

January
2017

MONTHLY DATA REPORT



Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division

California Public
Utilities Commission



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 2 OVERVIEW
- 3 COMMUNICATIONS
- 4 ENERGY
- 5 WATER
- 6 TRANSPORTATION
- 7 SAFETY CONCERNS
- 8 GLOSSARY

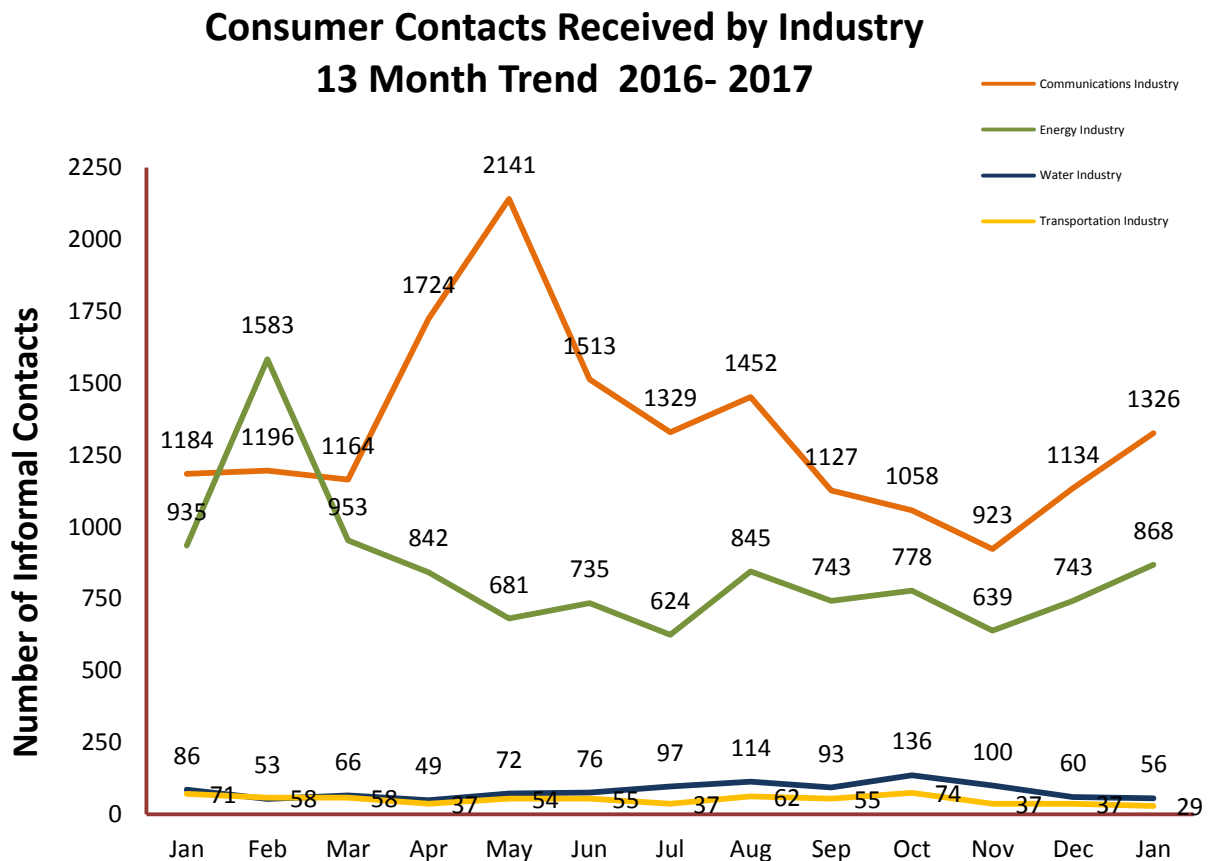
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able to assist consumers with an informal complaint resolution process, with answers to questions, and with referral information. In assisting consumers, we are able to gain a useful picture of consumer issues and trends.

This report is based on contacts (informal complaints and questions) received by the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) and the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) within CPED, and presents annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and pages 3 through 6 report data by industry for the current month. For context, the report also includes comparable data from the previous month. Page 7 presents contact data specifically related to safety concerns, by industry. A glossary of terms used in this report can be found on page 8.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division serves as the first line of support for consumers of CPUC-regulated services. CPED collects and resolves consumer informal complaints, enforces laws and regulations governing transportation carriers, and investigates allegations of utility waste, fraud, and abuse.

Overview

2,279 CONTACTS (January 2017)



Overall, 2,279 total informal consumer contacts were received during January 2017 across the four regulated industries, an increase of approximately 15% from the 1,974 informal contacts received during December 2016 and a one percent decrease from the prior 12-month average of 2,307.

Communications: 1,326 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during January 2016, which is an increase of 17% from the number of contacts received during December 2016. The contacts received during January are at par with the prior 12-month average of 1,329.

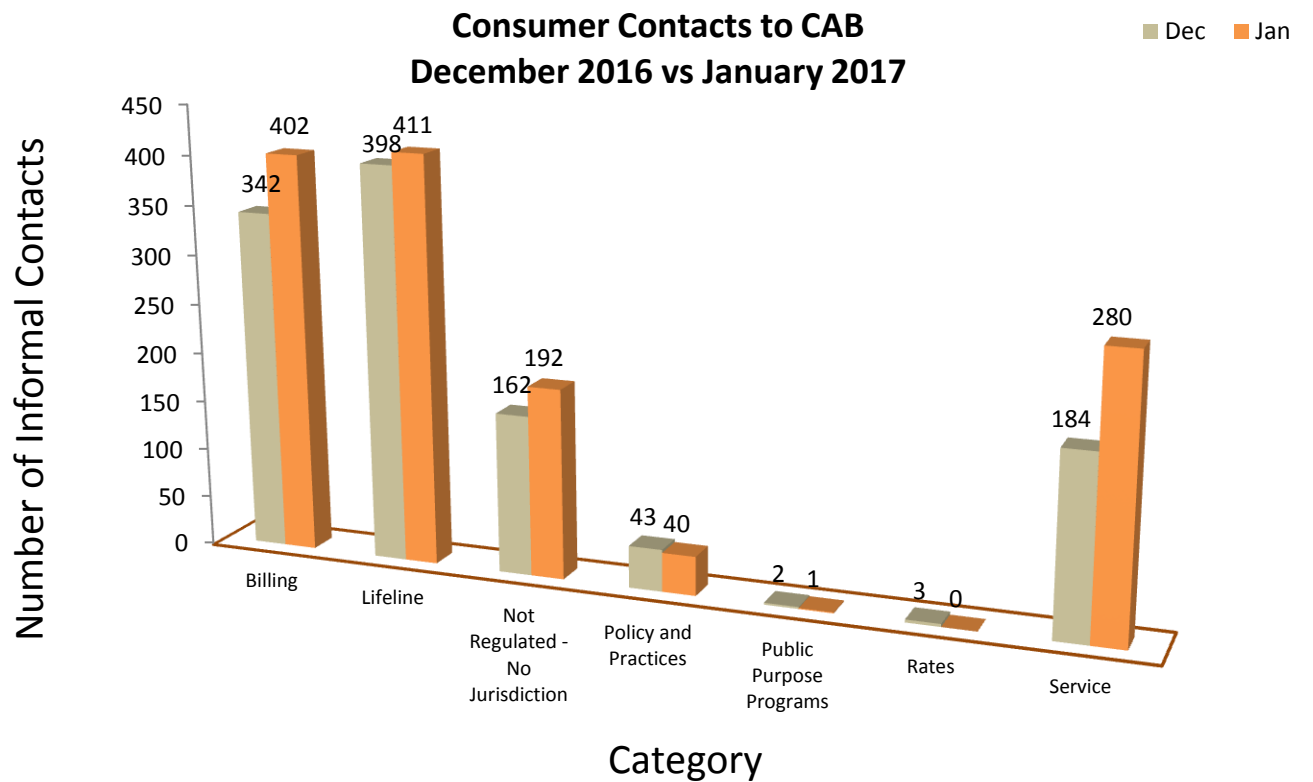
Energy: 868 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during January 2016, a near 17% increase from 743 the contacts received during December 2016, and three percent higher than the prior 12-month average of 842.

Water: 56 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during January 2017. This is a seven percent decrease from the 60 contacts received in December 2016. Water contacts continue to be below average with January being 33% lower than the prior 12-month average of 84.

Transportation: 29 Transportation-related contacts were received during January 2017, which were fewer than those in December 2016 (37) by approximately 21%. This is 45% lower than the prior 12-month average of 53.

Communications

1,326 CONTACTS (January 2017)

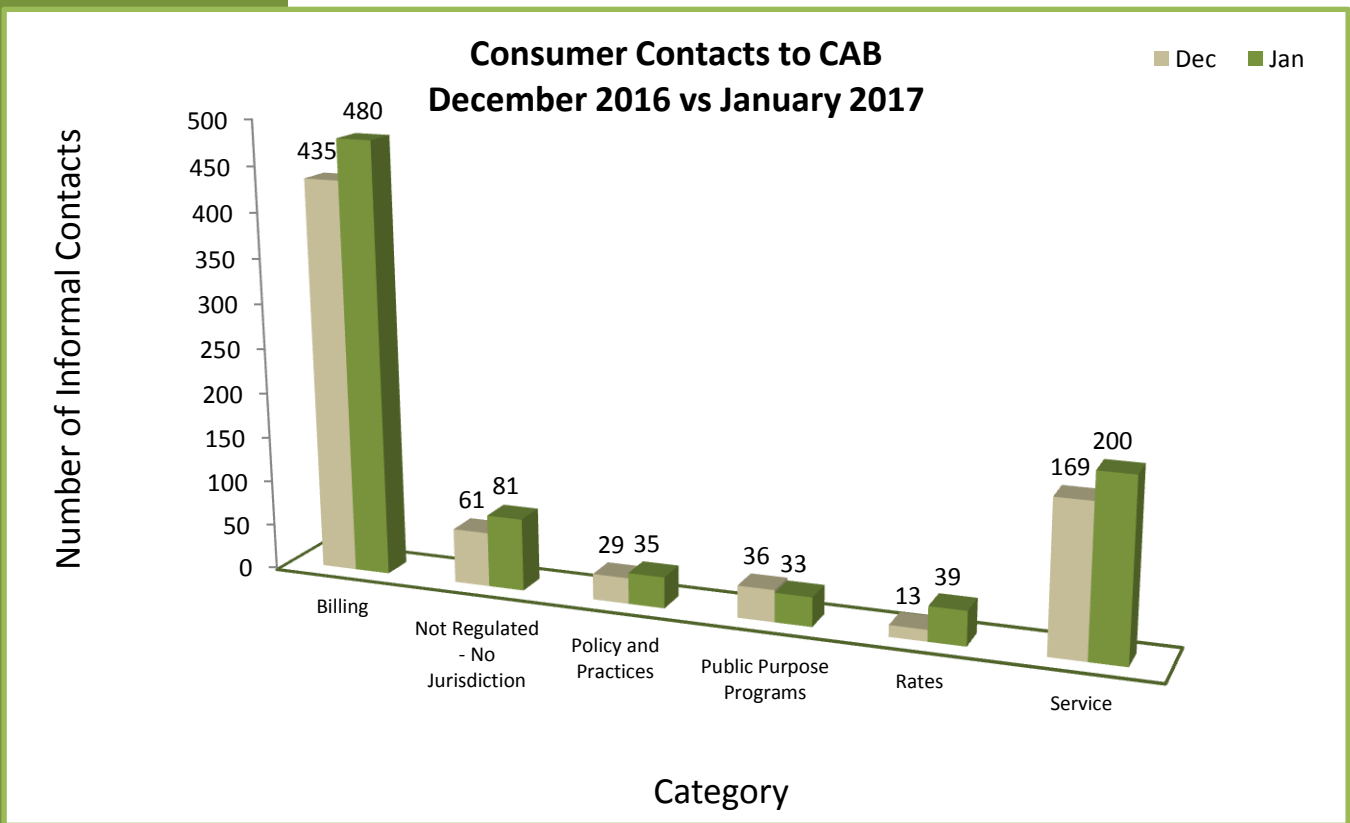


During January 2017, CAB received 1,326 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. This is an increase of approximately 17% from December's 1,134 contacts. The 52% increase observed in Service related contacts can be in part attributed to a 67% increase in consumers contacting CAB about service outages, primarily from AT&T and Frontier. This increase correlates to historically observed trends during inclement weather during winter months.

In addition to the 1,326 categorized contacts, CAB received 311 misdirected and uncategorized (pending processing) contacts relating to water utilities in January 2017.

Energy

868 CONTACTS (January 2017)

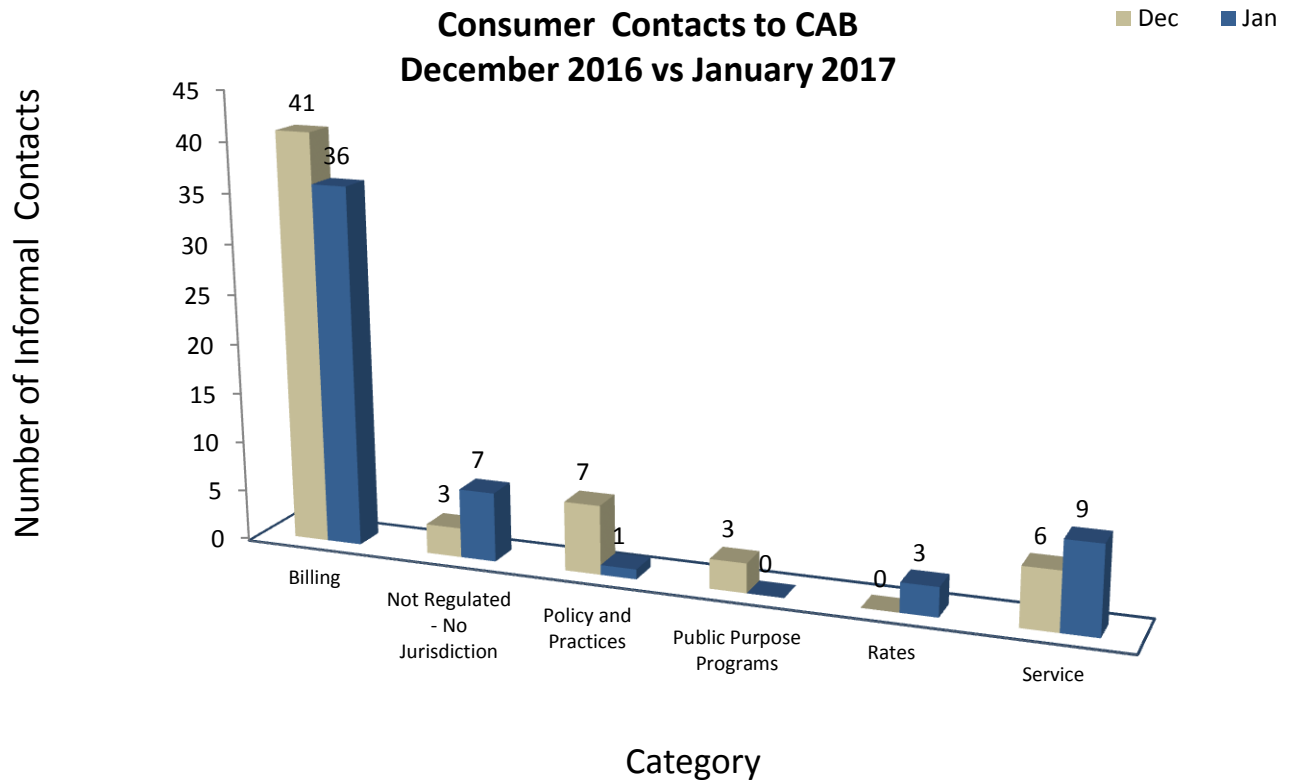


In January 2017, CAB received 868 Energy-related informal contacts allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There was a near 17% increase in contacts between December 2016 and January 2017. Consumer dissatisfaction with the rate increases approved in 2016 in combination with winter weather leading to increased consumption resulted in higher energy bills prompting increased consumer contacts to CAB. This is reflected in a 10% increase in Billing-related contacts that can be attributed in part to a 40% increase in contacts regarding High Bills (a subcategory of Billing contacts), and a 200% increase in Rates-related contacts due to a 240% increase in contacts regarding Rates Protests (a subcategory of Rates contacts).

In addition to the 868 categorized contacts, CAB received 180 misdirected and uncategorized (pending processing) contacts relating to water utilities in January 2017.

Water

56 CONTACTS (January 2017)

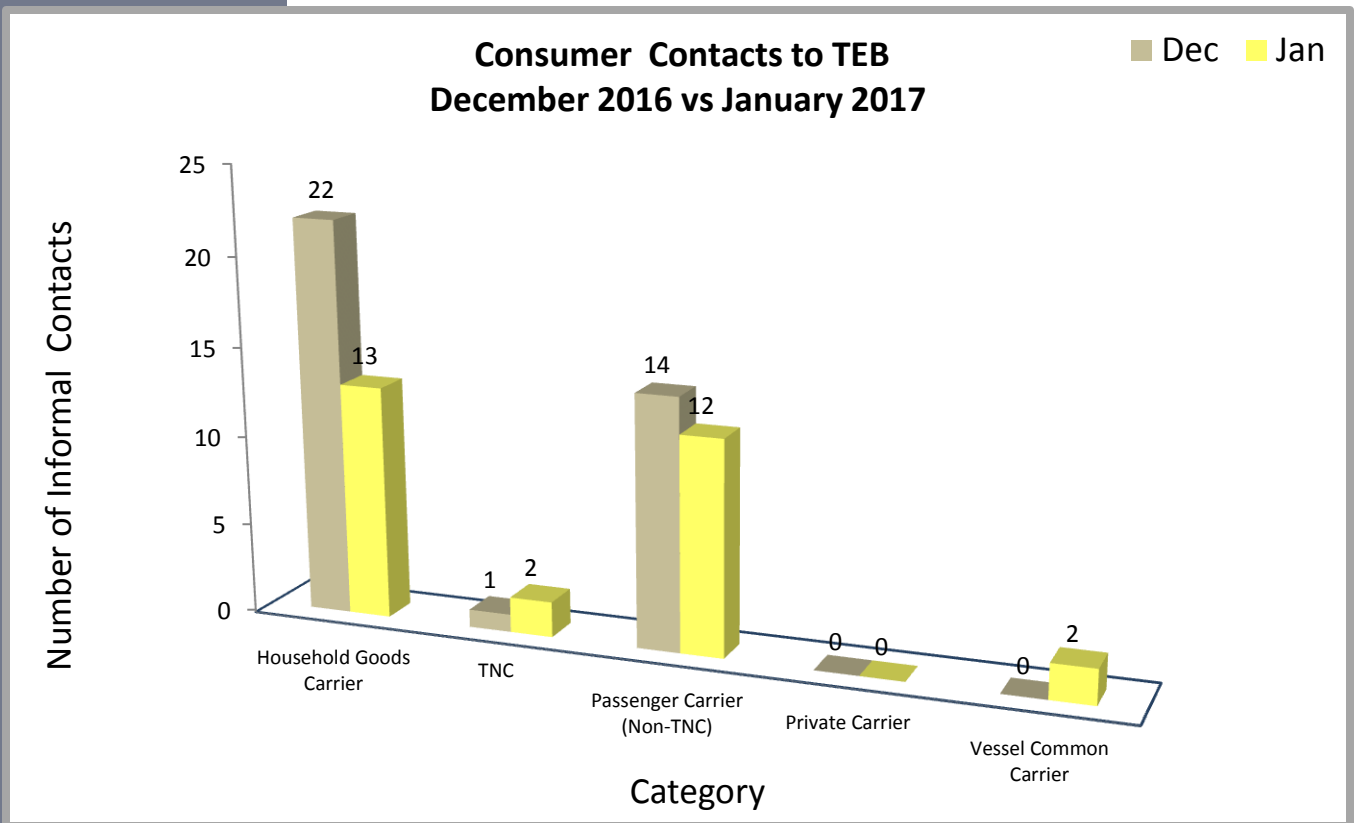


CAB received 56 Water-related informal contacts in January 2017, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. There was a seven percent decrease from December 2016, when CAB received 60 contacts. January contacts are 33% lower than the prior 12-month average of 84. The reduction in Water-related contacts can be attributed to contacts to CAB pertaining to protests against rate increases for San Jose Water Company having tapered off after December 2016, and a 21% reduction in contacts pertaining to high bills which may be attributed to the wet weather experienced during January decreasing the need for outside water usage such as lawn watering and car washing.

In addition to the 56 categorized contacts, CAB received 38 misdirected and uncategorized (pending processing) contacts relating to water utilities in January 2017.

Transportation

29 CONTACTS (January 2017)



In January 2017, transportation complaints regarding passenger carriers (12) were fewer than those in December 2016 (14) by just over 15 percent. Complaints regarding household goods carriers (13) decreased by nine (9) or 41 percent. Most informal complains involving allegation of operating and/or advertising without active authority: 12 among household goods carriers and 8 among passenger carriers. The remaining household goods-related complaints involved (1) loss and damage and zero allegations of holding goods hostage. TEB also opened complaint investigations regarding allegations that one or more carriers may lack workers' compensation insurance, and two overcharges against a TNC carrier. TEB also received two contacts regarding the service of a vessel common carrier.

Safety Concerns Across Industries

During January 2017, CPED received 32 safety-related contacts identified as having a safety concern component across the four reported industries. The contacts presented below are a subset of those presented on pages 3-7 of this report. Safety contacts are classified by the type of safety concern.

Communications	6
Emergency Services Access/Health Concerns	4
Utility Infrastructure	2

Energy	6
Gas Leaks	1
Property Restoration	2
Utility Infrastructure	3

Water	0
No Water Safety- Related Contacts Received	-

Transportation	20
Operating Without Active Authority	20

Definitions for Safety-Related Contacts:

Company Practice includes service-related issues perceived to impact consumer safety such as lengthy appointment wait times for service restoration.

Emergency Services/Health Concerns includes immediate or perceived concerns due to potential outages or events, such as inability to reach 911 during phone outage, or failure of medical equipment during power outages.

Gas Leak includes any concerns related to gas leaks in the utility distribution system or in the consumer's premises.

Property Restoration includes issues regarding ground hazards such as holes, trenches, tripping hazards, debris removal, tree trimming and street lighting.

Utility Infrastructure includes issues regarding infrastructure that is faulty or in disrepair such as hanging cables, exposed wires, leaning utility poles, analog meters and transformers.

Water Safety or Quality includes immediate or perceived concerns relating to water quality such as color, odor or presence of chemicals in drinking water.

Operating Without Active Authority involves operations without a valid permit or certificate, including operations with a suspended or revoked permit or certificate.

Definitions

Consumer Affairs Branch

The following definitions were compiled to assist with understanding consumer contacts information.

Type of Contacts Definitions	
Informal Consumer Contacts	Informal Contacts are consumers' communications received by CAB via phone calls, letters and electronic submissions (email/web form). Contacts can consist of complaints, questions, or feedback from consumers regarding the policies and practices of specific utilities or the CPUC. These contacts are reported as Categorized or Uncategorized.
Categorized Contacts	These are informal contacts which have sufficient information to be allocated into one the defined categories: Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, and Service based on the primary (overarching) reason for the contact.
Uncategorized Contacts	These are contacts which are pending assignment, lack sufficient information to be processed (Unknown), or contacts in which the consumer intended to contact some other entity, and mistakenly contacted CAB (Misdirected).

Category Definitions	
Billing	Consumer contacts related to disputed items appearing on a consumer's utility bill, the appearance of the bill, or other utility charges.
LifeLine (Billing & Appeals)	Consumer contacts related to the Lifeline Program, which assists low income telecommunications customers. It includes items related to Lifeline Appeals or Lifeline Billing disputes.
Not Regulated – No Jurisdiction	Consumer contacts related to concerns, disputes, and issues where the CPUC does not have jurisdiction.
Policy and Practices	Consumer contacts related to utility and/or CPUC policies and practices.
Public Purpose Programs	Consumer contacts related to programs that assist utility consumers, including income-based and disability-based programs.
Rates	Consumer contacts related to rate design, rate protests and baseline rates.
Service	Consumer contacts related to the service provided to the consumer by the utility.
Uncategorized Definitions	
Misdirected	Consumer contacts intended for some other entity such as consumer attempting to contact their utility. CAB assists these consumers by redirecting them to the entity best able to address their concerns.
Pending Assignment	Category not identified due to case pending processing.
Unknown	Category not identified due to lack of information from consumer.