



OFFICE OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

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**Energy and Environmental Advocacy
Office of Consumer Protection
Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2020**

In FY20, the Montgomery County Office of Consumer Protection (OCP) continued to collaborate with several County Agencies, elected officials, and non-profit organizations on behalf of Montgomery County and its residents. These efforts regarding energy and environmental advocacy primarily seek to promote the interests of residents and Montgomery County to obtain the lowest possible utility rates consistent with environmental stewardship and to assist consumers receive or obtain information regarding utility usage and costs.

Several Montgomery County departments are now involved in Energy and Environmental Advocacy under the direction of an Assistant Chief Administrative Officer in the Office of the County Executive. Several years ago an OCP Investigator's position was transferred and upgraded to an Assistant County attorney's position in the Office of the County Attorney. This enabled Montgomery County to devote additional resources to monitor and participate in the activities of the Maryland Public Service Commission and the Office of the People's Counsel. The OCP however continues to serve as a subject matter expert on issues related to consumer protection.

Accomplishments

- OCP continued to coordinate with Del. Charkoudian, Intergovernmental Relations, and MCG stakeholders to discuss possible revisions to Community Choice Aggregation (now Community Choice Energy) legislation for the next legislative season.
- Provided comments in connection with the Supplier Consolidated Billing Work Group created by the Public Service Commission (PSC).
- OCP worked on issues on the PSC's Competitive Markets and Customer Choice Work Group by taking part in meetings and conference calls to discuss Green Button Connect and Supplier Enhancements.
- Took part in the Climate Change Training by the Association of Climate Change Officers.

Continuing Initiatives

- Coordinate activities with Montgomery County's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Specifically, the OCP collaborated with DEP on outreach and education programs and events and promoted DEP messaging on social media. In FY20, OCP collaborated with DEP on a newsletter on greenwashing and on radon, presented on consumer issues unique to solar contracts, and contributed to the Energy Roadshow with a focus on educating consumers on energy scams.
- In FY21, OCP will contribute to the Energy Summit and Energy Roadshow as well as contribute on co-promoted outreach events. OCP also will work with the County's Climate Intern on Energy Efficiency Collaboration as appropriate.
- Consult with appropriate County departments on matters affecting Montgomery County's energy and environmental interests.
- Monitoring Public Service Commission Rate Design & Competitive Markets and Customer Choice Work Groups as it relates to consumer protection.
- Designate a Climate Ambassador.