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DC Agencies Launch New Website Focused on Pandemic Relief for Utility Consumers

Washington, DC – Today, four District agencies charged with serving DC utility consumers unveiled here2helpdc.dc.gov, which is designed to inform residents and businesses about energy and money-saving initiatives to help them minimize the negative impacts of the (coronavirus) COVID-19 pandemic.

The website is a part of #Here2HelpDC, a public awareness campaign launched in June by the Department of Energy & Environment (DOEE), DC Public Service Commission (DCPSC), DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU), and the Office of the People's Counsel for the District of Columbia (OPC).

“Nine months after COVID-19 drastically changed how we live, work and play, many people must still stay at home and consequently continue to use more electricity, gas and water. Therefore, the website says loud and clear that consumers must make a plan now and pay what they can to control utility costs,” said People’s Counsel Sandra Mattavous-Frye.

“Many District residents are unaware of assistance programs to help those impacted by the pandemic. Through #Here2HelpDC, utility consumers will learn where to go for help if they get behind on their utility bills ,” said Chairman of the DC Public Service Commission Willie L. Phillips.

The website will complement the social and traditional media messages the four agencies have shared. The agencies cite tips and tools to help consumers conserve energy and water resources, reduce billing costs and use relief and payment programs.

“The District government offers numerous programs that can help consumers manage their energy bills, and the #Here2HelpDC campaign and this new website is a great way for all of us to get the word out. As this pandemic continues, we want consumers to plan for the short-term by utilizing these programs to get their utility bills under control, then work with them to lower their overall energy costs for the long-term,” said DCSEU Director Ted Trabue.

“I’m proud of our track record, under Mayor Bowser’s leadership, in eliminating the history of residents having to wait in long lines to receive energy assistance. And we’ve achieved this while consistently preventing our energy relief funds from running out each year. #Here2HelpDC builds on these unprecedented accomplishments, by streamlining access to critical services for our residents who need them most,” said DOEE Director Tommy Wells.

Currently, legislation prohibits the disconnection of electric, natural gas, water and telecommunications services for non-payment of bills. Agency leaders are urging consumers to act now to take advantage of payment plans, financial assistance programs and rebates and incentives to help them save energy and money.

To learn more, visit [#Here2HelpDC](https://here2helpdc.dc.gov).

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