

Texas complaints way down (54%) from ERCOT chaos days

Enterprising PUC staffer starts firm to tally customer views

Former PUC staffer Patricia Dolese started the firm in 2002 and has been tracking customer complaints since the days when ERCOT's market opened to tumultuous confusion and ERCOT inability to switch shoppers.

The tally last year fell to 7,400 cases down from over 16,000 a year earlier or down about 54%

Regulatory Compliance Services in Austin compiled the data.

People got bad bills or no bills at all in 2003 but those problems are a lot better now, she found.

Slamming and cramming were big problems too but a PUC crackdown has greatly cut those complaints although the practice still exists, Dolese added.

About 400 people reported they were slammed last year with a surprisingly large 25% confirmed by PUC probers.

Some 4,300 complaints last year concerned billing but regulators found companies at fault in only 3% of the cases on average.

Those companies found guilty of slamming in all complaints filed against them include: ACN Energy, 4; Liberty Power, 3; Hino Electric Power, 2 and Park Energy, 2.

About 40% of the 10 complaints filed against Green Mountain were affirmed, while Gexa was found guilty in 36% of 21 cases filed against it.

Regulators ruled that 33% of 20 Econnergy Energy's complaints were valid and 24% of the 24 complaints against Entergy were upheld.

Just 17% of the 12 complaints filed against First Choice Power were proven.

Yet 17% of the 67 people filing against Centrica had been found to have been slammed while 45% of Reliant's 77 complaints were found valid.