

# 2004 Customer Service Performance



Pennsylvania Electric &  
Natural Gas Distribution Companies

Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission  
Bureau of Consumer Services



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## Introduction

This is the third comprehensive report of the Public Utility Commission (Commission) presenting quality of service data for both the Electric Distribution Companies (EDCs) and the major Natural Gas Distribution Companies (NGDCs). Prior to the report on annual activity in 2002, the Commission produced two separate reports. This is the sixth year EDC customer-service performance statistics are available and the fourth year NGDC statistics are available. This report fulfills the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 54.156 of the EDC reporting requirements and 52 Pa. Code § 62.37 of the NGDC reporting requirements. Both provide for the Commission to annually produce a summary report on the customer-service performance of the EDCs and NGDCs using the statistics collected as a result of the reporting requirements.

On December 3, 1996, the Electricity Generation Customer Choice and Competition Act (Act), 66 Pa. C.S. §§ 2801-2812, was enacted. The Natural Gas Choice and Competition Act (Act), 66 Pa. C.S. Chapter 22, was enacted on June 22, 1999. These Acts require the EDCs and NGDCs to maintain, at a minimum, the levels of customer service that were in existence prior to the effective dates of the acts. In response, the Commission took steps to ensure the continued provision of high-quality customer service through the implementation of regulations that require the EDCs and the NGDCs to report statistics on important components of customer service, including: telephone access to the company; billing frequency; meter reading; timely response to customer disputes; and the level of customer satisfaction with the company's handling of recent interactions with its customers (§§ 54.151-54.156 for EDCs and §§ 62.31-62.37 for NGDCs).

The Commission adopted the final rulemaking establishing *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* for the EDCs on April 23, 1998. The EDCs began reporting the required data to the Commission in August 1999, for the first six months of that year and followed up with a report on annual activity in February 2000. In January 2000, the companies began surveying customers who had initiated an interaction with their EDC. They have continued the survey each year since then.

The Commission adopted the final rulemaking establishing *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* for the NGDCs on January 12, 2000. As per the regulations, NGDCs began reporting the required data to the Commission in August 2001, for the first six months of that year, and followed up with a report on 2001 annual activity in February 2002. In January 2002, the companies began their surveys of customers who had initiated interactions with the companies. NGDCs that serve fewer than 100,000 residential accounts are not required to report statistics on the various measures required of the larger companies. The smaller NGDCs must conduct mail surveys of customers who contact them and report the survey results to the Commission. The smaller NGDCs surveyed their customers in 2004, and sent the results to the Commission in 2005.

The Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) has summarized the information supplied by the EDCs and NGDCs, including survey data, into the charts and tables that appear on the following pages. This is the first year that the report includes statistics from Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW).<sup>1</sup>

The reporting requirements at § 54.155 and § 62.36 include a provision whereby BCS is to report to the Commission various statistics associated with informal consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests that consumers file with the Commission. The BCS is to report a “justified consumer complaint rate,” a “justified payment arrangement request rate,” “the number of informally verified infractions of applicable statutes and regulations,” and an “infraction rate” for the EDCs and NGDCs. These statistics are also important indicators of service quality. The BCS has calculated and reported these rates for a number of years in the annual report, *Utility Consumer Activities Report and Evaluation: Electric, Gas, Water and Telephone Utilities (UCARE)*. The BCS reported the 2004 rates noted above in the 2004 UCARE report that the Commission released in November 2005. The report offers detailed descriptions of each of these measures as well as a comparison with performance statistics from the previous year. Access to the 2004 *Utility Consumer Activities Report and Evaluation* and the 2004 *Report on Pennsylvania’s Electric and Natural Gas Distribution Companies Customer Service Performance* are available on the Commission’s website: [www.puc.state.pa.us](http://www.puc.state.pa.us).

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<sup>1</sup> The Commission assumed regulatory responsibility over PGW on July 1, 2000, and did not require PGW to file a restructuring plan until July 1, 2002. PGW was not required to comply with Chapter 56 regulations until September 2003.

## I. Company-Reported Performance

In accordance with *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* (quality of service reporting requirements), the EDCs and the NGDCs reported statistics for 2004 regarding telephone access, billing, meter reading and disputes not responded to within 30 days. For each of the required measures, the companies report data by month and include a 12-month average.

With the exception of the telephone access statistics and the small business bill information, the required statistics directly relate to the regulations in 52 Pa. Code § 56 *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service*.

### Treatment of PECO Energy

Historically, the Customer Service Performance Report has presented PECO Energy (PECO) statistics with the EDCs, although PECO's statistics included data for both the company's electric and natural gas accounts. PECO has three categories of customers: electric only, gas only, and those receiving both electric and gas service. The company is not able to separate and report the data by gas and electric accounts. For example, PECO's gas and/or electric customers contact the same call center and receive only one bill per billing period. However, customers receiving electric and natural gas from PECO have two separate meters and the company must read each one. Therefore, beginning with the 2004 data, the report presents the natural gas meter-reading statistics with the NGDCs, separately from the electric meter-reading statistics. The presentation of PECO's meter-reading statistics for 2002 and 2003 is unchanged, so a comparison of the 2004 statistics with 2002 and 2003 is not possible.

### Treatment of the FirstEnergy Companies

FirstEnergy had advised BCS to report Metropolitan Edison (Met-Ed) and Pennsylvania Electric (Penelec) as separate companies beginning with 2003 data. This is the second year that BCS will present the data separately. Because Met-Ed and Penelec use the same call center, however, the data appears under FirstEnergy in the Telephone Access Section. Prior to 2003, BCS reported these two companies combined under the company name GPU. The third FirstEnergy Company is Penn Power. Penn Power has always been treated as a separate company.

#### A. Telephone Access

The quality of service reporting requirements for both the EDCs and the NGDCs include telephone access to a company because customers must be able to readily contact their EDC or NGDC with questions, complaints and requests for service, and to report service outages and other problems.

In order to produce an accurate picture of telephone access, the companies must report three separate measures of telephone access. Requiring three separate measures

averts the possibility of masking telephone access problems by presenting only one or two parts of the total access picture: 1) percent of calls answered within 30 seconds; 2) average busy-out rate; and 3) call abandonment rate. For example, a company may report that it answers every call in 30 seconds or less. If only this statistic is available, one might conclude that the access to the company is very good. However, if this company has only a few trunk lines into the company's call distribution system, once these trunks are at capacity, other callers receive a busy signal when they attempt to contact the company. Thus, a large percentage of customers cannot get through to the company and telephone access is not very good at all. Therefore, it is important to look at both percent of calls answered within 30 seconds and busy-out rates, to get a clearer picture of the telephone access to the EDC or NGDC.

Further, the call abandonment rate indicates how many customers drop out of the queue of customers waiting to talk to a company representative. A high call abandonment rate is most likely an indication that the length of the wait to speak to a company representative is too long. Statistics on call abandonment are often inversely related to statistics measuring calls answered within 30 seconds. For the most part, the companies answering a high percent of calls within 30 seconds had low call abandonment rates and those answering a lower percent of calls within 30 seconds had higher call abandonment rates. The 2002-04 EDC figures presented later in this report conform to the inverse relationship. In addition, the 2002-04 data reported by the NGDCs also conform to this relationship.

Attempted contacts to a call center initially have one of two results: they are either "received" by the company or they receive a busy signal and thus are not "received" by the company. Calls in the "busy-out rate" represent those attempted calls that received a busy signal or message; they were not "received" by the company because the company lines or trunks were at capacity.

For the calls that are "received" by the company, the caller has several options. One option is to choose to speak to a company representative. When a caller chooses this option, the caller enters a queue to begin a waiting period until a company representative is available to take the call. Once a call enters the queue, it can take one of three routes: it will either be abandoned (the caller chooses not to wait and disconnects the call); it will be answered within 30 seconds; or it will be answered in a time period that is greater than 30 seconds. The percent of those calls answered within 30 seconds is reported to the Commission.

This report presents the EDC and NGDC statistics on telephone access in the following three charts:

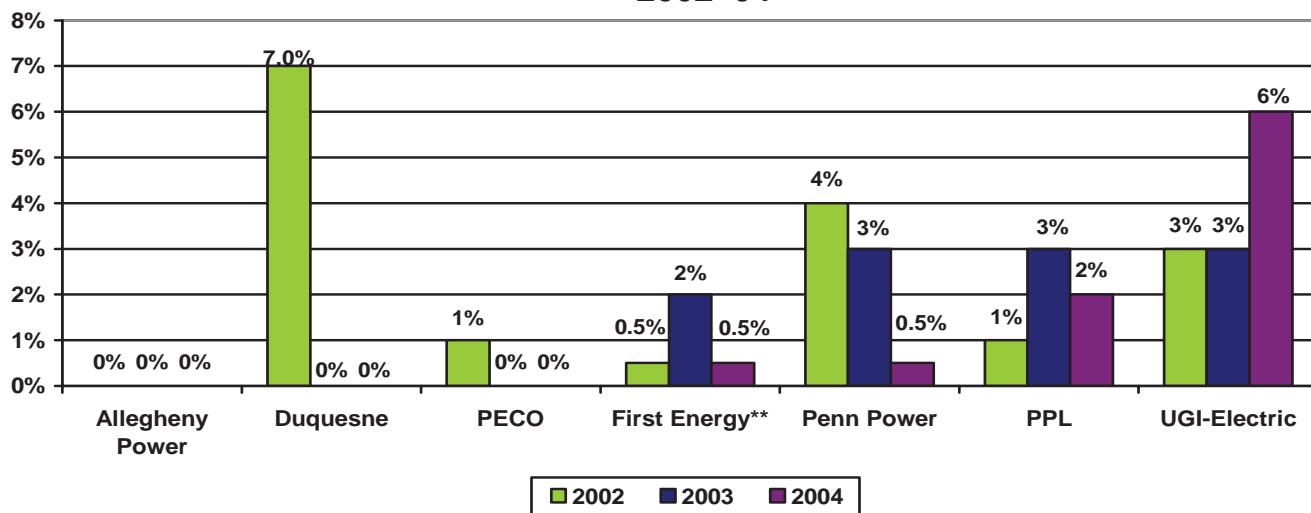
- Busy-out rate
- Call abandonment rate
- Percent of calls answered within 30 seconds



## 1. Busy-Out Rate

The Commission's Regulations at § 54.153(b)(1)(ii) require that the EDCs report to the Commission the average busy-out rate for each call center or business office, as well as a 12-month cumulative average for the company. Similarly, § 62.33(b)(ii) requires the NGDCs to report the average busy-out rate. Each regulation defines busy-out rate as the number of calls to a call center that receive a busy signal divided by the total number of calls received at a call center. For example, a company with a 10 percent average busy-out rate means that 10 percent of the customers who attempted to call the company received a busy signal (and thus did not gain access) while 90 percent of the customer calls were received by the company. If the company has more than one call center, it is to supply the busy-out rates for each center as well as a combined statistic for the company as a whole. The chart below presents the combined busy-out rate for each major EDC during 2002, 2003 and 2004. The second chart presents the combined busy-out rate for each major NGDC during 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**Electric Distribution Companies  
Busy-Out Rate\*2002–04**



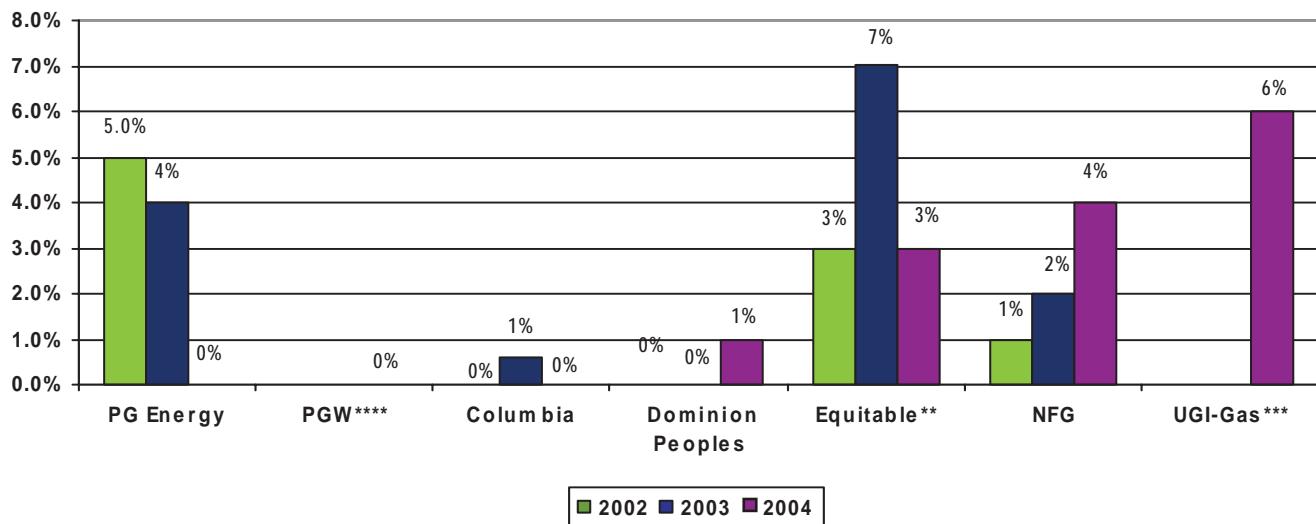
\* 12-month average.

\*\* Met-Ed and Penelec use the same call center so these two companies are combined under FirstEnergy.

The 2004 results show that UGI Electric had a higher busy-out rate in 2004, than in 2003. For the other EDCs, the busy-out rate was either lower or remained the same. During 2004, UGI consolidated the Electric and Gas Division Call Centers. The company explained that it expected this change to a Virtual Call Center to cause short-term slight declines in some performance factors. In the long term, however, UGI expects the consolidation to improve customer satisfaction efforts.

Penn Power did not include busy-out rates for January from its Outsourcing Services Inc. number. The company reports that the information was purged and not available. The average includes all of the data for the remaining months.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies  
Busy-Out Rate\***  
**2002-04**



\* 12-month average.

\*\* Equitable's 2002 data is does not include calls to the company's emergency call number.

\*\*\* The Commission granted UGI-Gas a temporary waiver of the section that requires reporting this statistic.

\*\*\*\* PGW was not required to report data prior to 2004

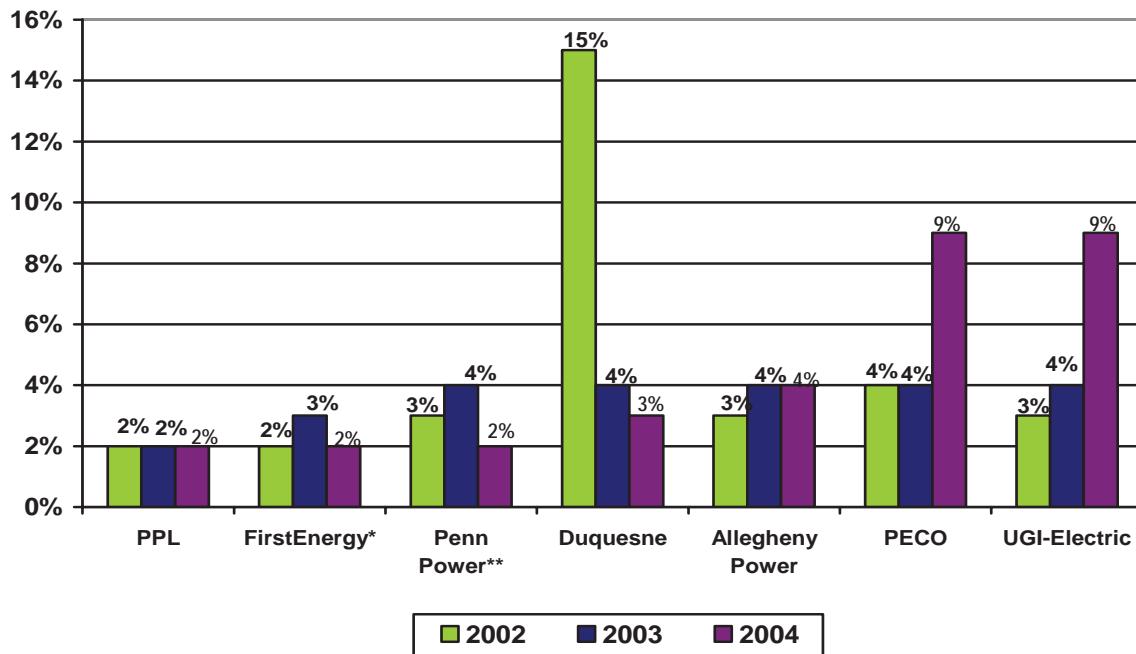
UGI-Gas began to capture the busy-out rate for its call centers beginning in November 2004. Therefore, the cumulative average of 6 percent is only a two-month average of November and December. UGI-Gas had requested and was granted a waiver of § 62.33(1) (ii) until it was able to supply this data.

Equitable reports that the company added more trunk (T-1) capacity in July 2004, and greatly reduced the busy-out rate from the 2003 level. PG Energy and Columbia Gas also show an improvement in their 2004 busy-out rates. NFG attributes its increased busy-out rate to a 10 percent increase in call volume from 2003 to 2004.

## 2. Call Abandonment Rate

Consistent with the regulations, the EDCs and NGDCs are to report to the Commission the average call abandonment rate for each call center, business office, or both. The call abandonment rate is the number of calls to a company's call center that were abandoned divided by the total number of calls that the company received at its call center or business office (§ 54.152 and § 67.32). For example, an EDC with a 10 percent call abandonment rate means that 10 percent of the calls received were terminated by the customer prior to speaking to an EDC representative. As the time that customers spend "on hold" increases, they have a greater tendency to hang up, raising the call abandonment rates. If the EDC or NGDC has more than one call center, it is to supply the call abandonment rates for each center as well as a combined statistic for the company as a whole. The next chart presents the combined call abandonment rate for each major EDC during 2002, 2003 and 2004.

## Electric Distribution Companies Call Abandonment Rate 2002-04



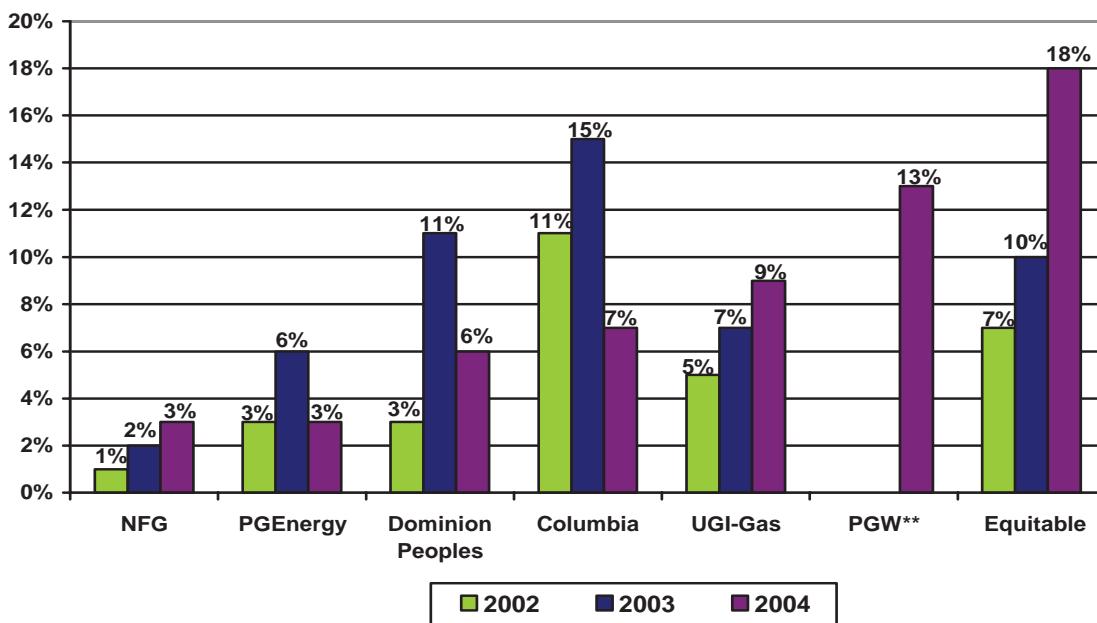
\* Met-Ed and Penelec use the same call center so the chart shows them combined under FirstEnergy.

\*\* Penn Power began using the same call center as Met-Ed and Penelec in mid-2003, but is presented separately for continuity.

The above statistics show five of the companies show a call abandonment rate in the range of 2 percent to 4 percent. These five companies either improved or maintained their 2003 rates. PECO and UGI-Electric both reported a 9 percent call abandonment rate, an increase from the 4 percent reported by those companies last year. UGI reports that, during 2004, it consolidated the Electric and Gas Division Call Centers. The company explained that it expected this change to a Virtual Call Center to cause short-term slight declines in some performance factors. In the long term, however, UGI expects the consolidation to improve customer satisfaction efforts.

The chart on the following page presents the 2004 call abandonment rates for the major NGDCs.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Call Abandonment Rate\***  
**2002-04**



\* 12-month average.

\*\* PGW was not required to report data prior to 2004

Three of the seven NGDCs had a higher average call-abandonment rate in 2004 than in 2003. Equitable, showing a significant increase from 10 percent to 18 percent, attributes the increased call abandonment rate to a high call volume and longer handling times. The company further explains that a new customer information and billing system implemented in February 2004, negatively affected service levels for the rest of the year. Equitable states it has added staff and provided additional training which, coupled with increased system reliability, is expected to reduce the negative impact.

Columbia Gas shows what it describes as “a marked decrease in the percent of calls abandoned.” Despite the decrease, Columbia states that it continues to focus on improvement in its service level metric. The company reports that longer talk times due to higher natural gas prices contributed to the 7 percent abandonment rate in 2004. Columbia further explains that “to help combat this issue” the company installed a new software program to its system. The software, known as “Customer Call Back,” now gives Columbia’s customers the option of staying on the line or receiving a call back when call volumes subside. According to Columbia, it will reduce the number of calls abandoned using this “Customer Call Back” software.

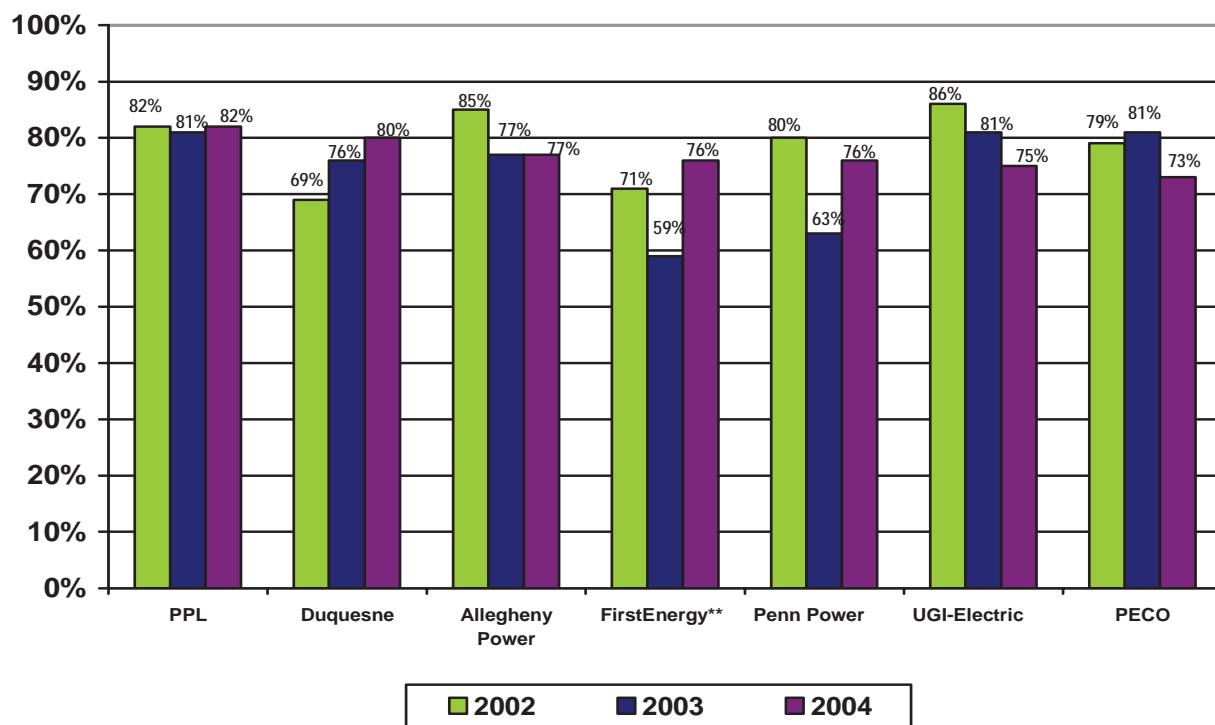
PGW, reporting for the first time, explains that a server capacity issue increased the call handle time for most of 2004, negatively affecting the service level. According to PGW, as of December 2004, when it installed new servers and upgraded the production database and operating system for the customer information system, the average call handling time is improving.

Dominion Peoples reports that the company increased staff the first quarter of 2004, and added new technology to provide for improvement in its call handling capabilities for the remainder of the year.

### 3. Percent of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds

Pursuant to the quality of service reporting requirements at § 54.153(b) and § 62.33(b), each EDC and major NGDC is to “take measures necessary and keep sufficient records” to report the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds or less at the company’s call center. The section specifies that “answered” means a company representative is ready to render assistance to the caller. An acknowledgement that the consumer is on the line does not constitute an answer. If a company operates more than one call center (a center for handling billing disputes and a separate one for making payment arrangements, for example), the company is to provide separate statistics for each call center and a statistic that combines performance for all the call centers. The chart below presents the combined percent of calls answered within 30 seconds for each of the major EDCs in Pennsylvania during 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**Electric Distribution Companies  
Percent of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds\*  
2002-04**



\* 12-month average.

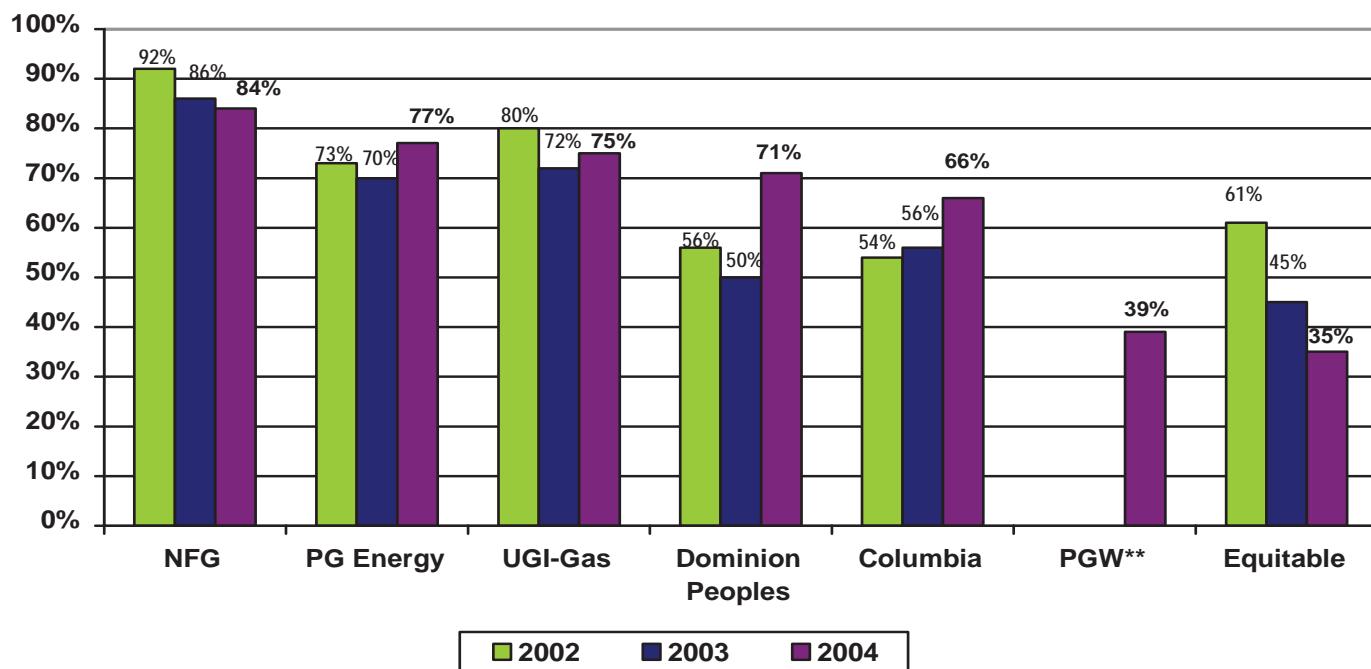
\*\* Met-Ed and Penelec use the same call center so these two companies are combined under FirstEnergy.

The 2004 results show improved access for four companies. Although Penn Power and FirstEnergy's telephone access decreased considerably from 2002 to 2003, both increased their access in 2004. According to the company, FirstEnergy's call center started taking Penn Power calls in June 2003, and, in the first quarter of 2004, hired and trained additional staff in anticipation of higher call volumes during peak times throughout the summer. The company attributes the increase in access to the additional staff, and to training initiatives provided to the existing staff.

PECO experienced the largest percentage decrease in access from 2003 to 2004. PECO points out that although the 12-month average for the year 2004 is down 6 percentage points from 2003, the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds for the month of December 2004 is 85 percent, an improvement over the 78 percent answered within 30 seconds in December 2003. PECO also notes that the payment terms call center (NCO) had significant technology issues resulting in a 12-month average of 53 percent; however, the company identified and rectified those issues resulting in a 94 percent for that call center in December 2004. The CAP call center's (OSI) performance decreased from a 83 percent average in 2003, to a 72 percent average in 2004. PECO reports that it shifted credit calls to the CAP call center and this may have contributed to the decrease in percentage of calls answered within 30 seconds.

UGI-Electric reports that UGI consolidated the Electric and Gas Division Call Centers during 2004. The company expected the change to a "Virtual Call Center" to cause short-term declines in some performance factors, but expects the consolidation to improve customer satisfaction in the long term.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies  
Percent of Calls Answered Within 30 Seconds\***  
**2002-04**



\* 12-month average.

\*\* PGW was not required to report data prior to 2004.

The percent of calls answered within 30 seconds varies depending on call volume and the number of employees available to take calls. PGW reports that a server capacity issue, that increased call handle time for most of 2004, negatively affected the level of service in PGW's call center. PGW explains that it responded to the issue by installing new servers and upgrading the production database and operating system for the customer information system as of Dec. 5, 2004. According to the company, the upgrade reduced the average call handling time by more than 60 seconds.

National Fuel Gas (NFG) attributes its slight decline in access statistics in 2004, to a 10 percent increase in call volume. Columbia shows a marked improvement in the percent of calls answered within 30 seconds. The company attributes its improved service level to the hiring of additional customer service personnel, both full time and part time, and to enhancing the automated phone system (IVRU) and making it more user friendly. Columbia reports that it also installed hardware to assist management with the scheduling of phone personnel during peak times of the day.

Equitable's service levels continue to decline. Equitable reports that, in early February 2004, it implemented a new customer service information and billing system. According to the company, "learning curves" and slower than anticipated system performance increased call handling time.

Dominion Peoples reports that it increased staff during the first quarter of 2004, and added new technology to improve its call handling capabilities for the year.

## **B. Billing**

Pursuant to 66 Pa.C.S. § 1509 and *Standards and Billing Practices for Residential Utility Service* (§ 56.11), a utility is to render a bill once every billing period to all customers. The customer bill is often the only communication between the company and a customer, thus underscoring the need to produce and send this fundamental statement to customers at regular intervals. The failure of a customer to receive a bill each month frequently generates consumer complaints to the company and sometimes to the Commission. It also adversely affects collections performance.

### **1. Number and Percent of Residential Bills Not Rendered Once Every Billing Period**

Pursuant to § 54.153(b)(2)(i) and § 62.33(b)(2)(i), the EDCs and major NGDCs shall report the number and percent of residential bills that the company failed to render pursuant to § 56.11. The following table shows the average number and percent of residential bills that each major EDC failed to render once every billing period during 2002, 2003 and 2004.

**Electric Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Bills**  
**Not Rendered Once Every Billing Period**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Duquesne	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PECO	1,125	.07%	77	0%	28	0%
UGI-Electric	4	.01%	4	.01%	2	0%
Penelec**			14	0%	64	.01%
Allegheny Power	102	.02%	107	.02%	74	.01%
PPL	470	.04%	368	.03%	102	.01%
Met-Ed**			18	0%	73	.02%
Penn Power	1	0%	30	.02%	22	.02%
GPU	141	.01%				

\* 12-month average.

\*\* FirstEnergy Companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2002.

PECO again experienced a decrease in the number of bills it did not render and explains the decline in the number is a direct result of effort to track and rectify billing. In late 2003, PECO implemented a system to track this performance and made additional revisions to the IT programs.

Beginning in 2003, FirstEnergy East accounting group began to handle the Penn Power billing. Met-Ed, Penelec and Penn Power point out that, for all three companies, a month-by-month review of the number of residential bills not rendered every billing period shows a decrease in the number for the second half of 2004, when compared to the first six months of 2004.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Bills**  
**Not Rendered Once Every Billing Period**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Columbia	9	0%	4	0%	7	0%
PG Energy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
NFG	21	0%	11	.01%	9	0%
UGI-Gas	16	.01%	12	.01%	4	0%
Dominion Peoples	352	.11%	70	.02%	24	.01%
Equitable	7	0%	15	.01%	158	.07%
PGW**					4,156	1.00%

\* 12-month average.

\*\* First year reporting.

Equitable explains that it implemented a new customer information and billing system and, as a result of “various system and business process issues,” the number of customers who did not receive 12 monthly bills in 2004 increased. The majority of customers affected received 11 bills over a 12-month period.

## **2. Number and Percent of Bills to Small Business Customers Not Rendered Once Every Billing Period**

Both the EDC and the NGDC quality of service reporting requirements require that companies report the number and percent of small business bills the companies failed to render in accordance with 66 Pa.C.S. § 1509. The reporting requirements at § 54.152 define a small business customer as a person, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, association or other business that receives electric service under a small commercial, industrial or business rate classification. In addition, the maximum registered peak load for the small business customer must be less than 25 kilowatt hours within the last 12 months. Meanwhile, the NGDC reporting requirements at § 62.32 define a small business customer as a person, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, association or other business whose annual gas consumption does not exceed 300 thousand cubic feet (mcf). The next two tables show the average number and percent of small business customers the major EDCs and NGDCs did not bill according to statute.

**Electric Distribution Companies  
Number and Percent\* of Bills to Small Business  
Customers Not Rendered Once Every Billing Period**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Duquesne	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PECO	880	.49%	37	.02%	4	0%
PPL	231	.12%	203	.12%	78	.01%
UGI-Electric	1	.02%	0	0%	.6	.01%
Allegheny Power	137	.17%	90	.11%	44	.05%
Penelec**			24	.03%	40	.05%
Met-Ed**			11	.02%	38	.07%
Penn Power	1	0%	1	.01%	17	.09%
GPU	94	.08%				

\* 12-month average.

\*\* FirstEnergy Companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2001 and 2002.

PECO reports, as it did with residential bills, that the decrease in the number of bills not rendered to small business customers is due to a direct result to track and rectify billing.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Bills to Small Business**  
**Customers Not Rendered Once/Billing Period**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Columbia	10	.00%	7	.00%	3	.00%
PG Energy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
UGI-Gas	4	.02%	3	.01%	0	0%
Dominion Peoples	44	.16%	9	.05%	3	.02%
NFG	3	.03%	1	.01%	2	.02%
Equitable	2	.00%	7	.04%	29	.24%
PGW**					189	1.00%

\* 12-month average.

\*\* First year reporting.

The above table presents the average monthly number and percent of bills to small business customers that each major NGDC failed to render once every billing period during 2004. As the table shows, four of the seven NGDCs improved or maintained their average from 2003 to 2004. Equitable experienced a larger rise in its average this year than previously, and, as with residential billing, attributes any failure to render a bill at least once a billing period to the new customer information and billing system the company implemented in February 2004.

## C. Meter Reading

Regular meter reading is important to produce accurate bills for customers who expect to receive bills based on the amount of service they have used. The Commission's experience is that the lack of actual meter readings generates complaints to companies, as well as to the Commission. In both of the Final Rulemaking Orders establishing *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* [L-00000147 and L-970131], the Commission stated its concern that regular meter reading may be one of the customer service areas where EDCs and NGDCs might reduce service under competition. The quality of service reporting requirements include three measures of meter-reading performance that correspond with the meter reading requirements of the Chapter 56 regulations at § 56.12(4)(ii), § 56.12(4)(iii) and § 56.12(5)(i).

### 1. Number and Percent of Residential Meters Not Read By Company or Customer in Six Months

Pursuant to § 56.12(4)(ii), a utility may estimate the bill of a residential ratepayer if utility personnel are unable to gain access to obtain an actual meter reading. However, at least every six months, the utility must obtain an actual meter reading or ratepayer supplied reading to verify the accuracy of prior estimated bills. The quality of service reporting requirements at § 54.153(b)(3)(i) require EDCs to report the number and percent of residential meters for which they have failed to comply with § 56.12(4)(ii). The results are compiled in the next table.

**Electric Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Meters Not Read**  
**by Company or Customer in Six Months**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
UGI-Electric	0	0%	0	0%	1	.00%
Duquesne	146	.03%	24	0%	6	.00%
Allegheny Power	83	.01%	78	.01%	65	.01%
PPL	270	.02%	287	.02%	78	.01%
PECO	8,841	.44%	6,008	.30%	811**	.05%**
Penn Power	8	.06%	10	.01%	120	.08%
Met-Ed***			245	.06%	319	.08%
Penelec***			350	.07%	385	.08%
GPU	729	.08%				

\* 12-month average.

\*\* PECO's gas meters are not included in the 2004 data in this table.

\*\*\* FirstEnergy companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2002.

Met-Ed, Penelec, and Penn Power report that they are trying to resolve ongoing access issues by reviewing accounts identified as having consecutive estimates and contacting customers to arrange mutually agreeable access.

As previously noted in this report, the number of PECO meters not read in six months does not include gas meters, whereas the 2002 and 2003 data for PECO includes gas and electric combined.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Meters Not Read**  
**by Company or Customer in Six Months**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
PG Energy	7	.00%	8	.00%	4	.00%
PECO (Gas)***					428	.10%
Columbia	1,084	.32%	980	.27%	781	.20%
Dominion Peoples	1,025	.32%	984	.30%	1,014	.31%
NFG	626	.35%	748	.37%	828	.41%
UGI-Gas	2,288	.76%	1,443	.62%	1,380	.43%
PGW**					3,005	1.00%
Equitable	380	.16%	417	.17%	5,538	2.00%

\* 12-month average.

\*\* First year reporting.

\*\*\* First year PECO gas meters presented separately.

The *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* at § 62.33(b)(3)(i) require the major NGDCs to report the number and percent of residential meters for which the company has failed to obtain an actual or ratepayer supplied meter reading within the past six months as required under § 56.12(4)(ii). The table above presents the data that the companies reported for 2002, 2003 and 2004. Two of the gas companies improved performance from 2003 to 2004. Three reported higher numbers for 2004, than they did for 2003. For the first time, the report presents PECO's natural gas meter-reading data separately from its electric meter-reading data.

The number of residential meters Equitable reported as not read in accordance with § 56.12(4)(ii) in 2004 is almost seven times the number of meters not read in 2002 and 2003 combined. Equitable states that it became concerned in late 2003 that its meter readers were not meeting expectations. In June 2004, Equitable decided to outsource this function to a meter-reading contractor. Equitable notes that the meter-reading contactor "encountered typical ramp-up problems" while learning the geographical territory and assigning routes. Equitable also notes that it is in the process of evaluating an Automated Meter Reading (AMR) initiative that will "assist with the resolution of long-term no-read/no-access issues."

NFG reports that it is in the process of reviewing its procedures in an attempt to improve in this area. Columbia Gas notes that, for the third consecutive year, it reduced the number of its meters not read in six months.

## 2. Number and Percent of Residential Meters Not Read In 12 Months



Pursuant to § 56.12 (4)(iii), a company may estimate the bill of a residential ratepayer if company personnel are unable to gain access to obtain an actual meter reading. However, at least once every 12 months, the company must obtain an actual meter reading to verify the accuracy of either the estimated or ratepayer supplied readings. The *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* at § 54.153(b)(3)(ii) require the EDCs to report the number and percent of residential meters for which they fail to meet the requirements of this section. The table on the following page presents the statistics the EDCs submitted to the Commission for this measure.

**Electric Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Meters Not Read**  
**in 12 Months**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
PPL	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
UGI-Electric	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Duquesne	7	.00%	3	.00%	2	.00%
Penn Power	0	0%	1	.00%	23	.01%
Allegheny Power	5	.00%	5	.01%	68	.01%
Met-Ed**			53	.01%	97	.02%
Penelec**			73	.02%	81	.02%
PECO	8,052	.40%	6,626	.33%	2,936 ***	.19% ***
GPU	627	.07%				

\* 12-month average.

\*\* FirstEnergy companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2001 and 2002.

\*\*\* PECO's gas meters are not included in the 2004 data in this table.

PECO reports that it continues to aggressively address its no-read meters by focusing on installing Automatic Meters (AMR) and by using the termination process in situations where it cannot gain access to install them. Again, as indicated in the footnote, and previously in this report, the 2004 meter data for PECO no longer combines electric with gas.

Penelec reports that the company made every effort to address the access issue that prohibited reading meters. Those efforts include attempting phone calls, sending letters to the customer, leaving door hangers with messages to call the company to set up an appointment to have the meter read, and attempting to read the meter during the normal cycle reading.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Meters Not Read**  
**in 12 Months**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
PG Energy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dominion Peoples	115	.04%	91	.03%	97	.03%
Columbia	440	.13%	389	.10%	268	.10%
UGI-Gas	695	.23%	954	.31%	510	.16%
PECO (Gas)***					737	.17%
NFG	162	.09%	266	.12%	375	.19%
PGW **					2,349	.49%
Equitable	698	.30%	490	.21%	2,118	1.00%

\* 12-month average.

\*\* First year reporting.

\*\*\* First year PECO gas meters presented separately.

For the NGDCs, the quality of service reporting requirements at § 62.33(b)(3)(ii) require the major NGDCs to report the number and percent of residential meters for which the company failed to obtain an actual meter reading within the past 12 months. For the first time, the report presents PECO's natural gas meter-reading data separately from its electric meter-reading data.

NFG reports that it is reviewing its procedures in an attempt to improve in this area. The number of residential meters that NFG did not read in 12 months has steadily increased since 2002. Columbia again reduced the number of its meters not read in a 12-month period. Columbia points out a 31 percent decrease from 2003 to 2004. UGI-Gas shows the biggest improvement from 2003. UGI reports that it did take measures to help reduce the number of residential meters not read in 12 months, but does not say what those measures were.

### **3. Number and Percent of Residential Remote Meters Not Read in Five Years**

Pursuant to § 56.12(5)(i), a utility may render a bill on the basis of readings from a remote reading device. However the utility must obtain an actual meter reading at least once every five years to verify the accuracy of the remote reading device. Under the quality of service reporting requirements at § 54.153(b)(3)(iii) and § 62.33(b)(3)(iii), each EDC and major NGDC must report to the Commission the number and percent of residential remote meters for which it failed to obtain an actual meter reading under the timeframe described in Chapter 56. The tables on the following page show the data as reported by the major companies.

**Electric Distribution Companies  
Number and Percent\* of Residential Remote Meters  
Not Read in Five Years**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Duquesne	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PECO	74	23.44%	0	0%	NA	NA
UGI-Electric	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Penelec**			2	.04%	0	0%
Met-Ed**			1	.02%	1	.01%
Allegheny Power***	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	NA
Penn Power***	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	NA
PPL***	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	NA	NA
GPU	9	.17%				

\* 12-month average.

\*\* FirstEnergy Companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2002.

\*\*\* No remotely read meters

The accuracy of the data in the tables regarding remote reading devices cannot be verified. Although the Commission has defined remote meter-reading devices and direct interrogation devices, there is still a question whether certain meters qualify as direct interrogation devices. PECO notes this year that it does not have remote meters.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number and Percent\* of Residential Remote Meters Not Read**  
**in Five Years**

Company	2002		2003		2004	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Columbia	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Dominion Peoples	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
PGW **					0	0%
NFG	54	2.10%	39	1.70%	38	1.90%
UGI-Gas	806	5.04%	504	3.20%	313	2.04%
Equitable	104	.79%	123	1.33%	377	4.92%
PECO (Gas)***					NA	NA
PG Energy***	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

\* 12-month average.

\*\* First year reporting.

\*\*\* No remote meters.

Three of the Natural Gas Distribution Companies reported residential remote meters not read in 2004 as required by § 56.12(5)(i). Two of those companies show a continued decrease from 2002 to 2004, while one shows a continued increase, reporting three times the number of remote meters not read in 2004 from 2003.

UGI-Gas reports that it continues to make every attempt to read the remote devices and verify their accuracy, either on the route or during special off-hour attempts. PG Energy and PECO both note that they do not have any residential remote meters.

#### **D. Response to Disputes**

When a ratepayer registers a dispute with a utility about any matter covered by Chapter 56 regulations, each utility covered by the regulations must issue its report to the complaining party within 30 days of the initiation of the dispute pursuant to § 56.151(5). A complaint or dispute filed with a company is not necessarily a negative indicator of service quality. However, a company's failure to promptly respond to the customer's complaint may be an indication of poor service. Further, to respond beyond the 30-day limit is an infraction of § 56.151(5) and a cause of complaints to the Commission.

##### **1. Number of Residential Disputes that Did Not Receive a Response within 30 Days**

The *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* at § 54.153(b)(4) and § 62.33(b)(4) require each EDC and major NGDC to report to the Commission the actual number of disputes for which the company did not provide a response within 30 days as required under the Chapter 56 regulations. The following two tables present this information as reported by the companies.

**Electric Distribution Companies**  
**Number of Residential Disputes That Did Not**  
**Receive a Response Within 30 Days**

Company	2002	2003	2004
UGI-Electric	7	7	0
Duquesne	164	34	3
PECO	55	38	2
Penn Power	1	44	10
Met-Ed*		201	10
Penelec*		225	14
Allegheny Power	287	242	131
PPL	1,587	1,726	1,023
GPU	686		

\* FirstEnergy companies Met-Ed and Penelec reported as GPU in 2002.

All eight of the EDCs reported a decrease from 2003 to 2004 in the number of disputes not responded to within 30 days. PPL attributes its 41 percent reduction from 2003 to 2004 to various reasons. PPL reviews lists weekly to identify dispute responses nearing the 30-day deadline. According to PPL, it can resolve check-read and high-bill inquiries more quickly since finishing its Automatic Meter Reader deployment.

Met-Ed, Penelec, and Penn Power attribute their improvement in timely dispute handling to a more efficient tracking mechanism that was put in place in September 2004. The companies also provided additional training related to Chapter 56 and to the proper handling of customer disputes.

PECO notes that it implemented additional training in recognizing disputes and completing the investigation in a timely manner. PECO attributes its improved performance to this training.

**Natural Gas Distribution Companies**  
**Number of Residential Disputes That Did Not Receive**  
**a Response Within 30 Days**

Company	2002	2003	2004
PG Energy	0	1	0
NFG	5	3	2
UGI-Gas	160	207	59
Columbia	96	71	63
PGW *			330
Dominion Peoples	1,806	514	575
Equitable	26	21	939

\* First year reporting.

Equitable notes that the number of disputes filed by customers peaked midyear and trended downward throughout the remainder of the year. Analysis of the data submitted by Equitable shows that 96 percent of the residential disputes that did not receive a response within 30 days were recorded in the last six months of 2004.

Dominion Peoples reports that the company experienced a union strike early during the year that impacted the handling of disputes in a timely manner in the first and early in the second quarter of 2004.

## II. Customer Transaction Survey Results

In conformance with the *Reporting Requirements for Quality of Service Benchmarks and Standards* at § 54.154 for the EDCs and § 62.34 for the major NGDCs, the companies are to report to the Commission the results of telephone transaction surveys of customers who have had interactions with the company.

The purpose of the transaction surveys is to assess the customer's perception regarding this recent interaction. The regulations specify that the survey questions are to measure access to the company, employee courtesy, employee knowledge, promptness of the EDC or NGDC response or visit, timeliness of the company response or visit, and satisfaction with the handling of the interaction.

The EDCs and NGDCs must carry out the transaction survey process using survey questionnaires and procedures that provide the Commission with uniform data to directly compare customer service performance among EDCs and NGDCs in Pennsylvania. A survey working group composed of EDC representatives and Commission staff designed the EDC survey questionnaire and survey procedures in 1999. The first surveys of EDC customers were conducted in 2000. In 2001, the NGDCs formed a survey working group to design the survey questionnaire and survey procedures. The NGDCs agreed to use the same basic survey as the EDCs with similar procedures. The survey of NGDC customers was conducted for the first time in 2002.

Both working groups decided that the focus of the surveys should be on residential and small business customers who have recently contacted their company. The working groups agreed that industrial customers and large commercial customers should not be included in the survey since these large customers have specific representatives within their respective companies with whom they discuss any problems, concerns, and issues, and thus should be excluded from the survey. For both the EDCs and the NGDCs, the survey sample also excludes all transactions that result from company outbound calling programs or other correspondence. However, transactions with consumers who use a company's automated telephone system exclusively, as well as those who contact their company by personal visit, are eligible to be surveyed.

This is the first year that all of the major EDCs used a common survey company. It is also the first time that the NGDCs contracted with the same survey company as the EDCs to conduct the 2004 surveys. This year, Penelec and Met-Ed survey data appear separately instead of combined as FirstEnergy. It is also the first time that this report presents PGW survey data.

Each month, the EDCs and NGDCs randomly select a sample of transaction records for consumers who have contacted them within the past 30 days. The companies transmit the sample lists to the research firms. The research firms randomly select individual consumers from the sample lists. The survey firms contact individual consumers in the samples until they meet a monthly quota of completed surveys for each company.

Each year, the survey firms complete approximately 700 surveys for each EDC or NGDC. With a sample of this size, there is a 95 percent probability the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus five percentage points of what the results would be if all customers who had contacted their EDC or NGDC had been surveyed. Thus, the sampling plan meets the requirements of § 54.154(5) and § 62.34(5) that specify that the survey results must be statistically valid within plus or minus 5 percent.

Survey working group members from both industries agreed the 700 completed surveys should include 200 contacts about credit and collection issues and 500 contacts about all other types of issues. Under this plan, the credit and collection contacts do not dominate survey results. Credit and collection contacts are from customers who need to make payment arrangements, customers who received termination notices or had service terminated, those who are requested to pay security deposits and others with bill payment problems. Consumer contacts about other issues include calls about billing questions and disputes, installation of service requests, metering problems, outage reporting, questions about choosing an alternative supplier, and a variety of other reasons.

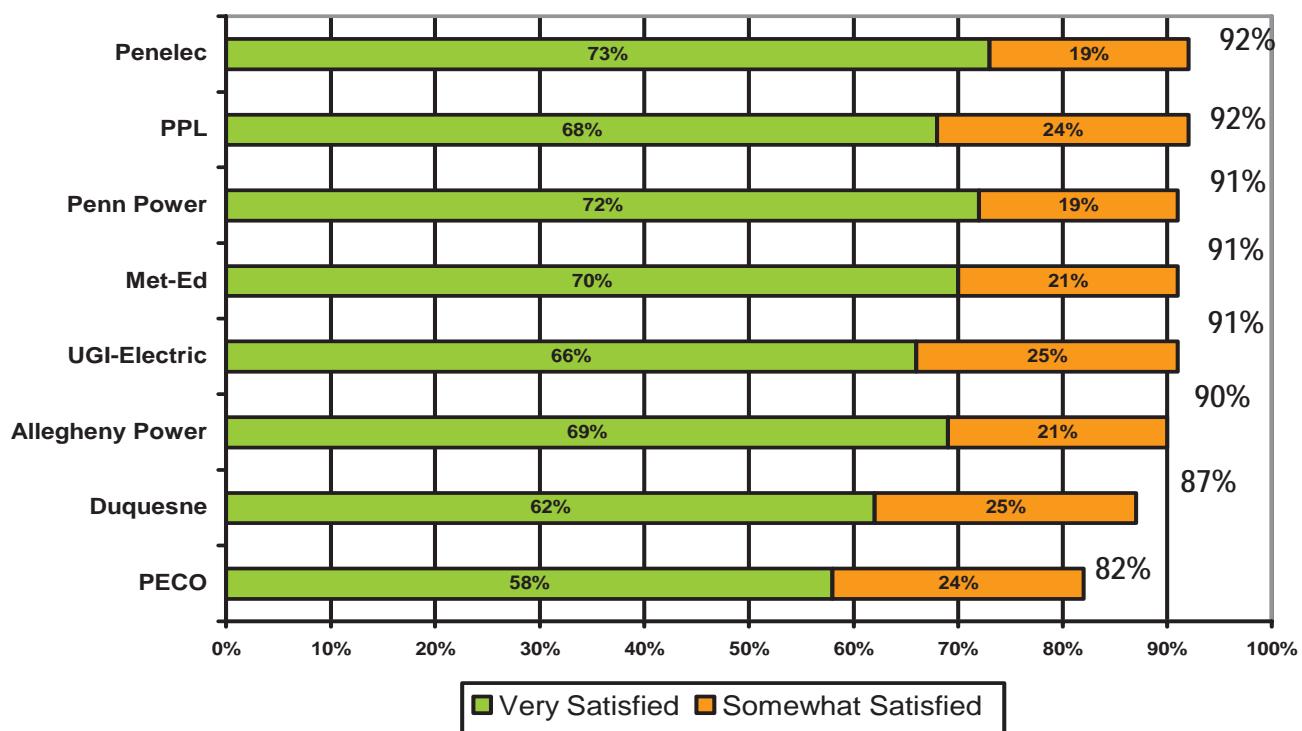
This report summarizes the 2002-04 EDC survey data and the 2002-04 NGDC survey data into the charts and tables that appear later in this chapter and in the appendices. For the EDCs, the chapter presents the results from the 2004 surveys while Appendix A presents a comparison of results from the past three years. Appendix A also includes additional details of the EDC survey results. This is the first year that the report presents a comparison of results for the NGDCs for a three-year period. Appendix B includes the comparison. Both Appendix A and B provide information about the number and type of consumers who participated in the 2004 surveys, as well as the average number of residential customer each EDC and NGDC serves. In all charts and tables related to the surveys, “don’t know” and “refused” responses to survey questions were removed from the analysis.

## A. Reaching the Company

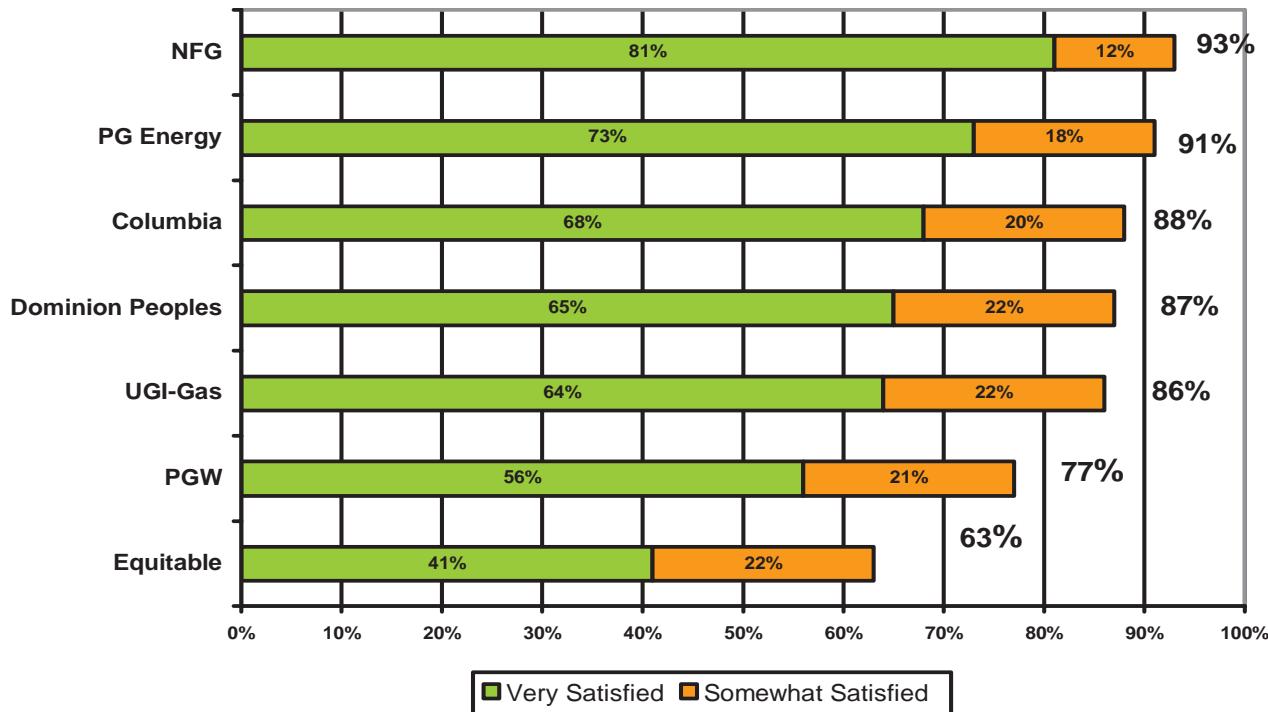
One of the first survey questions in each of the surveys asks the consumer “How satisfied were you with the ease of reaching the EDC or the NGDC?” The bar charts that follow present the percent of consumers who indicated satisfaction with the initial stage of their contact with the company. The Commission believes a company should offer reasonable telephone access to its customers. Customers must be able to readily contact their company with questions, complaints, requests for service, and to report service outages and other service problems. For 2004, the average of the percents of EDC customers who responded that they were either “satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the ease of reaching the company is 90 percent. Survey results from 2003 and 2002, are available in Appendix A, Table 1. For NGDCs, the average of the percents of NGDC consumers who responded that they were either “satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the ease of reaching the company is 84 percent. The NGDC survey results for 2003 and 2002, are available in Appendix B, Table 1.



## Satisfaction with the Ease of Reaching the Electric Distribution Company 2004



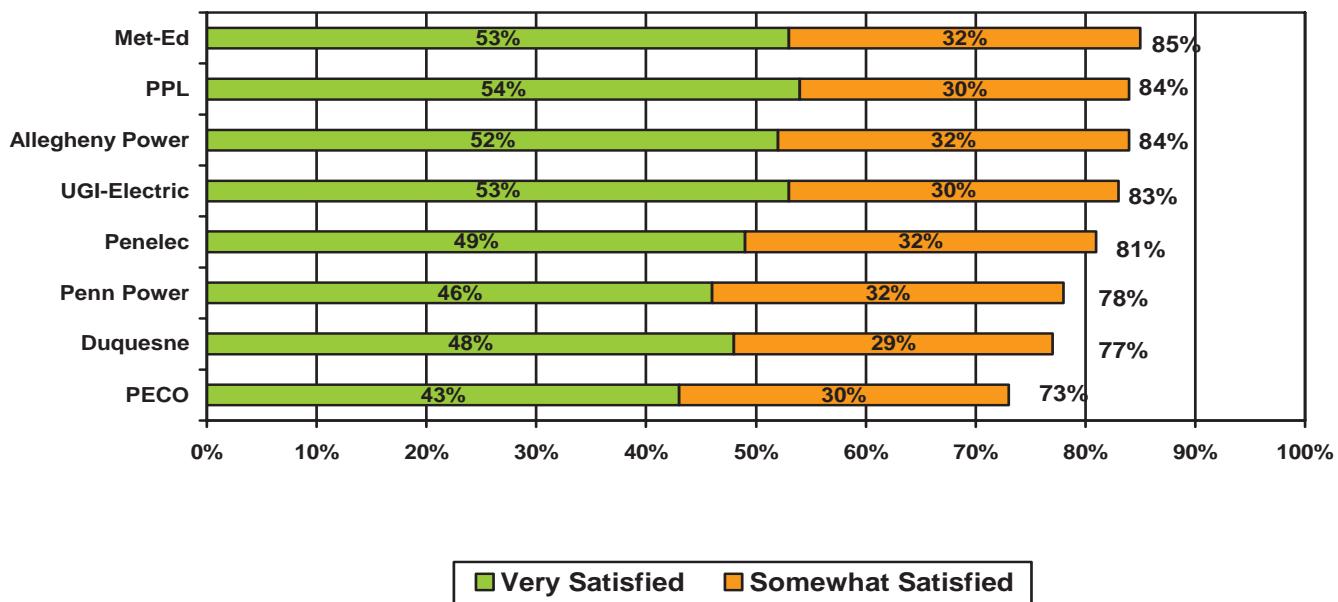
## Satisfaction with the Ease of Reaching the Natural Gas Distribution Company 2004



## B. Automated Phone Systems

Survey interviewers ask consumers other questions about the preliminary stages of their contact with the EDC or NGDC. All the EDCs and all but one of the NGDCs use an automated telephone system to filter calls and save time and money when dealing with consumer calls. (NFG does not use an automated telephone system at its call center.) The surveys ask consumers several questions about their experience with using the automated systems. The charts that follow present the level of satisfaction consumers expressed about using the EDC's or NGDC's automated telephone systems.

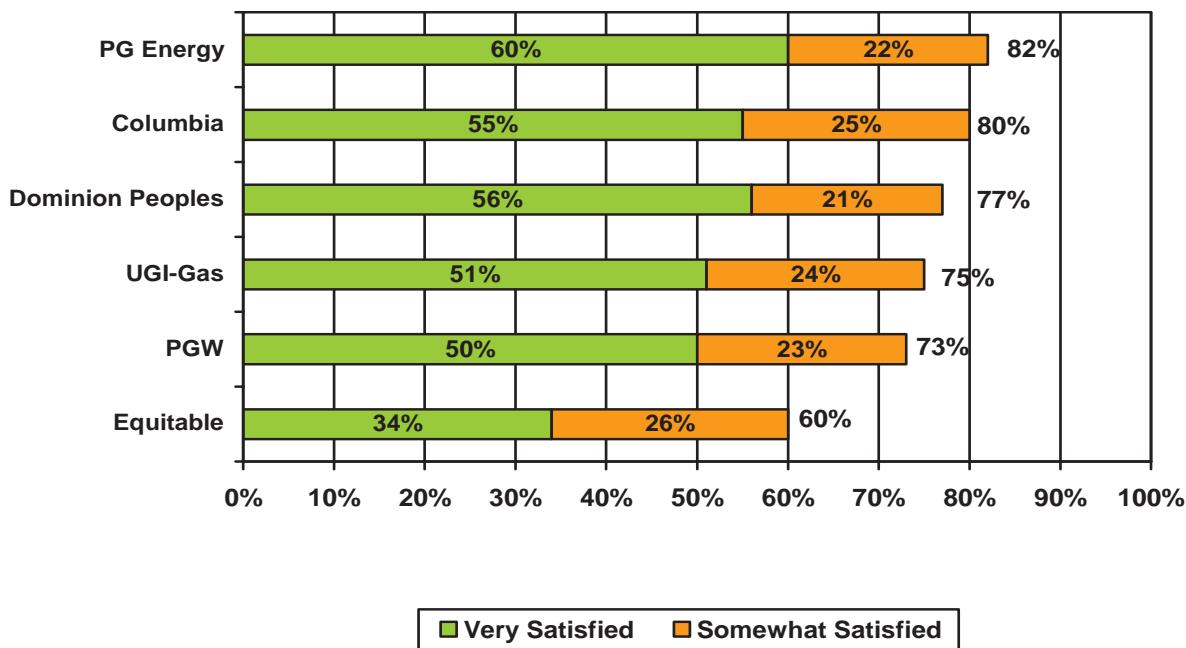
**Satisfaction with Using an Electric Distribution Company's  
Automated Phone System  
2004**



On average, 81 percent of EDC consumers reported being either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the EDCs' automated phone system. Appendix A, Table 3, presents other details of consumers' perceptions of using their EDCs' automated phone systems.

The chart on the following page presents the survey findings regarding the perceptions of NGDC consumers related to the NGDC telephone systems. It shows that, for the major NGDCs, 75 percent of NGDC consumers reported satisfaction with using the automated systems. NFG does not use an automated phone system to route consumer calls so NFG is not included in the chart. Appendix B, Table 3, presents other details of customers' perception of using the NGDCs' automated systems.

**Satisfaction with Using a Natural Gas Distribution Company's  
Automated Phone System  
2004**



### C. Company Representatives

As indicated in Appendix A, Table 6, an average of 89 percent of surveyed EDC customers indicated that they had spoken with a company representative during their most recent interaction with the company. Appendix B, Table 6 shows, on average, 96 percent of NDGC consumers indicated they spoke with an NDGC representative during the most recent interaction they had with the company. Each consumer who indicated that they had spoken with a company representative was asked the following question: "Thinking about your conversation, how satisfied were you with the way in which the company representative handled your contact?" The following tables show the consumers' level of satisfaction with this interaction.



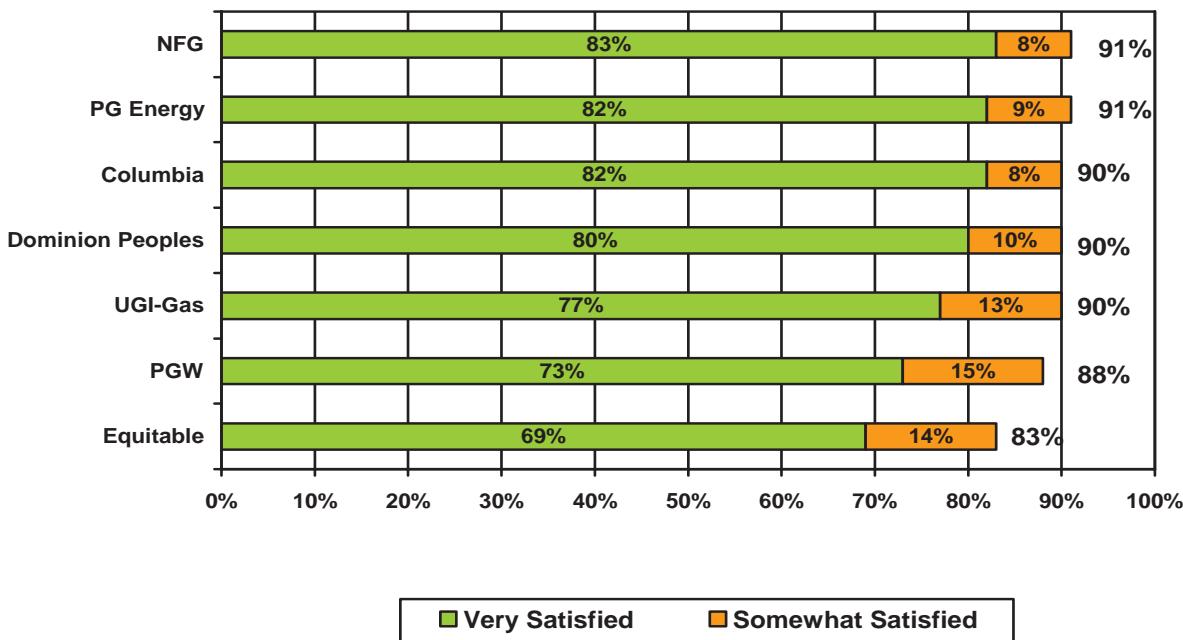
**Satisfaction with the Electric Distribution Company  
Representative's Handling of the Contact  
2004**



On average in 2004, 93 percent of EDC consumers indicated being either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the way the company representative handled the consumer contact. Appendix A, Table 1B, provides results from 2002 through 2004 regarding consumer satisfaction with how EDC representatives handled the contact to the EDC.

The following chart shows that in 2004, on average, 89 percent of NGDC consumers indicated they were either “somewhat satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the way the company representative handled the interaction. Appendix B, Table 1B, provides results from 2002 through 2004 regarding consumer satisfaction with how NGDC representatives handled the contact to the NGDC.

**Satisfaction with the Natural Gas Distribution Company Representative's Handling of the Contact**  
**2004**



A consumer's overall rating of satisfaction with the company representative's handling of the contact may be influenced by several factors, including the courtesy and knowledge of the representatives. The reporting requirements specify the transaction survey questionnaire must measure consumers' perceptions of employee courtesy and knowledge. The following tables show the EDC and NGDC consumers' 2004 ratings of these attributes of the company representatives with whom they interacted. Appendix A, Table 4, provides a comparison of 2002, 2003 and 2004 ratings of the EDC representatives. Appendix B, Table 4, provides a comparison of 2002, 2003 and 2004 ratings of NGDC representatives.

**Consumer Ratings of  
Electric Distribution Company Representatives  
2004**

Company	Call Center Representative's Courtesy		Call Center Representative's Knowledge	
	Somewhat Courteous	Very Courteous	Somewhat Knowledgeable	Very Knowledgeable
Allegheny Power	6%	90%	13%	83%
Duquesne	9%	86%	14%	80%
Met-Ed	7%	90%	15%	80%
PECO	9%	83%	20%	70%
Penelec	7%	91%	16%	80%
Penn Power	6%	91%	15%	81%
PPL	6%	90%	14%	82%
UGI-Electric	10%	84%	18%	77%
<b>Average</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>79%</b>

On average, 96 percent of consumers indicated the company person they spoke with was either “very courteous” or “somewhat courteous” with the majority indicating the representative was “very” courteous. An average of 95 percent rated the company representative as “very knowledgeable” or “somewhat knowledgeable,” with the majority giving a “very knowledgeable” rating.



**Consumer Ratings of  
Natural Gas Distribution Company Representatives  
2004**

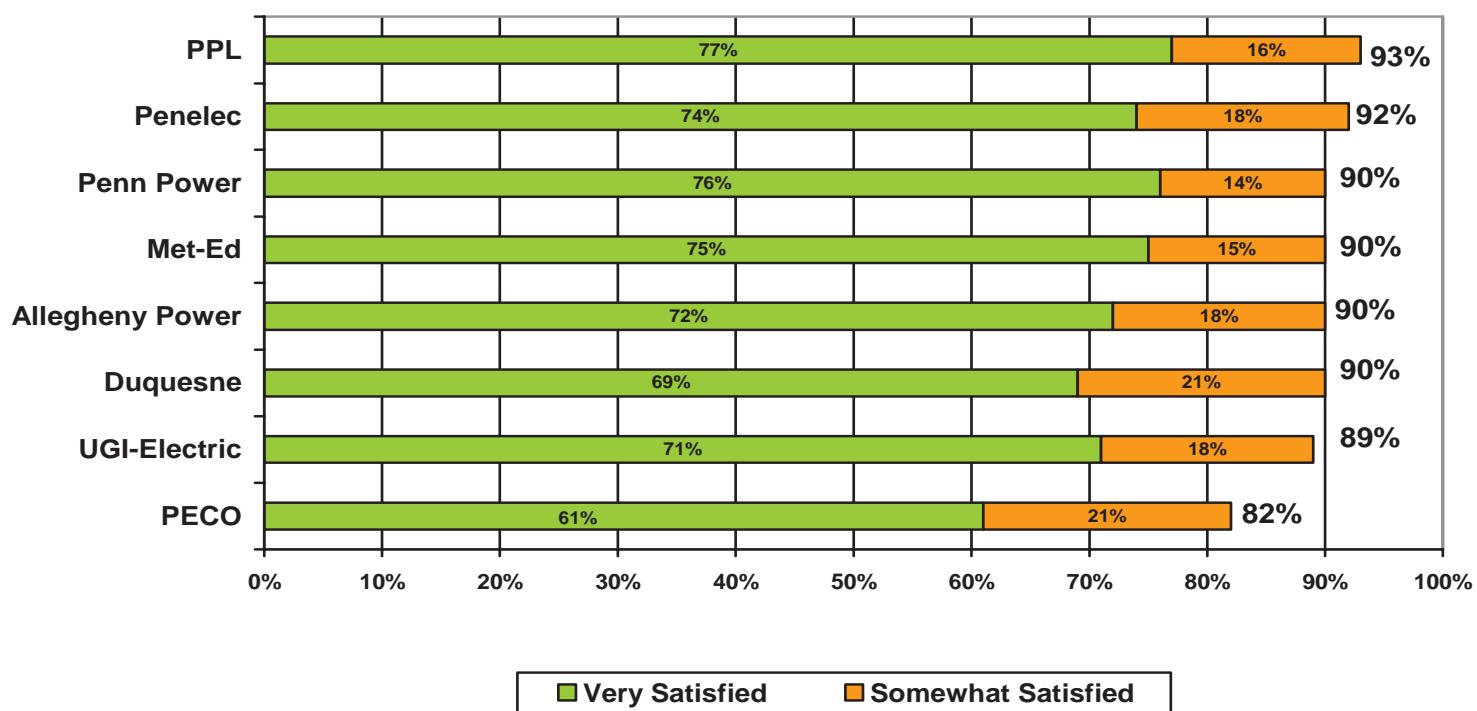
Company	Call Center Representative's Courtesy		Call Center Representative's Knowledge	
	Somewhat Courteous	Very Courteous	Somewhat Knowledgeable	Very Knowledgeable
Columbia	8%	86%	10%	82%
Dominion Peoples	7%	87%	14%	79%
Equitable	9%	79%	16%	70%
NFG	7%	86%	10%	85%
PG Energy	6%	88%	12%	82%
PGW	10%	81%	15%	75%
UGI-Gas	9%	84%	12%	81%
<b>Average</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>79%</b>

On average, 92 percent of consumers rated NGDC representatives as either “very courteous” or “somewhat courteous”, with the majority indicating the representative was “very courteous.” In addition, 92 percent of NGDC consumers rated company representatives as either “very knowledgeable” or “somewhat knowledgeable”, with the majority giving a “very knowledgeable” rating.

#### **D. Overall Satisfaction**

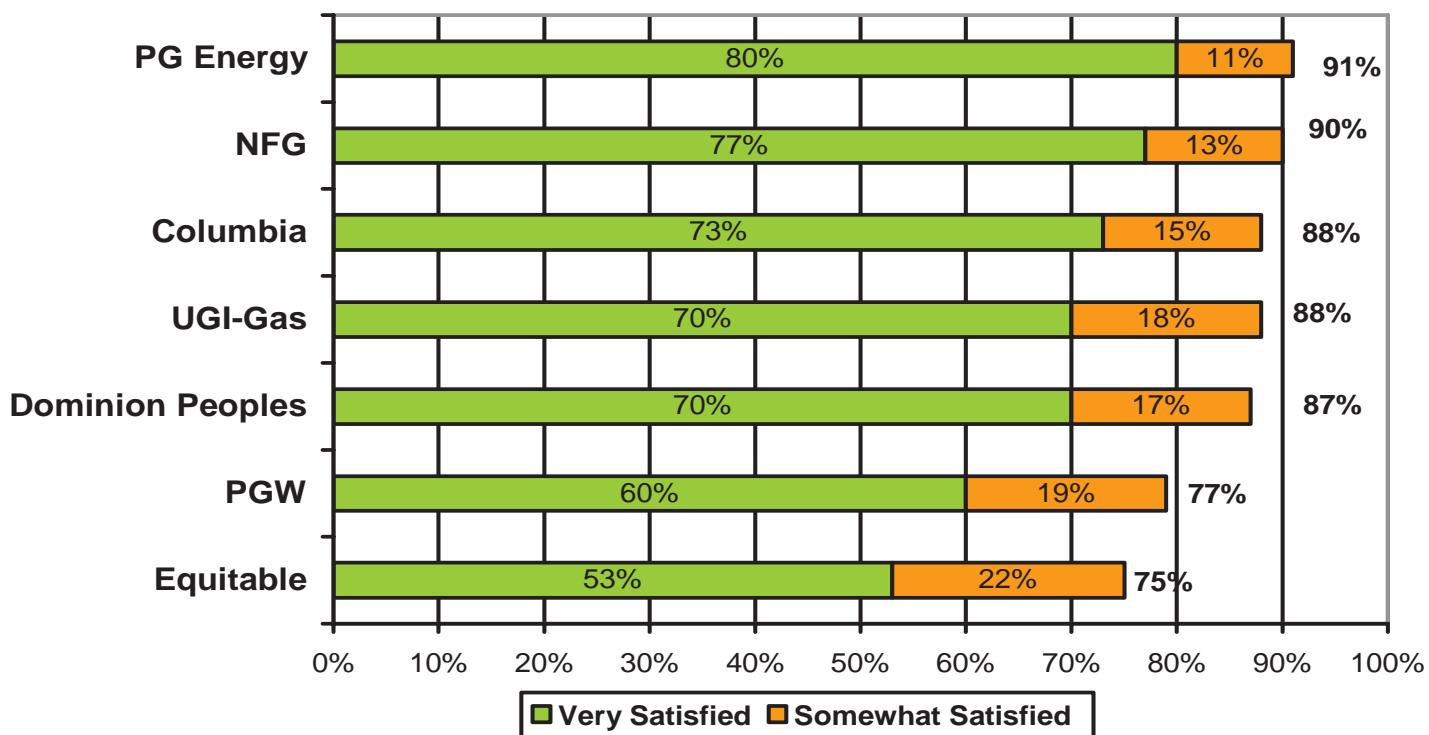
Consumers use a variety of factors to determine their overall level of satisfaction about a contact with a utility company. The ease of reaching the company may be the beginning factor. Other factors include the use of the company’s automated telephone system, the wait to speak to a company representative, and the courtesy and knowledge of that representative. If a field visit is part of the interaction, this, too, would affect the consumer’s overall assessment. The tables that follow present the 2004 survey findings regarding overall satisfaction with EDC and NGDC quality of service during customer contacts.

**Overall Satisfaction with  
Electric Distribution Company's  
Quality of Service During Recent Contact  
2004**



The chart shown above presents the results of the responses to the question, "Considering all aspects of recent contact with the company, how satisfied were you with the quality of service provided by the company?" In 2004, the EDC industry average showed that 90 percent of consumers were satisfied (72 percent very satisfied) with the overall quality of service they received from their EDCs. Appendix A, Table 1B, provides 2002, 2003 and 2004 results regarding EDC overall customer satisfaction.

**Overall Satisfaction with  
Natural Gas Distribution Company's  
Quality of Service During Recent Contact  
2004**



In 2004, the third year of the NGDC survey, the industry average for overall satisfaction with NGDC customer contacts is 85 percent (69 percent were very satisfied). The above chart shows the percent of consumers who indicated satisfaction in response to the question: "Considering all aspects of this recent contact with the NGDC, how satisfied were you with the quality of the service provided by the NGDC?" Appendix B, Table 1B, provides 2002, 2003 and 2004 results regarding NGDC overall customer satisfaction.

As indicated in the introduction to the section on customer surveys, the companies and survey firms divided consumer contacts into credit and collection contacts, and contacts about other matters.

Members of both working groups had expressed concern that the satisfaction level of consumers who had contacted the companies about credit and collection issues would negatively influence the overall satisfaction ratings. However, the opposite proved true for all the EDCs in the first two years the survey was conducted and again in 2004. Over the last three years, a slightly greater percentage of customers who contacted the EDCs about credit and collection issues responded that they were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" compared to customers who contacted the EDCs about other issues. Appendix A, Table 2,

presents the level of satisfaction by these two categories of contacts as well as the overall satisfaction level for each of the EDCs.

For three out of the seven NGDCs, customers rated their satisfaction slightly higher on credit and collection contacts in 2004 than other types of contacts that year. The average percentage of customers who were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their non-credit and collection contacts with the NGDCs was 86 percent, while the average percentage who were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their credit and collections contacts was 85 percent. Appendix B, Table 2, presents the level of satisfaction by these two categories of contacts as well as the overall satisfaction level for each of the NGDCs for 2002-04.

### III. Conclusion

This report fulfills the Commission's responsibility to summarize the quality of service statistics that the EDCs and NGDCs reported to the Commission. The companies will continue to report data annually to the Commission. The telephone access, billing, meter-reading and dispute data is due to the Commission on February 1 of each year. On April 1 of each year, the Commission is to receive the results of the customer surveys conducted during the previous year.

The Commission uses three sources of data to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the quality of customer service experienced by customers of the major electric and gas companies. The first source is the company itself that reports telephone access statistics, number of bills not rendered monthly to residential and commercial customers, meters not read according to Chapter 56 regulations, and disputes not handled within 30 days. The Commission uses consumer complaints and payment arrangement requests filed with the Commission by the customers of the EDCs and NGDCs as a second source of data. As noted in the introduction, 2004 data on informal complaint and payment arrangement requests filed with the Commission were reported in the Commission's annual *UCARE* report in November 2005. Finally, the Commission uses the results of the surveys of the companies' customers who have had customer-initiated contacts with the companies. This latter source of information tells the Commission about the ease of contacting the companies, the consumers' view of the knowledge and courtesy of the companies' customer service representatives, as well as the consumers' overall satisfaction with the way the company handled the contacts. This information, taken together, allows the Commission to monitor the quality of the EDCs and NGDCs' customer service performance.

The survey results show, for the most part, customers are satisfied with the service they receive from their companies. Nevertheless, the company-reported performance data indicates there is room for improvement on the part of Pennsylvania's major electric and gas companies.

For example, the number of accounts not billed, meters not read and complaints not responded to within 30 days represent infractions of the Chapter 56 regulations. Although some companies have improved their telephone access statistics, access remains at a less than desirable level. Customers, who cannot reach their company, contact the Commission to report access problems. The Commission closely monitors company performance on access measures not only through reported statistics, but also through customer reports to BCS. Deficiencies in call center access are an even greater cause for concern since the passage of Act 201 which specifically forbids the Commission from accepting complaints from customers who have not first contacted the utility.

The analyses provided by both the EDCs and the NGDCs regarding the company-reported statistics show the various measures prescribed by the reporting requirements are inter-related. Often, the level of performance on one of the measures directly affects a company's performance on one or more of the other measures. For example, if a company fails to obtain actual meter readings for long periods of time, it may underestimate customers' usage. When the company does get actual reads, the make-up bills may cause the customers to call the company generating increased volumes of complaints. This may affect telephone access statistics. Further, as several companies have pointed out, an increased volume of complaints often leads to the companies not being able to handle the disputes in a timely manner and the failure to issue reports to the disputes within the required 30-day timeframe. Later, such behavior may influence customer survey results and generate consumer complaints with the Commission. Finally, Commission review of the complaints may generate high justified consumer complaint rates, as well as high infraction rates.

# Appendix A

## EDC Survey Results 2002-04

**Table 1A**

Company	Satisfaction w/ Ease of Reaching the Company*			Satisfaction with Using EDC's Automated Phone System*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	90%	90%	91%	81%	79%	84%
Duquesne	80%	85%	87%	71%	74%	77%
FirstEnergy	90%	87%	**	82%	80%	**
Met-Ed	**	**	91%	**	**	85%
PECO	82%	83%	82%	73%	72%	74%
Penelec	**	**	92%	**	**	81%
Penn Power	90%	90%	91%	79%	82%	78%
PPL	90%	89%	91%	81%	80%	83%
UGI-Electric	89%	91%	91%	82%	82%	83%
<b>Average</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>81%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of their recent contact with the EDC.

\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

## EDC Survey Results (continued) 2002-04

**Table 1B**

Company	Satisfaction with EDC Representative's Handling of Contact*			Overall Satisfaction with Quality of Contact with EDC*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	90%	88%	92%	85%	86%	90%
Duquesne	87%	88%	92%	83%	85%	90%
FirstEnergy	92%	91%	**	89%	86%	**
Met-Ed	**	**	94%	**	**	91%
PECO	82%	85%	85%	80%	78%	82%
Penelec	**	**	96%	**	**	92%
Penn Power	92%	91%	95%	88%	91%	90%
PPL	90%	90%	94%	89%	88%	92%
UGI-Electric	88%	91%	91%	87%	91%	89%
<b>Average</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>90%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of their recent contact with the EDC.

\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

**Overall Satisfaction with Contact:  
EDC Credit/Collection Calls v. Other Calls\***  
**2002-04**

**Table 2**

Company	Credit/ Collection			Other			Overall		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	88%	84%	91%	84%	87%	90%	85%	86%	90%
Duquesne	89%	84%	91%	80%	86%	89%	83%	85%	90%
FirstEnergy	89%	93%	**	88%	84%	**	89%	86%	**
Met-Ed	**	**	96%	**	**	89%	**	**	91%
PECO	80%	84%	84%	79%	76%	81%	79%	78%	82%
Penelec	**	**	96%	**	**	91%	**	**	92%
Penn Power	92%	92%	94%	86%	90%	89%	88%	91%	90%
PPL	90%	92%	96%	88%	86%	91%	89%	88%	92%
UGI-Electric	88%	90%	89%	87%	92%	89%	87%	91%	89%
<b>Average</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>90%</b>

\* Other calls include all categories of contacts to an EDC other than those related to credit and collection. Other calls include contacts about trouble or power outages, billing matters, connect/disconnect requests, customer choice and miscellaneous issues such as requests for rate information or name and address changes.

\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

**Contacting an EDC  
2002-04**

**Table 3**

Company	Ease of Using EDC's Automated Telephone System*			Satisfaction w/Choices offered by Automated Telephone System**			Satisfaction w/Wait to Speak to an EDC Representative**		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	85%	84%	90%	84%	83%	89%	86%	88%	90%
Duquesne	80%	83%	82%	77%	80%	85%	75%	79%	83%
FirstEnergy	87%	85%	***	86%	83%	***	87%	87%	***
Met-Ed	***	***	89%	***	***	87%	***	***	93%
PECO	82%	78%	84%	77%	76%	80%	80%	80%	82%
Penelec	***	***	89%	***	***	89%	***	***	92%
Penn Power	86%	89%	85%	85%	86%	84%	91%	90%	93%
PPL	86%	85%	87%	84%	82%	89%	89%	85%	90%
UGI-Electric	87%	87%	90%	84%	84%	89%	86%	89%	88%
<b>Average</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>89%</b>

\* Percent of customers who answered "very easy to use" or "somewhat easy to use" when asked how easy it was to use the EDC's automated telephone system.

\*\* Percent of customers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" to questions about satisfaction with how well the choices of the automated telephone system fit the nature of the customer's call and how satisfied they were with the amount of time it took to speak to a company representative.

\*\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

## Consumer Ratings of EDC Representatives 2002-04

**Table 4**

Company	Call Center Representative's Courtesy*			Call Center Representative's Knowledge*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	95%	93%	95%	91%	94%	96%
Duquesne Light	93%	94%	95%	90%	92%	94%
FirstEnergy	95%	95%	**	94%	94%	**
Met-Ed	**	**	97%	**	**	95%
PECO	89%	92%	93%	86%	89%	90%
Penelec	**	**	98%	**	**	96%
Penn Power	97%	96%	97%	93%	94%	96%
PPL	93%	95%	96%	94%	94%	96%
UGI-Electric	89%	93%	94%	92%	93%	94%
<b>Average</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

## Premise Visit from an EDC Field Representative 2002-04

**Table 5A**

Company	Overall Satisfaction w/Way Premise Visit Handled*			Satisfaction that Work Completed Promptly*			Field Rep's Courtesy**		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	85%	88%	96%	72%	76%	84%	93%	92%	100%
Duquesne Light	91%	88%	95%	85%	88%	89%	89%	94%	96%
FirstEnergy	92%	84%	***	88%	77%	***	100%	89%	***
Met-Ed	***	***	95%	***	***	91%	***	***	100%
PECO	86%	78%	94%	63%	58%	69%	94%	98%	97%
Penelec	***	***	96%	***	***	90%	***	***	98%
Penn Power	88%	92%	95%	77%	82%	84%	100%	98%	100%
PPL	92%	93%	96%	76%	77%	82%	93%	100%	100%
UGI-Electric	89%	90%	93%	82%	88%	88%	96%	92%	97%
<b>Average</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>98%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* Percent of consumers who described the company field representative as "very courteous" or "somewhat courteous" when asked about their perceptions about various aspects of the field representative's visit to the consumer's home or property.

\*\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

## Premise Visit from an EDC Field Representative (continued)

2002-04

**Table 5B**

Company	Field Rep's Knowledge			Field Rep's Respect for Property**			Satisfaction that Work Completed in a Timely Manner*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Allegheny Power	91%	96%	98%	91%	90%	97%	83%	79%	87%
Duquesne Light	97%	94%	96%	87%	93%	100%	87%	89%	95%
FirstEnergy	95%	97%	***	96%	94%	***	92%	87%	***
Met-Ed	***	***	96%	***	***	97%	***	***	90%
PECO	91%	93%	97%	89%	93%	97%	76%	65%	63%
Penelec	***	***	100%	***	***	100%	***	***	91%
Penn Power	100%	98%	100%	96%	99%	100%	82%	93%	93%
PPL	96%	95%	97%	94%	97%	100%	74%	80%	92%
UGI-Electric	98%	98%	100%	98%	94%	100%	89%	94%	96%
<b>Average</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>89%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* Percent of consumers who described the company field representative as "very knowledgeable" or "somewhat knowledgeable" and "very respectful" or "somewhat respectful" when asked about their perceptions about various aspects of the field representative's visit to the consumer's home or property.

\*\*\* Prior to 2004, survey results for Met-Ed and Penelec were combined as FirstEnergy.

## Characteristics of 2004 EDC Survey Participants

**Table 6**

EDC	Consumers Surveyed	% Residential Consumers	% Commercial Consumers	% Who Used EDC's Automated Phone System	% Who Spoke with a Company Representative	% Who Needed a Premise Visit
Allegheny Power	700	96%	4%	74%	83%	14%
Duquesne Light	700	99%	1%	77%	85%	12%
Met-Ed	700	97%	3%	53%	95%	10%
PECO	700	98%	2%	69%	84%	13%
Penelec	700	98%	2%	60%	93%	14%
Penn Power	700	98%	2%	54%	93%	15%
PPL	700	99%	1%	75%	78%	10%
UGI-Electric	700	98%	2%	62%	97%	13%
<b>Average</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>13%</b>

**Average Number of Residential Customers  
2004**

**Table 7**

Electric Distribution Company	Average Number of Residential Customers
Allegheny Power	600,419
Duquesne	525,858
Met-Ed	459,171
Penelec	504,114
PECO	1,394,250
Penn Power	137,514
PPL	1,161,123
UGI-Electric	53,896

## Appendix B

### NGDC Survey Results 2002-04

**Table 1A**

Company	Satisfaction wth Ease of Reaching the Company*			Satisfaction with Using NGDC's Automated Phone System*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	86%	92%	88%	84%	86%	85%
Dominion Peoples	91%	89%	87%	85%	85%	86%
Equitable	86%	85%	63%	75%	73%	70%
NFG	98%	99%	93%	NA	NA	NA
PG Energy	95%	95%	91%	89%	90%	86%
PGW**			77%			81%
UGI-Gas	93%	91%	86%	83%	88%	80%
<b>Average</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>81%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of their recent contact with the NGDC.

\*\* First year reporting.

### NGDC Survey Results (continued) 2002-04

**Table 1B**

Company	Satisfaction with NGDC Representative's Handling of Contact*			Overall Satisfaction with Quality of Contact with NGDC*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	95%	95%	90%	92%	93%	88%
Dominion Peoples	94%	92%	90%	90%	86%	87%
Equitable	93%	91%	83%	87%	87%	75%
NFG	94%	95%	91%	93%	93%	90%
PG Energy	95%	93%	91%	93%	93%	91%
PGW**			88%			79%
UGI-Gas	94%	90%	90%	93%	90%	88%
<b>Average</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>85%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of their recent contact with the NGDC.

\*\* First year reporting.

**Overall Satisfaction with Contact:  
NGDC Credit/Collection Calls v. Other Calls\***  
**2002-04**

**Table 2**

Company	Credit/ Collection			Other			Overall		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	92%	94%	91%	92%	92%	88%	92%	93%	88%
Dominion Peoples	92%	79%	85%	89%	89%	88%	90%	86%	87%
Equitable	83%	86%	74%	89%	88%	75%	87%	87%	75%
NFG	91%	87%	87%	94%	95%	91%	93%	93%	90%
PG Energy	91%	93%	87%	93%	93%	92%	93%	93%	91%
PGW***			82%			78%			79%
UGI-Gas	90%	90%	91%	94%	88%	87%	93%	90%	88%
<b>Average</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>85%</b>

\* Other calls include all categories of contacts to an NGDC other than those related to credit and collection. Other calls include contacts about reliability and safety, billing matters, connect/disconnect requests, customer choice and miscellaneous issues such as requests for rate information or name and address changes.

\*\* First year reporting.

**Contacting an NGDC  
2002-04**

**Table 3**

Company	Ease of Using NGDC's Automated Telephone System*			Satisfaction w/Choices offered by Automated Telephone System**			Satisfaction w/Wait to Speak to an NGDC Representative**		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	90%	92%	85%	89%	86%	86%	88%	89%	87%
Dominion Peoples	87%	89%	86%	88%	85%	83%	91%	86%	84%
Equitable	82%	85%	70%	81%	76%	69%	88%	84%	62%
NFG	N/A	NA	NA	N/A	NA	NA	99%	98%	94%
PG Energy	93%	95%	86%	93%	93%	85%	94%	94%	90%
PGW***			81%			78%			75%
UGI-Gas	90%	91%	80%	89%	88%	80%	94%	91%	85%
<b>Average</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>82%</b>

\* Percent of customers who answered "very easy to use" or "somewhat easy to use" when asked how easy it was to use the NGDC's automated telephone system.

\*\* Percent of customers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" to questions about satisfaction with how well the choices of the automated telephone system fit the nature of the customer's call and how satisfied they were with the amount of time it took to speak to a company representative.

\*\*\* First year reporting.

## Consumer Ratings of NGDC Representatives 2002-04

**Table 4**

Company	Call Center Representative's Courtesy*			Call Center Representative's Knowledge*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	96%	97%	94%	96%	96%	92%
Dominion Peoples	97%	94%	94%	94%	93%	93%
Equitable	97%	93%	88%	95%	94%	86%
NFG	94%	96%	93%	94%	95%	95%
PG Energy	96%	95%	94%	95%	95%	94%
PGW**			91%			90%
UGI-Gas	96%	93%	93%	95%	91%	93%
<b>Average</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* First year reporting.

## Premise Visit from an NGDC Field Representative 2002-04

**Table 5A**

Company	Overall Satisfaction wth Way Premise Visit Handled*			Satisfaction that Work Completed Promptly*			Field Rep's Courtesy**		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	97%	99%	97%	87%	91%	91%	100%	99%	98%
Dominion Peoples	98%	96%	100%	89%	89%	90%	99%	96%	100%
Equitable	100%	96%	100%	87%	88%	69%	100%	98%	100%
NFG	96%	98%	99%	94%	89%	81%	94%	98%	99%
PG Energy	99%	98%	98%	94%	94%	91%	99%	99%	99%
PGW***			92%			84%			92%
UGI-Gas	99%	98%	97%	93%	90%	93%	99%	98%	98%
<b>Average</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* Percent of consumers who described the field representative as "very courteous" or "somewhat courteous," "very knowledgeable" or "somewhat knowledgeable" and "very respectful" or "somewhat respectful" when asked about their perceptions about various aspects of the field representative's visit to the consumer's home or property.

\*\*\* First year reporting.

## Premise Visit from an NGDC Field Representative (continued)

### 2002-04

**Table 5B**

Company	Field Rep's Knowledge			Field Rep's Respect for Property**			Satisfaction that Work Completed in a Timely Manner*		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
Columbia	97%	99%	97%	99%	100%	99%	95%	97%	92%
Dominion Peoples	98%	98%	100%	99%	99%	100%	95%	96%	94%
Equitable	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%	97%	96%	94%	89%
NFG	96%	100%	98%	99%	100%	97%	95%	92%	89%
PG Energy	98%	99%	98%	100%	99%	98%	96%	98%	93%
PGW***			95%			96%			88%
UGI-Gas	97%	96%	98%	100%	99%	98%	94%	97%	95%
<b>Average</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>91%</b>

\* Percent of consumers who answered either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" when asked how satisfied they were with this aspect of the field visit.

\*\* Percent of consumers who described the company field representative as "very knowledgeable" or "somewhat knowledgeable."

\*\*\* First year reporting.

## Characteristics of 2004 NGDC Survey Participants

**Table 6**

NGDC	Consumers Surveyed	% Residential Consumers	% Commercial Consumers	% Who Used NGDC's Automated Phone System	% Who Spoke with a Company Representative	% Who Needed a Premise Visit
Columbia	700	98%	2%	64%	91%	18%
Dominion Peoples	700	99%	1%	66%	96%	14%
Equitable	700	95%	5%	67%	93%	14%
NFG	700	99%	1%	N/A*	97%	20%
PG Energy	700	99%	1%	49%	91%	53%
PGW	700	98%	2%	47%	95%	18%
UGI-Gas	700	99%	1%	63%	98%	21%
<b>Average</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>23%</b>

\* NFG does not use an automated system.

**Average Number of Residential Customers  
2004**

**Table 7**

Natural Gas Distribution Company	Average Number of Residential Customers
Columbia	357,006
Dominion Peoples	323,513
Equitable	239,621
NFG	195,022
PG Energy	139,964
PGW	476,662
UGI-Gas	270,327

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