

REGULATED INDUSTRIES COMMISSION

RICNEWS

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RIC ADAPTS TO CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

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INDUSTRIES
COMMISSION**



Protecting YOUR Interests

Quarterly Complaints Report

Consumer Complaints Get Resolved

RIC'S COMPLAINTS REPORT FOR 1st QUARTER 2020

Status	JAN –20	FEB –20	MAR–20
Number of complaints received	96	158	269
Number of complaints resolved	46	65	163
Number of complaints unresolved	50	93	106
Resolution rate for complaints received	48%	41%	61%

**REBATE / COMPENSATION AWARDED
TO CUSTOMERS BETWEEN JAN – MAR, 2020**

\$583,004.00

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**

#37 Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad, WI
P.O. Box 1001

Tel: 800-4RIC (4742) • Fax: 624-2027

Website: www.ric.org.tt Email: complaints@ric.org.tt

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Protecting *YOUR* Interests

RIC REACHES OUT TO TOBAGO CUSTOMERS

The RIC hosted a Customer Outreach Session in Tobago on Saturday 29th February, 2020. This was part of the RIC's ongoing efforts to ensure that utility customers in Tobago are aware of their rights as consumers as well as how the RIC can assist them should they have issues receiving a reliable service from their Water/Wastewater and Electricity Service Providers.



Customer Service Officer – Shelly Soonachan distributes some informational brochures and promotional items to a visitor at the RIC Booth.

Once a month a Customer Service Officer of the RIC would visit Tobago to receive in-person complaints as well as address customer queries face to face at the offices of the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago in Gulf City Mall, Lowlands Tobago. However, on Saturday 29th February, 2020 the RIC decided to set up a full information booth at the same mall from 12pm to 4pm with the goal of interacting with a wider segment of the Tobago population, to educate the public on the roles and responsibilities of the RIC. Information was also shared on how individuals can save money on their electricity bills, how they can conserve water, as well as how they can get more involved in regulatory matters that may affect them.

The RIC advertised the Outreach Session on Radio Tambrin prior to the event. This enabled several persons to visit to booth to register complaints against their service providers, while others came with queries on how to proceed with utility related matters. Many visitors to the booth were happy to learn more about the RIC's Quality of Service Standards which would allow electricity customers to apply for rebates or compensation from their electricity provider, should the provider be in breach of these standards.

Four staff members from the RIC manned the booth; the Corporate Communications Manager, Corporate Communications Assistant, a Customer Service Officer and the Human Resources Assistant, all of whom interacted with the public and disseminated information through the distribution of promotional items and RIC brochures, as well as through face-to-face discussions. Visitors to the booth also had the opportunity to lodge complaints and have their questions answered by a Customer Service Officer of the RIC.



The RIC was able to interact with a group of Girl Scouts who were eager to take informational brochures back to their parents and of course get some exciting promotional items for themselves.



Customer having their temperature measured at the Temperature Check Station.

RIC ADAPTS TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread throughout the globe, eventually arriving in Trinidad and Tobago, many local organizations were driven to implement more stringent hygiene and safety measures to ensure that the health and wellness of their employees as well as their external customers was preserved. The RIC, in keeping with Public Health Guidelines instituted by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, also modified its day-to-day operations and developed an operational COVID-19 staff protocol document that detailed the new processes and procedures as it relates to office safety. The RIC also conducted a staff education session where general health and safety measures were presented to staff on not only safety at work, but also at home and in public spaces. Mask wearing, hand washing and sanitizing and social distancing protocols were implemented with immediate effect.

The RIC also introduced further measures to protect employees and visitors to the RIC's office. This included:

- The limiting of all walk-in clients in order to minimize the number of persons within the RIC's office at any given time. Customers were advised to utilize the RIC's various customer complaints options to lodge complaints against their water/wastewater or electricity service providers. i.e. RIC toll-free number: 800-4742, email: complaints@ric.org.tt and use of the RIC's website and Social Media pages.

- Informational signs were strategically placed throughout the office with clear instructions on how to practice social distancing, how to wash hands and how to wear masks, etc.
- Additional sanitation mechanisms were implemented including the placement of hand sanitizers and other cleaning agents in common areas of the office, to allow staff to regularly sanitize their individual work spaces if needed and to utilize hand sanitizers on entry to the building.
- Staff workstations were relocated in order to maintain the recommended distance of 6 feet apart between people.
- The use of shared spaces, including lunchrooms were limited.
- Staff members were provided with care packages including, a face mask, hand sanitizer, brochures on social distancing and tips to minimize the chance of contracting the virus.

All these measures will remain in effect indefinitely. Further safety precautions will be implemented to safeguard the employees and anyone visiting the RIC's office.

Ministry of Health signs that are currently being displayed at the RIC's office advising staff of "The New Normal."



THE NEW NORMAL

- Wear a mask when you go out in public
- Keep your distance from others (6 feet)
- Stay home if you are ill
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cough into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow
- Avoid touching your face
- Clean then sanitize surfaces (e.g. table tops, door knobs and cell phones)

#TTBEATCOVID19

Ministry of Health

Source: Ministry of Health



How to Handrub?

RUB HANDS FOR HAND HYGIENE! WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED

Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds

- 1a Apply a painful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;
- 1b Rub hands palm to palm;
- 3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;
- 4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
- 5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;
- 6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
- 7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
- 8 Once dry, your hands are safe.

World Health Organization | Patient Safety | SAVE LIVES Clean Your Hands

Source: World Health Organisation



How to Handwash?

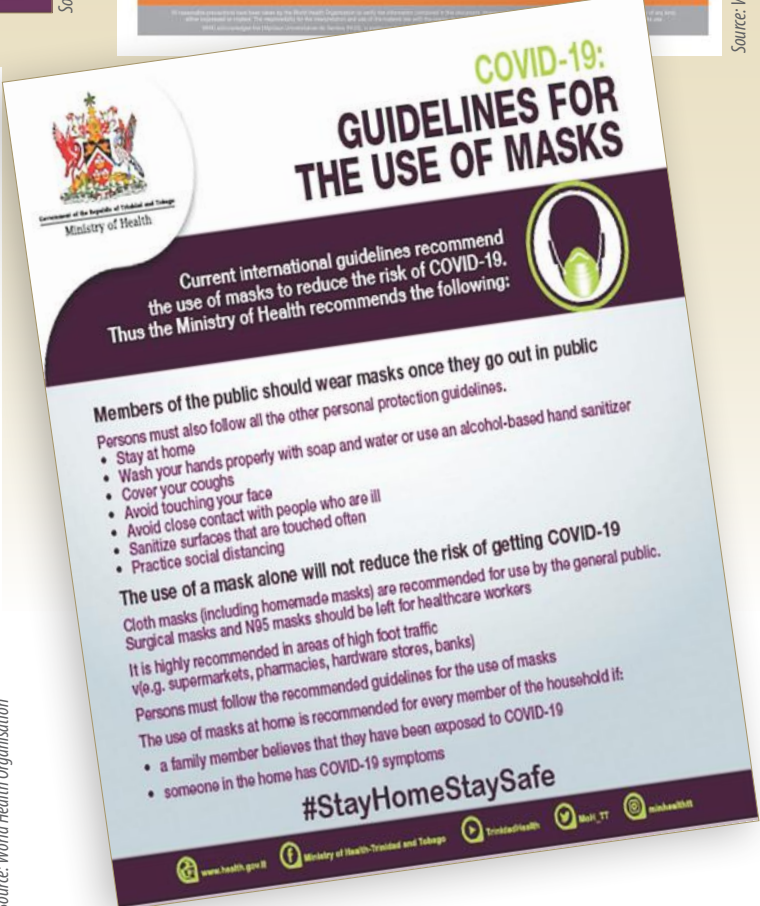
WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

- 0 Wet hands with water;
- 1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;
- 2 Rub hands palm to palm;
- 3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;
- 4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
- 5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;
- 6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
- 7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
- 8 Rinse hands with water;
- 9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;
- 10 Use towel to turn off faucet;
- 11 Your hands are now safe.

World Health Organization | Patient Safety | SAVE LIVES Clean Your Hands

Source: World Health Organisation



COVID-19: GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF MASKS

Current international guidelines recommend the use of masks to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Thus the Ministry of Health recommends the following:

Members of the public should wear masks once they go out in public

Persons must also follow all the other personal protection guidelines.

- Stay at home
- Wash your hands properly with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your coughs
- Avoid touching your face
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill
- Sanitize surfaces that are touched often
- Practice social distancing

The use of a mask alone will not reduce the risk of getting COVID-19

Cloth masks (including homemade masks) are recommended for use by the general public. Surgical masks and N95 masks should be left for healthcare workers.

It is highly recommended in areas of high foot traffic v/e.g. supermarkets, pharmacies, hardware stores, banks)

Persons must follow the recommended guidelines for the use of masks

The use of masks at home is recommended for every member of the household if:

- a family member believes that they have been exposed to COVID-19
- someone in the home has COVID-19 symptoms

#StayHomeStaySafe

Ministry of Health

Source: Ministry of Health

HOW TO LODGE COMPLAINTS

A GUIDE FOR WATER/WASTEWATER AND ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS

The Regulated Industries Commission is an independent consumer oriented body that is concerned with protecting the interests of consumers. As part of our mandate the RIC wishes to empower consumers with the knowledge and confidence needed to be able to address complaints directly with the Service Providers i.e. T&TEC and WASA.

The RIC provides free impartial information and advice to all electricity and water consumers and acts as a neutral third party and mediator to those who have been unable to obtain redress or those who are dissatisfied with the decision of the Service Providers.

Who do I contact first?

As a consumer you have the right to obtain a high standard of quality service from the Service Providers. If you have a complaint, you must first make contact with the Service Provider and give them the opportunity to resolve the problem. However, if your Service Provider fails to resolve the problem, or if you are not satisfied with the action taken by the Service Provider, you can then contact the RIC for further assistance in your matter.

How do I sort out problems with the Service Provider?

You must first contact your Service Provider and explain that you wish to make a complaint. You can do this in a number of ways:

- ✓ In writing
- ✓ In person
- ✓ By telephone
- ✓ By e-mail
- ✓ And in some cases, even via social media.

All Service Providers have clear procedures for dealing with complaints and you should follow these as far as possible.

When making a complaint to your Service Provider

When making a complaint to your Service Provider

- ✓ **Make copies of any document you send to your Service Provider. Do not send originals.**
- ✓ **Take meter readings, particularly if your complaint concerns your billing or supply and make a note of the date the readings were taken.**
- ✓ **Make notes of who you have spoken, or written to and the date, so that you can refer to them.**
- ✓ **Keep copies of correspondence sent to you by your Service Provider so that you can refer to them as well.**

**What do I do
if the Service
Provider fails
to resolve the
problem?**

If your Service Provider fails to resolve the problem, or if you are not satisfied with the action the Service Provider has taken, you can contact the RIC for further assistance in resolving your complaint.

**What types of
complaints can
the RIC help to
resolve?**

If you have a complaint that fits any of the mentioned descriptions and you have already contacted the service provider to no avail, the RIC can offer assistance.

T&TEC

- Billing Query
- Damaged Appliance
- Damage to Property
- Defective Street Lights
- Disconnection/Reconnection
- Low Voltage/Voltage Fluctuations
- Malfunctioning/ Broken Meter
- Breach of the Guaranteed Electricity Standards
(You can find the list of these standards on the RIC's website www.ric.org.tt)
- Tree Trimming / Vegetation Management
- Removal/Relocation of Lines
- Request for Service
- Rotten/Leaning/Broken/ Termite Infested Poles

WASA

- Billing Query
- Damage to Property
- Disconnection/ Reconnection
- Erratic Scheduled Supply
- Illegal Connection
- Inaccurate Annual Taxable Value of Property
- Lack of Pipe-Borne Supply
- Leaks
- Low Water Pressure
- Poor Water Quality
- Request for Service
- Request for Truck-Borne Supply
- Retroactive Billing Adjustment
- Road Restoration

**How will the
RIC handle my
complaint?**

The Customer Services Department 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 the RIC staff in understanding the complaint should be provided. We will forward our response to your complaint to the Service Provider and then inform you of the action taken to resolve your complaint. We will also keep you up-to-date on the progress of our investigation of your complaint and its resolution.

The RIC is committed to helping consumers become better informed about how to obtain redress for WASA and T&TEC issues that affect them.

For more information please feel free to visit us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube or LinkedIn or check out our website www.ric.org.tt

RIC's Annual Carnival Lime

It was that time of year again where the RIC staff were encouraged to show off their many talents at the RIC's Annual Carnival Lime which was held in the RIC's Training Room on Thursday 20th February, 2020. This well anticipated event in the RIC's staff calendar entailed a number of exciting activities including a dance competition which had staff pulling out their best moves.

The afternoon also included a Carnival trivia game, musical chairs and other fun entertainment. Staff members were treated with a traditional Trinidad and Tobago fare of mini bake and shark, chicken tenders, mini roti, samosas, corn soup, cakes, ice cream, and drinks.



Corporate Communications Manager – Driselle Ramjohn presents a prize to IT Specialist – Gerard Benjamin during the Carnival Trivia.

There was a fully decorated refreshment station and desserts made available for staff.

Staff were fully entertained by two competitors in the dance off competition.



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#37 Wrightson Road, Port of Spain, Trinidad, W.I. P.O. Box 1001
Tel: 800-4RIC (4742), 627-7820, 627-0821; 627-0503; 625-5384
Fax: 624-2027
Website: www.ric.org.tt Email: ricoffice@ric.org.tt

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Contact: Ms. Driselle Ramjohn, Corporate Communications Manager at ramjohnd@ric.org.tt OR comments@ric.org.tt

