

## Media Release

### OUR directs JPS to reduce and re-issue some customer bills

**(KINGSTON, JAMAICA, 2024 August 23)** The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) has instructed the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) to reduce some customers' bills in the next billing period and re-issue those bills issued in August with zero consumption that do not show a corresponding zero money value.

The scale and extensiveness of the JPS bill increase for August came to the OUR's attention after the utility began to dispatch the bills and customers started to complain about high electricity charges.

In 2021 the OUR communicated to JPS that it viewed any average increase in overall rates in excess of 5% to be a rate or bill shock; a situation that should be avoided. Previously, in one-off spikes, the regulatory treatment is that the additional cost to customers was spread over several months to mitigate the effects on customers.

The OUR has commenced an investigation into the current billing complaints. Once the relevant information has been received from the JPS and analysed, the OUR will determine what, if any, remedies are necessary.

Pending the outcome of its investigation, the OUR has written to JPS, explaining that within the context of the current hike in electricity bills, how it was executed, and given the OUR's responsibility to approve non-fuel and fuel rates as stipulated in Schedule 3 of JPS's Electricity Licence, 2016, it finds it necessary to direct the power company to reduce customer bills in 2024 September by the difference in JPS's fuel cost in 2024 July over June. Additionally, the August bills with zero consumption that do not show a corresponding zero money value should be reissued.

Customers whose July – August JPS bills were higher than 5% of their May to June bills should first, complain to JPS, ensuring that you provide all relevant details like the current and previous bill. Also, if the complaint is made via the Call Centre, ensure you get a reference number.

Contact the OUR immediately if:

- I. You are not satisfied with JPS's response;
- II. You are told to pay the bill or the service will be disconnected;
- III. You receive no response from JPS within 30 working days.

#### QUALITY POLICY STATEMENT

**OUR RULES:** The management and staff of the OUR are committed to Regulating Utility services in accordance with our Legislative powers and to the Enhancement of customer Satisfaction through continual improvement of our quality management system.

**ISO 9001:2015 certified**

The OUR also advised that its investigation into the 2024 August billing will include but not be limited to, an examination into:

- I. The dispatch of generating plants during the period;
- II. Any applicable system operating constraints (generation and transmission) encountered in the generation dispatch process during system operation in 2024 July;
- III. The basis for the substitution of ADO for natural gas;
- IV. The effect of the government tax waiver on ADO pricing;
- V. The mechanisms to minimize the rate hikes in one-off situations.

The OUR anticipates that it will wrap up its investigation promptly and will engage with JPS “to agree on the treatment of any verifiable increases that are appropriate.”

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### **OUR Consumer Contact Details**

Office of Utilities Regulation  
3rd Floor, PCJ Resource Centre  
36 Trafalgar Road  
Kingston 10

Tel: 876-968-6053

E-mail: [consumer@our.org.jm](mailto:consumer@our.org.jm)

Website: [www.our.org.jm](http://www.our.org.jm)

Facebook.com/officeofutilitiesregulation

[www.twitter.com/TheOURja](https://www.twitter.com/TheOURja)

Toll Free from land lines: 888-CALL-OUR (2255-687)

**Contact OUR’s Public Affairs Unit:** [publicaffairs@our.org.jm](mailto:publicaffairs@our.org.jm) or 876-968-6053.

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