

Pepco charging customers during power outages?

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Fresh on the heels of [days-long power outages](#) and countless [officials blasting Pepco](#) for poor service comes the news that Pepco may have been charging you for electricity even while your power has been out.

The Maryland Public Service Commission has initiated an investigation (yes, [another one](#)) into Pepco's bill stabilization adjustment system, which is the same thing that smooths out your electric bills during extreme winter months. But the PSC says that the system may have also let Pepco charge for electricity that wasn't actually delivered. A hearing date has been set for Feb. 22. We've posted the PSC order below.

But an investigation alone won't be nearly enough for Montgomery County Councilman Roger Berliner (D-Dist. 1), who announced today that he wants the PSC to create a restitution fund to pay back customers. From Berliner's press release:

"The Commission is right to take action that will immediately eliminate this perverse disincentive to restore power quickly. But they should go one critical step further. They should create a 'restitution fund' out of these ill-gotten gains and provide immediate and direct rebates to consumers. Pepco should never have been given these dollars and they should be required to give them back—every dollar. Our residents have suffered enormously and this restitution fund is just one small step towards making it right."

A "perverse disincentive?" Those are definitely fighting words.