

Consumer Advisory

How to Handle Solicitations from Retail Energy Suppliers

District residents can choose their electric generation and transmission supplier and their natural gas supplier, while Pepco remains the sole electric distribution company and Washington Gas Light (WGL) remains the sole natural gas distribution company. Before choosing your retail energy supplier, the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (Commission) is encouraging consumers to “**BE INFORMED.**”

How to Handle Solicitations from Competitive Retail Energy Suppliers?

Some competitive energy suppliers are promoting their services and rates through door-to-door salespersons or telemarketers. All representatives must comply with the Commission’s Consumer Bill of Rights” (CBOR), which requires:

- Energy suppliers may not engage in marketing, advertising, solicitation, or trade practices that are unlawful, misleading, or deceptive;
- Home solicitations are limited to the hours between 9 a.m. and sunset;
- Telephone solicitations shall be made only between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.;
- Energy suppliers shall not engage in cramming (unauthorized adding of services or charges to an energy bill) or slamming (unauthorized switching of an energy supplier);
- Consumers must be advised of their right to cancel;
- Consumers should be given a contact number for the supplier in order to cancel or ask follow-up questions; and
- Consumers have a right to request not to be contacted by the energy supplier.



Consumers can download a copy of the CBOR from the Commission’s website:

<https://dcpssc.org/PSCDC/media/PDFFiles/RevisedConsumerBillOfRights.pdf>

The Commission advises consumers **NOT** to provide account numbers or other personal information until **AFTER** you have determined that you want to be a customer of a particular retail energy supplier. Consumers also should ask to see identification before letting anyone claiming to be a utility or company employee into their home. **The Commission requires that all representatives carry a picture identification badge and are required to present it upon request.**

The Commission advises consumers not to make an “on-the-spot” decision unless they have researched the supplier and understand the supplier’s terms and conditions for providing energy.

Consumers who want information on retail energy suppliers or have questions, concerns, or a complaint regarding a retail energy supplier’s service or solicitation process are advised to contact the Commission’s Office of Consumer Services at 202-626-5120 or the Office of the People’s Counsel at 202-727-3071.

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