April as established by the ITU, and has been celebrated since 2010.

NARUC Appointment



OUR's Director of Consumer and Public Affairs, Mrs. Yvonne Grinam-Nicholson was on March 9 appointed to the Staff Subcommittee on Consumer Affairs of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). Jamaica is an associate member of NARUC, which is the association representing the utility regulators in all 50 states of the US, and the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. NARUC is a non-profit association of public service commissions which regulate the utilities that provide essential services such as energy, telecommunications, water, and transportation.

JPS NET BILLING RESUMES



Customers of Jamaica Public Service Company Limited ("JPS") are now once again able to apply for licences to sell their excess electricity generated from renewable energy sources to the grid as of April 11, 2016.

Minister of Science Energy & Technology ("MSET") Hon. Dr. Andrew Wheatley announced that "on Monday, April 11, the Office of Utilities Regulation ("OUR") will resume accepting applications for net billing under similar terms as the previously-ended net billing pilot project until the details of a permanent programme are finalised".

The decision to continue the programme came out of an agreement reached on April 7, between MSET, the OUR and JPS. All parties agreed that it was in the best interest of all concerned that the net billing programme be resumed so as to strengthen the development of the renewable energy sector in line with the National Energy Policy. The two (2) year pilot programme was extended last May, as the system peak demand threshold was not met. As at March 2015, 351 applications were received, 311 of which were granted licences.

The net billing pilot programme was given the legislative underpinning in the Electricity Act, 2015 and based on the review of the pilot, undertaken by the OUR with the support of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, several other improvements arising from the recommendations will be enshrined in regulations.

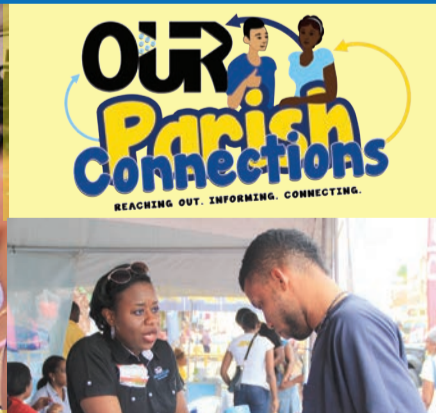
The Electricity Act also provides a mechanism for JPS customers to connect to the grid for other purposes. "The persons already connected to the grid for these other purposes, are being encouraged to regularise their status by making the relevant application for a licence to the OUR within a six-month amnesty period, commencing on Monday, April 11, 2016", the energy Minister said.

BACKGROUND

Net Billing allows customers of the JPS, who own renewable energy generators, such as wind turbines and photovoltaic (solar) systems and who generate electricity for personal use, to sell excess energy to JPS at the short run variable "avoided cost" prices set by the OUR. The Net Billing policy which is outlined in the "JPS Standard Offer for the Purchase of As-Available Intermittent Energy from Renewable Energy Facilities up to 100kW Revised Determination Notice", stipulates that provision be made for small commercial and residential electricity generation installations with renewable energy sources capacity up to 10kW for residential customers and up to 100kW for small commercial customers.



Scenes from O.U.R.'s Clarendon Parish Connections



Over seven hundred utility consumers turned out to the OUR's Clarendon Parish Connection held from April 12-15. Representatives from the OUR and utility companies connected with consumers, provided them with updates on services in the parish and fielded questions, at the School's Connection at Vere Technical; a Community Leaders' meeting at St. Gabriel's Anglican Church in May Pen; a Farmers' meeting at Clarendon College and an Expo in the centre of May Pen. Help desks were also set up to assist in resolving utility customers' concerns on-the-spot.



O.U.R. gets prelim report on power outage from JPS.

The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has received a preliminary report from the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) about the power outage which affected a wide cross section of its customers across the island on Sunday, April 17. The OUR had written requesting that JPS, as a matter of urgency, submit a preliminary report on the outage, as a precursor to a more detailed report which JPS is obliged to submit to the OUR within thirty (30) days of restoration of power. This preliminary report, the OUR said, should indicate the nature and impact of the outage on the generation, transmission and distribution systems, and on its supply to customers.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.OUR.ORG.JM FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Yvonne Nicholson
Director, Consumer and Public Affairs
E-mail: ynicholson@our.org.jm

Tel: 876-968-6053 | /officeofutilitiesregulation | @theOURja | www.our.org.jm

ADVT.