

R E G U L A T E D I N D U S T R I E S C O M M I S S I O N

RICNEWS

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REDUCING YOUR ENERGY COSTS: *30 Helpful Tips*



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**REGULATED
INDUSTRIES
COMMISSION**



Protecting YOUR Interests

Quarterly Complaints Report

Consumer Complaints Get Resolved

RIC's Complaints Report for 3rd Quarter 2014

Status	Jul '14	Aug '14	Sep '14	Total
Number of complaints received	239	94	116	449
Number of complaints resolved	134	38	44	216
Number of complaints unresolved	105	56	72	233
Number of complaints withdrawn	0	0	0	0
Resolution rate for complaints received	56.1%	40.4%	37.9%	48%
No. of outstanding complaints resolved	119	71	109	299
Total number of complaints resolved	253	109	153	515

**REBATE/COMPENSATION AWARDED TO
CUSTOMERS BETWEEN JULY – SEPT 2014**

\$22,344.00

Our Customer Service Promise to You- The RIC will:

- ☒ Conduct an investigation to obtain all the necessary facts both from you and the Service Provider.
(Copies of all relevant information that would assist us in understanding the complaint should be provided.)
- ☒ Respond to your written, telephone and email complaints within ten (10) working days of receipt.
- ☒ Forward our response to your complaint to the Service Provider and then provide written confirmation of action taken.
- ☒ Keep you up-to-date on the progress of our investigation of your complaint and its resolution.
- ☒ Ensure that you are attended to by a Customer Service Representative within ten (10) minutes of your appointment time.

If you have a complaint, you must first make contact with the service providers (i.e. WASA and T&TEC) and give them the opportunity to resolve the problem

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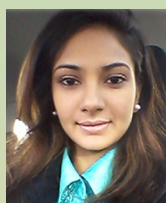
RIC "SUMMER" INTERNSHIP 2014

The Regulated Industries Commission (RIC) offers a Summer Internship Programme in an effort to provide University Students from a variety of educational disciplines the opportunity to apply traditional academic classroom learning to actual work experience. The RIC strongly believes its internship programme is an important tool for use by students interested in gaining professional experience and exposure to critical issues pertaining to Utilities Regulation, as well as involvement in the day-to-day work of the organisation while preparing themselves for future employment.

Shalana Mahabir is a student at the University of the West Indies pursuing a BSc in Economics. During her two-month internship at the RIC, Ms. Mahabir was assigned to the Economics and Research Department.

She had this to say about her time at the RIC:

"I am very grateful for this opportunity that was given to me. I have learnt a lot about the RIC after reading several of its documents and speaking to persons from different departments. The internship has led to my personal development. For the first time I was exposed to how my studies, Economics, can be utilized in the world of work. This has strengthened my passion for Economics and I am more appreciative of the classroom material having seen its application and importance. Presenting my paper to members of staff was a great learning experience as it took me out of my comfort zone which is an essential part of the learning process. In addition to this, it was interesting being a witness to how members of staff communicate with each other during meetings as opposed to in the lunchroom. After discussions with employees, it was admirable to know that many commuted from south Trinidad. This erased the misconception that Port-of-Spain is too far for a central resident to seek employment."



The RIC provides opportunities for students seeking to gain work experience within the following Departments:

- Accounting
- Customer Services
- Corporate Communications
- Information Technology
- Legal/Corporate Secretarial Services
- Human Resources and Administration
- Technical Operations
- Economics and Research
- Library Services.

This year the RIC welcomed two students from the University of the West Indies for its annual "summer" internship programme, Shalana Mahabir and Renuka Ramdass.

Renuka Ramdass is a third year of law at the University of The West Indies Cave Hill Campus and was assigned to the Legal/Corporate Secretary for the duration of her internship.

Speaking of her experience at the RIC Ms. Ramdass said:

"I have had working experience elsewhere, but the RIC was a unique one. It was much more academic based and therefore unlike the others. The idea of having to do a paper and having others critique was a new idea for me in the workplace. I attended one meeting prior to my presentation and it was quite an enlightening experience in terms of the approach that was taken. It provided me with a new scope of the world of work in that sense. Also, my mini project for Mrs. Peru, [Manager Human Resources and Administration] had me interacting with the HR department of other regulatory bodies and it allowed me to get an understanding that all companies operated differently. Sometimes, I was given a straightforward answer and other times I was given several persons to call just to get a simple answer or had to go through a certain protocol before I was given the information. The working world is never quite a straight cut thing."



REDUCING YOUR ENERGY COSTS:

30 Helpful Tips

You can significantly reduce your electricity bills with a few simple tricks and minor adjustments to the way you operate your appliances. These 30 useful tips can help you drive your energy costs down without sacrificing your comfortable lifestyle.

Unplug

- Unplug seldom-used appliances, like an extra refrigerator in the basement or garage that contains just a few items. You may save around \$10 every month on your utility bill.
- Unplug your chargers when you're not charging. Every house is full of little plastic power supplies to charge cell phones, PDA's, digital cameras, cordless tools and other personal gadgets. Keep them unplugged until you need them.
- Use power strips to switch off televisions, home theater equipment, and stereos when you're not using them. Even when you think these products are off, together, their "standby" consumption can be equivalent to that of a 75 or 100 watt light bulb running continuously.

Computers

Set Computers to Sleep and Hibernate

- **Enable the "sleep mode" feature** on your computer, allowing it to use less power during periods of inactivity. In Windows, the power management settings are found on your control panel. Mac users, look for energy saving settings under system preferences in the apple menu.
- **Configure your computer** to "hibernate" automatically after 30 minutes or so of inactivity. The "hibernate mode" turns the computer off in a way that doesn't require you to reload everything when you switch it back on. Allowing your computer to hibernate saves energy and is more time-efficient than shutting down and restarting your computer from scratch. When you're done for the day, shut down.



Refrigerators

- **Choose** a refrigerator size based on the needs of your family – a refrigerator operates at peak efficiency when filled.
- **Do not overload your fridge**, excessive products in your fridge will lower the quality of the food and use more electricity.
- **Let hot foods cool down** before placing them in the refrigerator.
- **Be sure** the seal around your refrigerator is intact. (Close the door on a piece of paper: if you can pull the paper out easily, the seal should be replaced).
- **Do not place** the refrigerator near a stove or against a wall facing the sun.



Freezer

- **Defrosting** of chest type freezers should be done once or twice a year. For upright models, defrosting should be done twice or three times a year.
- The freezer should be **kept as full as possible** to prevent heavy icing.

Electric Stoves

- **Use cooking utensils** with flat a bottom and tight fitting covers and ensure pots and pans completely cover the stove plates.

- Use a **pressure cooker** to conserve energy when cooking foods that take a long time, such as beef and pork.
- **Do not use the grilling compartment** to make toast- it is very expensive.
- You can **turn off the heat a couple of minutes** before the food is ready for stovetop cooking and several minutes in the oven to save on money.

Microwave Ovens

- Defrost your food in the refrigerator instead of the microwave oven: it is more economical.



- Use your **microwave oven** to cook small to medium quantities of food. To cook larger portions of meat, it is better to use a conventional oven.
- **Keep the edges** of your microwave door and its hinges clean.

Lighting

- **Don't forget to flick the switch** when you leave a room.
- **Remember this at the office, too.** Turn out or dim the lights in unused conference rooms, and when you step out for lunch. Work by daylight when possible. A typical commercial building uses more energy for lighting than anything else.
- **Replace incandescent lamps** (i.e. regular light bulbs) with compact fluorescent lights, which are more economical. Fluorescent lamps give five times the light and last up to ten times as long as ordinary bulbs.



Small Appliances

- Using **small kitchen appliances** instead of the stove can save energy. Toaster, electric grills and skillets, slow cookers and electric coffee pots usually require less energy than the stove when used correctly.
- Use an **electric kettle** to boil water, not a saucepan or a microwave.
- If using a **hair dryer**, use it sparingly and don't use the maximum heat setting as this will save energy.

Washing Machines

- **Wash only full loads** in your dishwasher, using short cycles for all but the dirtiest dishes. This saves water and the energy used to pump and heat it. Air-drying, if you have the time, can also reduce energy use.



- In your clothes washer, **set the appropriate water level** for the size of the load; wash in cold water when practical, and always rinse in cold.
- **Clean the lint filter** in the dryer after each use. Dry heavy and light fabrics separately and don't add wet items to a load that's already partly dry. If available, use the moisture sensor setting. (A clothesline is the most energy-efficient clothes dryer of all!)

Ironing

- **Switch your iron off** before you are finished and complete the ironing on stored energy.
- Iron large batches of clothing at one time to avoid wasting energy reheating the iron several times.



REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION



DAMAGED APPLIANCE/ EQUIPMENT CLAIM PROCESS

ANY CUSTOMER WHOSE ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION, OR APPLIANCE OR EQUIPMENT, WAS DAMAGED RESULTING FROM VOLTAGE FLUCTUATIONS OR INTERRUPTION IN SUPPLY ON T&TEC'S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, **CAN FILE A CLAIM.**

1 VERIFICATION OF CLAIM

The customer should provide T&TEC with the following information, as requested in claim form, in order to verify the claim:

- the service address affected by the electrical incident;
- the time and date of the electrical incident;
- the item/s (property/ appliance/ equipment) damaged;
- the amount of compensation claimed. This amount should be on the basis that customer is no worse off, that is, the cost of replacing of substantially the same age, functionality and appearance; or the cost of repairing to substantially the same functionality and appearance.

2 INVESTIGATION AND DETERMINATION OF LIABILITY

T&TEC must initiate its investigation by the second day of the complaint and send/ make available to the customer a claim form. T&TEC is required to provide a response within ten (10) working days of the complaint.

If T&TEC is unable to confirm the incident, either together with or subsequent to sending the claim form, T&TEC may request that the customer provide a statement by a qualified person that the damage is consistent with a voltage variation.

Further, T&TEC must communicate its final position within 30 working days of the complaint.

3 PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

If after investigations T&TEC agrees with the claim, T&TEC must pay the customer the amount claimed within 15 days of the acceptance of claim.

4 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Customers can refer the matter to the RIC if they are dissatisfied with T&TEC's decision or T&TEC has failed to communicate its final decision. The RIC would conduct an independent assessment to determine if T&TEC's decision was justified. However, the customer can take other steps to arrive at a resolution, which may include mediation, arbitration and recourse through the Courts.



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SCHEDULE OF OUTREACH PROGRAMME FOR THE CUSTOMER SERVICES DEPARTMENT FOR 2014

FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
OP Penal/Debe Regional Corporation	OP Siparia Regional Corporation	OP Chaguanas Borough Corporation	OP San Fernando City Corporation	OP Point Fortin Regional Corporation	OP Princes Town Regional Corporation	OP Arima Borough Corporation	OP Mayaro/Rio Regional Corporation	OP Couva/Tabaquite/Talparo Regional Corporation	OP Sangre Grande Regional Corporation	N/A
*OP Tobago		*OP Tobago			*OP Tobago			*OP Tobago		

*OP scheduled for Tobago quarterly

10 Corporations selected to conduct the CSD's Outreach Programme. Port of Spain City Corporation, Diego Martin Regional Corporation, San Juan/Laventille Regional Corporation & Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation not included due to easy access to the RIC's office.

Remember, the RIC is here to protect your interests!

ENERGY CONSERVATION



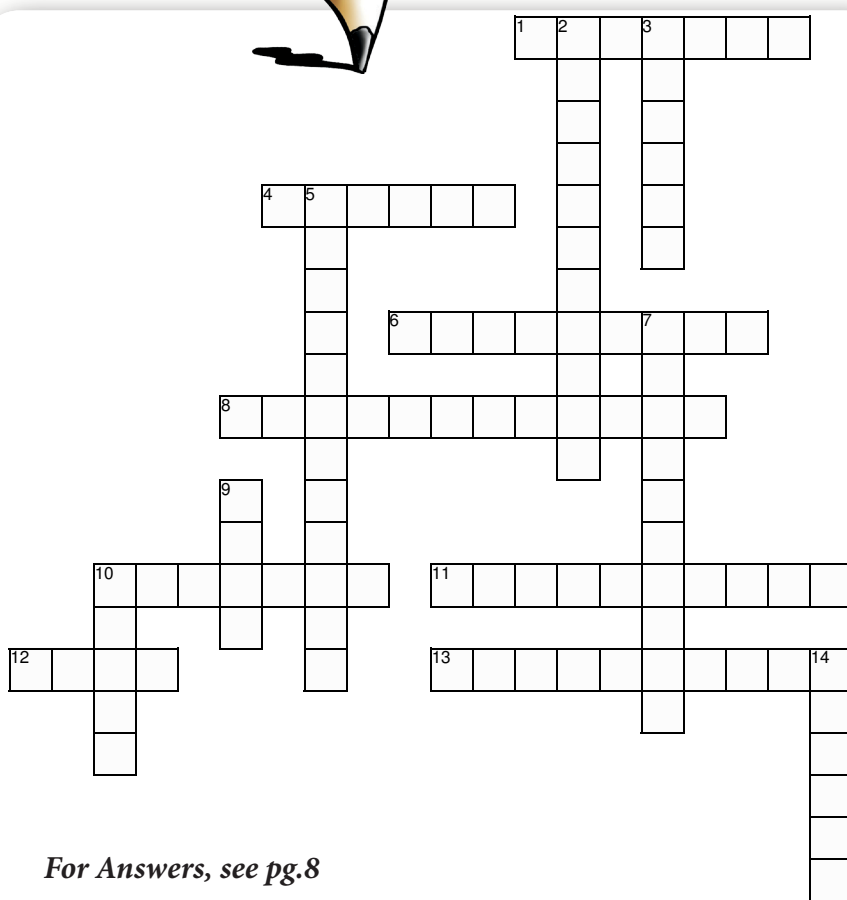
CROSSWORD

ACROSS:

1. To thaw
4. (transitive) To disconnect from a supply, especially an electrical socket.
6. Using a particular proportion of available energy.
8. A wise use of natural resources.
10. A state in which your computer consumes less power when idle, but remains available for immediate use. While your computer is on standby, information in computer memory is not saved on your hard drive.
11. Extent to which a resource is used for the intended purpose.
12. A request for payment of products and/or services sold.
13. Plural form of appliances.

DOWN:

2. Form of energy.
3. The act of putting something in working order again.
5. Resources that can only be used once.
7. Careful with money so as not to spend too much; prudent; thrifty.
9. Power from giant turbines, often on hill tops.
10. Energy from the sun.
14. A circuit element that has two states, on and off.



For Answers, see pg.8

RIC BIRTHDAY CLUB



Shelly Soonachan celebrated her birthday in the month of August.



(Above, from left): Helen Peru, Nadia Joseph and Jenelle Crosby celebrated their birthdays in the month of July.

(Photo, left): Daramdeo Maharaj was surprised with a snack basket for his birthday which was also celebrated in the month of August.

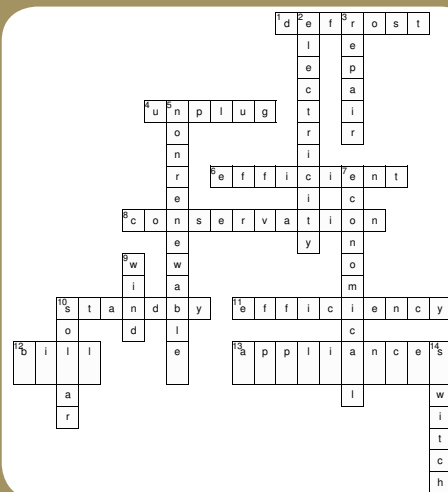


Mohan Chadee was surprised with a fruit basket on his birthday which he celebrated in the month of August as well.

The RIC recently started a "Birthday Club" initiative to celebrate the birthdays of members of staff. It was created since it was found that there was an interest within the RIC to celebrate the birthdays of our colleagues. The aim of the club was to keep celebrations simple, fun and equitable. The Club executives decide on a day once a month to celebrate everyone born in that month. Celebrations entail the sharing of cake and ice-cream, other snacks and goodies, games and other team building activities.



ENERGY CONSERVATION CROSSWORD ANSWERS



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