

January  
2019

# MONTHLY DATA REPORT



Consumer  
Protection and  
Enforcement  
Division  
California Public  
Utilities Commission



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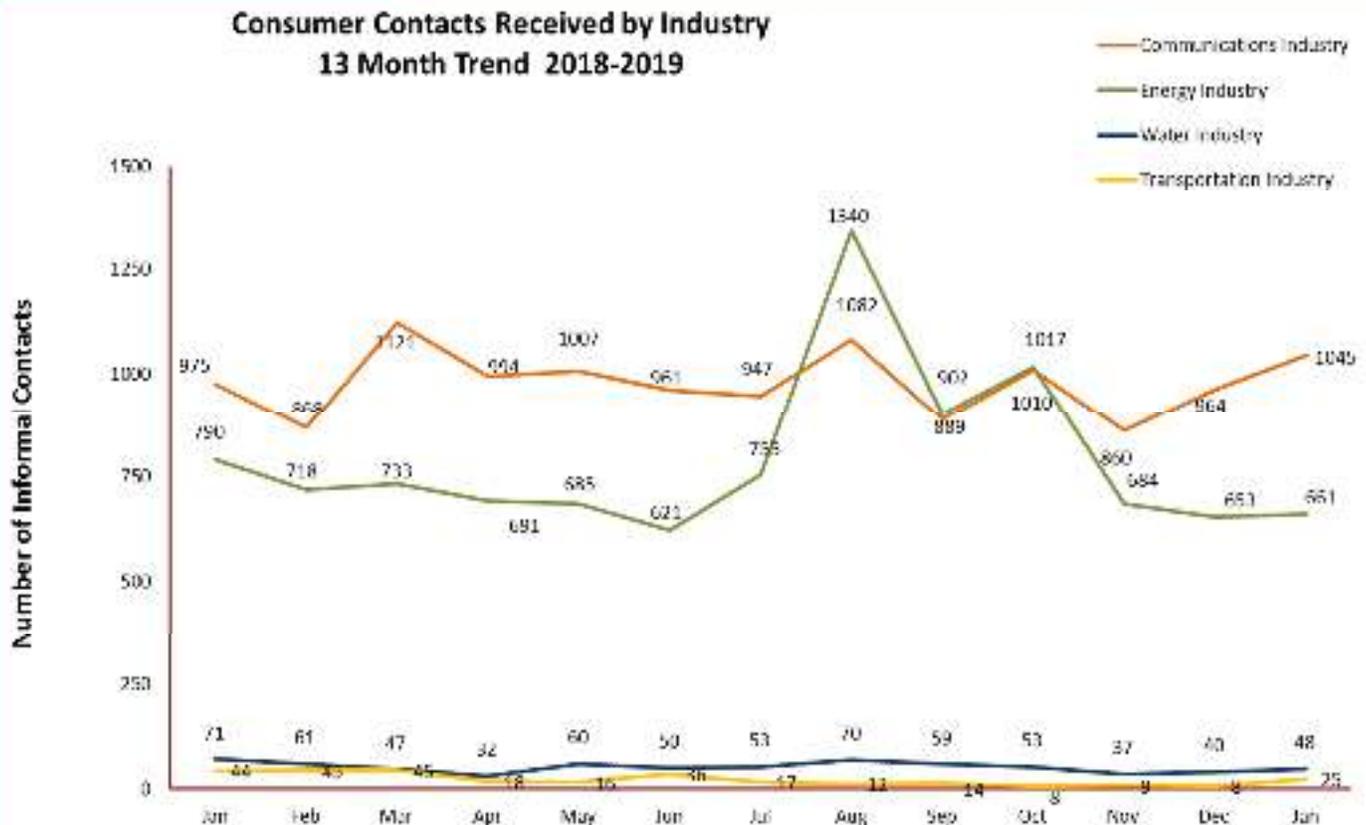
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able 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 both annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and Page 3 through Page 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

1,779 CONTACTS (January 2019)



Overall, 1,779 total informal consumer contacts were received during January 2019 across the four regulated industries. January shows an increase of approximately 6.8% from the 1,665 informal contacts received during December 2018; and a 3.7% decrease from the prior 12-month average of 1,848.

**Communications:** 1,045 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during January 2019, which is an increase of 8.4% from the 964 contacts received during December 2018. The contacts received during January are 7.4% higher than the prior 12-month average of 973.

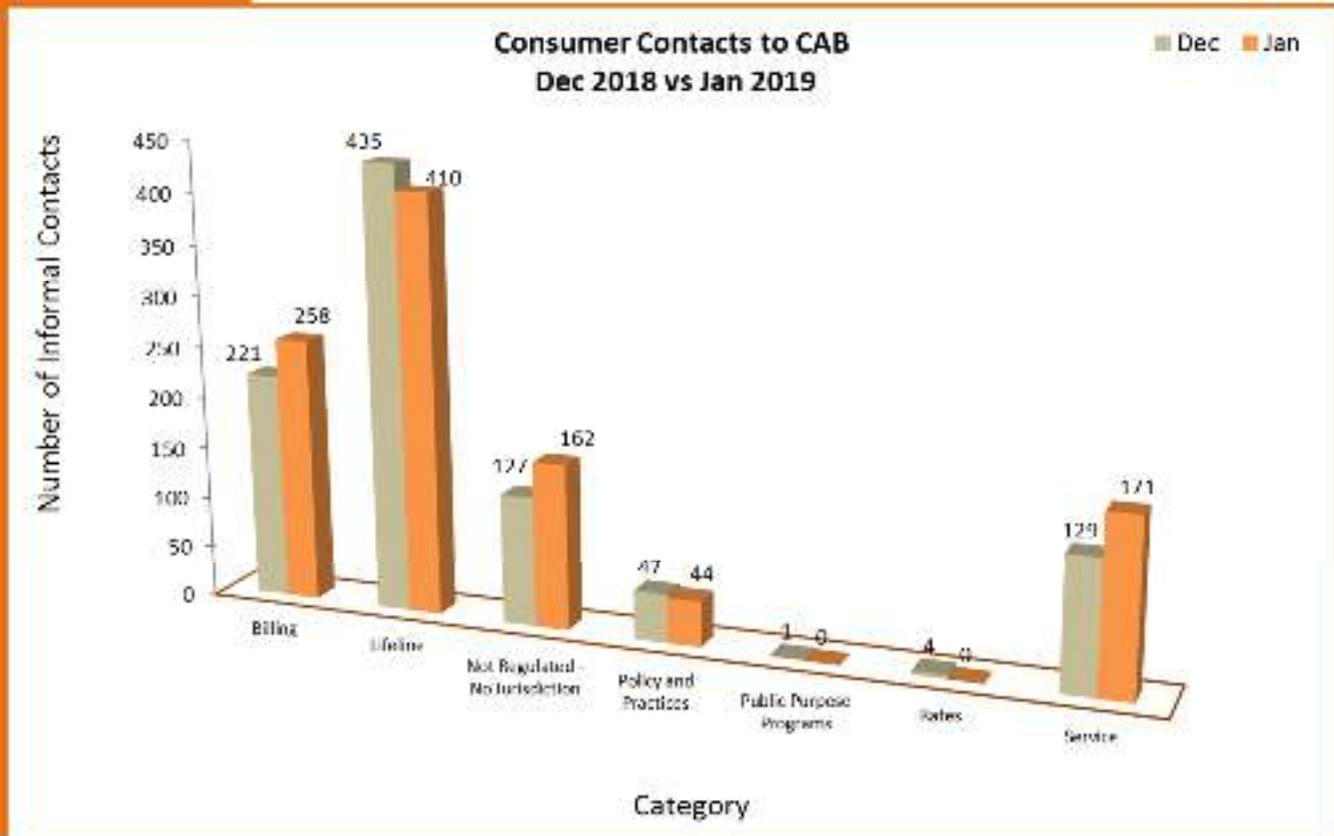
**Energy:** 661 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during January 2019, which is a nominal increase of 1.2% from 653 contacts received during December 2018. Contacts received in January 2019 are 17.3% lower than the prior 12-month average of 799.

**Water:** 48 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during January 2019. This is a 20.0% increase from the 40 contacts received in December 2018. Water contacts remain below average, with January 2019 being 15.1% lower than the prior 12-month average of 27.

**Transportation:** TEB received 25 categorized contacts in January 2019. Transportation contacts are 212.5% higher, by 17 contacts, than the 8 contacts in December 2018 and 10.3% higher than the prior 12-month average of 23 contacts.

# Communications

1,045 CONTACTS (January 2019)



During January 2019, CAB received 1,045 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.

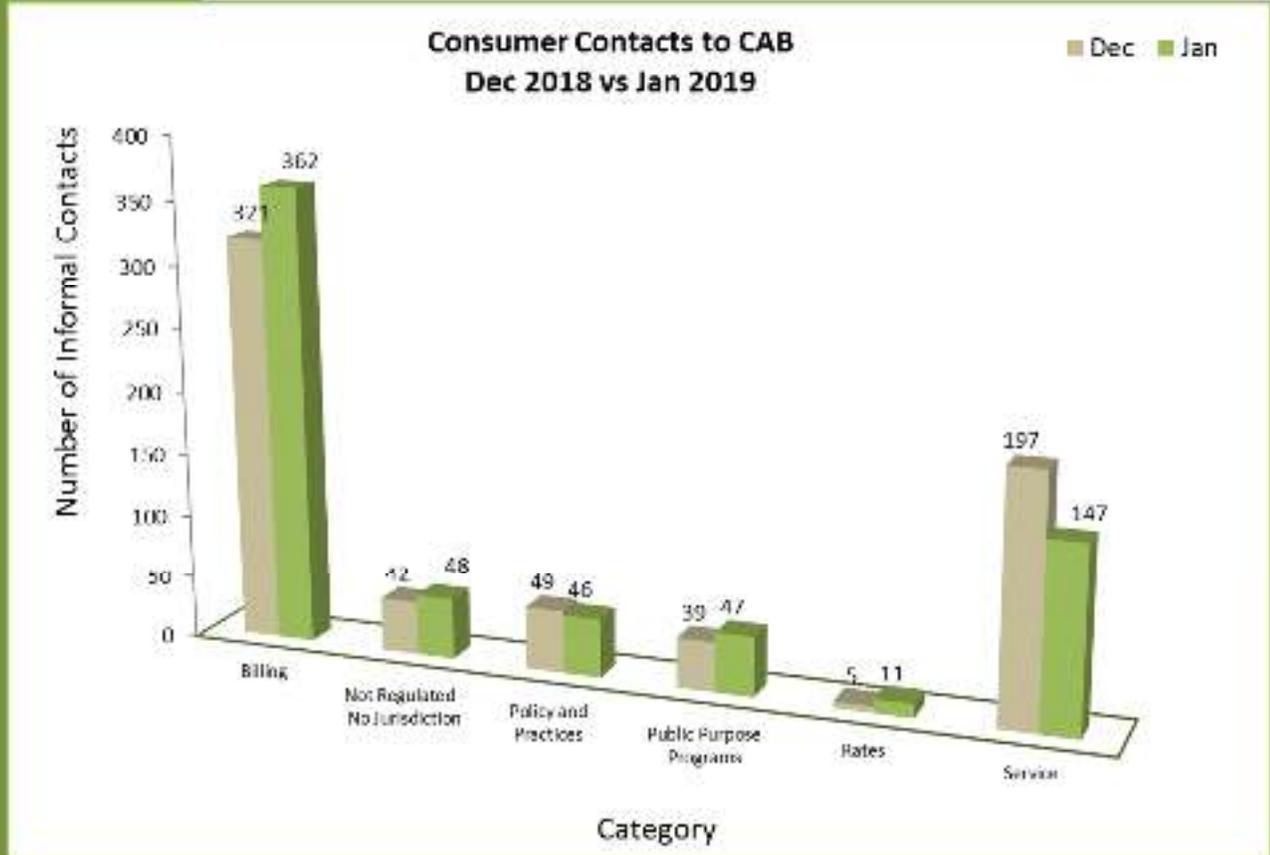
Billing related contacts increased by 16.7% in January 2019. The High Bill complaints with AT&T California, Inc. (AT&T) and Frontier California, Inc. (Frontier) were the main contributors for the increase.

In addition, Service-related contacts increased by 32.6% in January 2019. Outage complaints with AT&T and Frontier increased from December 2018 to January 2019. Moreover, there was a slight increase in contacts related to disconnection for non-payment with AT&T California.

In addition to the 1,045 categorized contacts, CAB received 137 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

# Energy

661 CONTACTS (January 2019)



In January 2019, CAB received 661 Energy-related informal contacts allocated amongst the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

Billing related contacts increased by 12.8% in January 2019. High Bill complaints with PG&E and Southern California Edison were the primary contributors for the increase.

In addition, the doubling of consumer contacts in Rates was due to consumer issues regarding determination of their energy baseline for PG&E, San Diego Gas & Electric, and Southern California Gas Company.

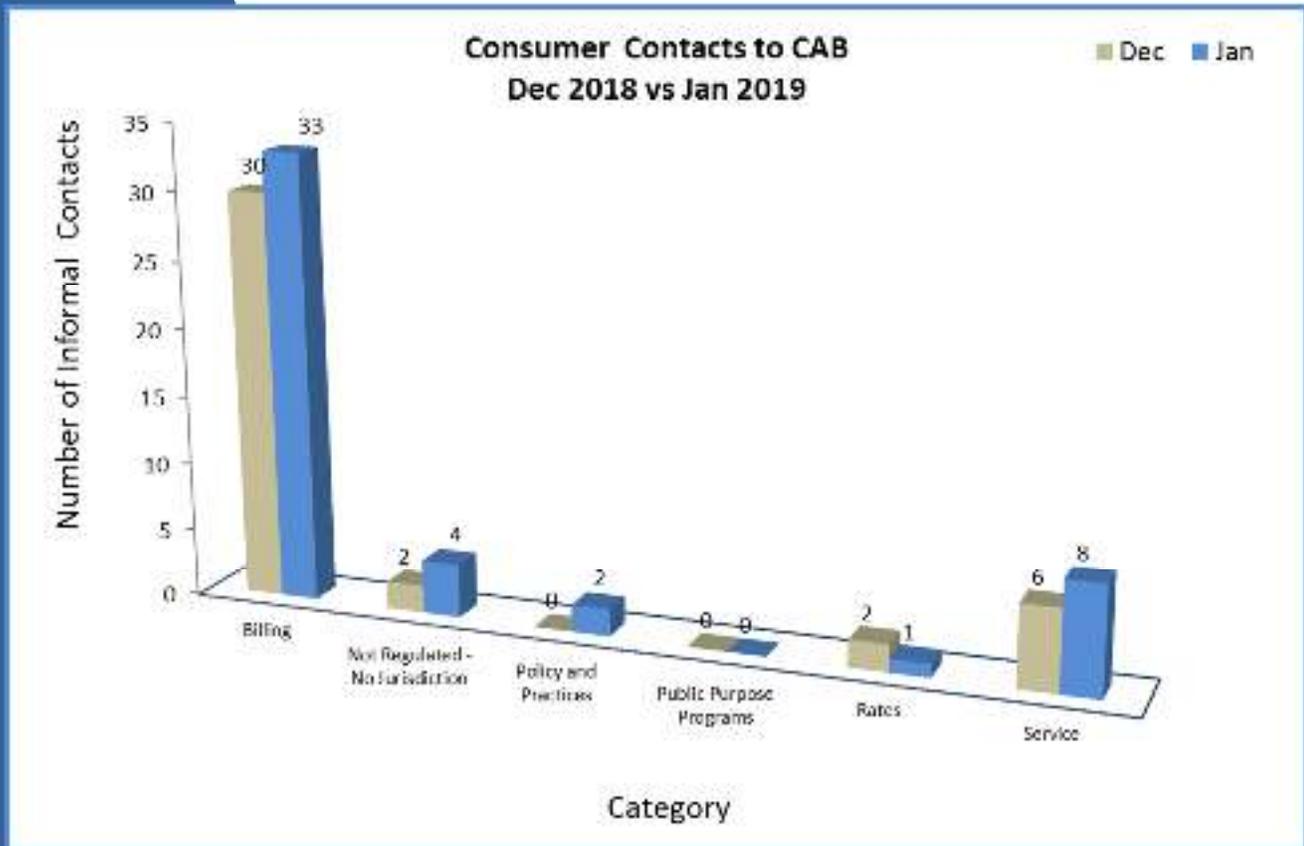
Also, Service-related contacts decreased by 25.4% from December 2018 to January 2019. The key factor in the decline was a decrease in disconnection for non-payment related contacts with PG&E.

In addition to the 661 categorized contacts, CAB also received 68 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.



# Water

48 CONTACTS (January 2019)

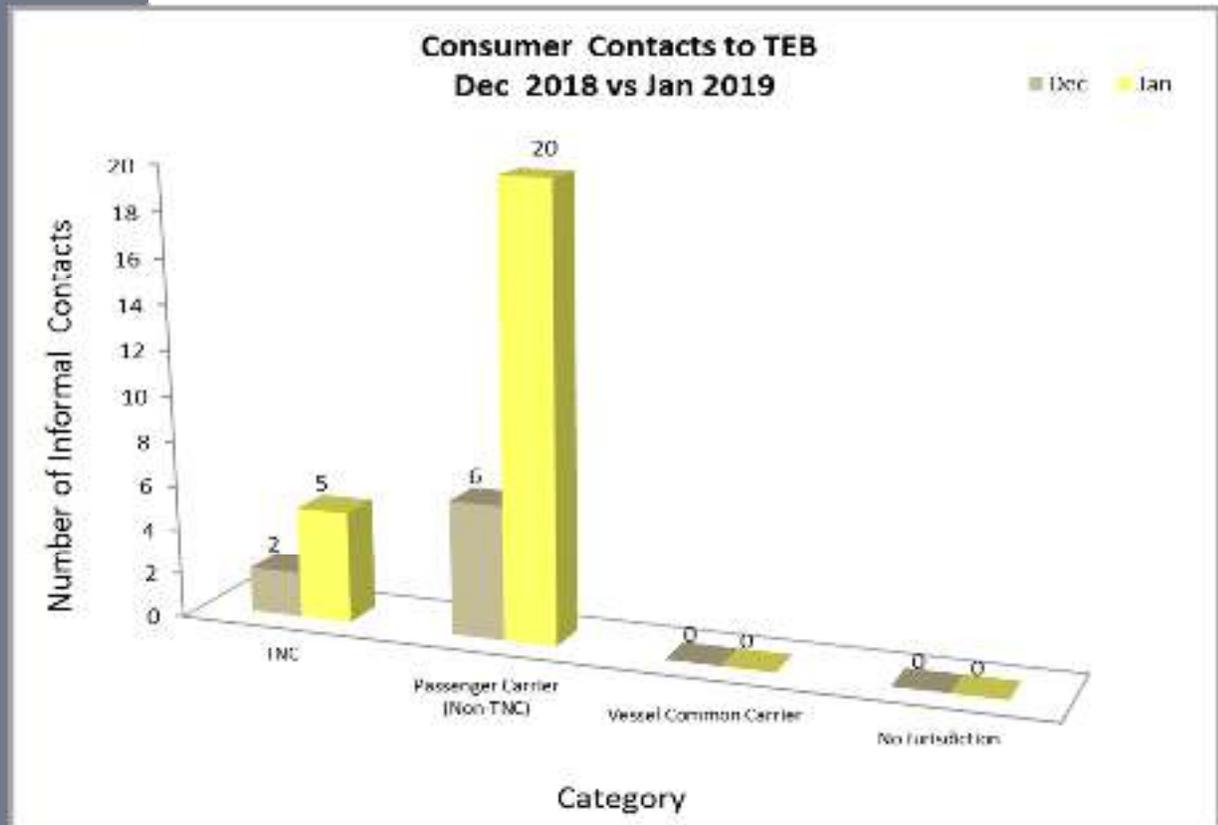


CAB received 48 Water-related informal contacts in January 2019, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service. While there was a 20% increase (8 contacts) in informal contacts between December 2018 and January 2019, there was no significant driver of the increase in any category.

In addition to the 48 categorized contacts, CAB also received 23 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

# Transportation

25 CONTACTS (January 2019)



TEB received 25 Transportation-related contacts in January, allocated into one of the 4 defined categories of Passenger Carrier (TNC), Passenger Carrier (Non-TNC), Vessel Common Carrier, and No Jurisdiction.

Passenger carrier complaints (TNC, limo, buses) consisted of (14) operating or advertising without a permit (safety issue), (4) operating on a suspended or revoked permit (safety issue), (1) operating without workers' compensation insurance, (5) refund requests, and (1) complaint against a driver. CIU referred (19) complaints for enforcement action, resolved (3) complaints, and will likely complete the remaining (3) complaints within 30 days of receipt. The Customer Intake Unit (CIU) closed (24) complaints in January 2019: (22) within 30 days of receipt, (1) within 35 days, and (1) within 42 days.

Each of the complaints involved a specific carrier, so no trend or pattern could be attributed to the complaints relative to the over 7,000 carriers under CPUC jurisdiction.

# Safety Concerns Across Industries

During January 2019, CPED received **56** contacts identified as having a safety component across three of the four reported industries. The contacts presented below are a subset of those presented on pages 3-6 of this report. Safety contacts are classified by the type of safety concern.

<b>Communications</b>	<b>13</b>
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	5
Property Restoration	1
Utility Infrastructure	7

<b>Energy</b>	<b>24</b>
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	2
Gas Leak	4
Property Restoration	6
Utility Infrastructure	12

<b>Water</b>	<b>1</b>
Water Quality	1

<b>Transportation</b>	<b>18</b>
Operating Without Active Authority	18

## 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.

**Consumer Property** includes issues with consumer owned property such as unsafe appliances (heaters, stoves, etc.)

**EMF/Power Surges/Voltage fluctuations** include cases related to Electromagnetic Field (EMF) concerns (e.g. Smart Meters), consumer household power surges and electricity voltage fluctuations.

**Emergency Services/ Health Concerns** include 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.

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

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

**Security Concerns** includes issues perceived to impact consumer security such as phone line privacy issues, unlisted phone numbers, or utility personnel identification.

**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.

# 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.