

July
2018

MONTHLY DATA REPORT



Consumer
Protection and
Enforcement
Division
California Public
Utilities Commission



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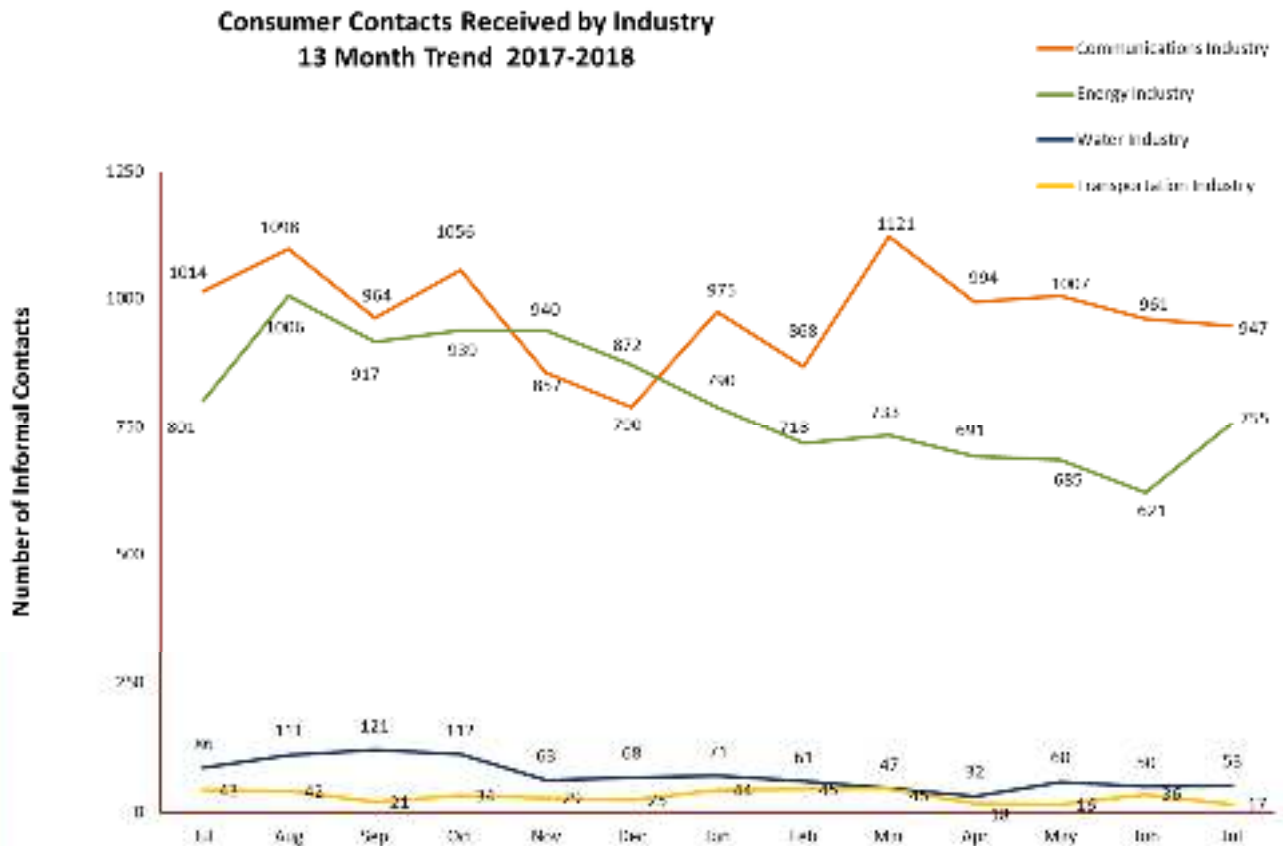
The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division (CPED) serves the public interest and the mission of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) by assisting consumers in resolving their informal complaints against service providers under the Commission's jurisdiction. CPED is proud to be able to assist consumers with an informal complaint resolution process, with answers to questions, and with referral information. In assisting consumers, we are able to gain a useful picture of consumer issues and trends.

This report is based on contacts (informal complaints and questions) received by the Consumer Affairs Branch (CAB) and the Transportation Enforcement Branch (TEB) within CPED, and presents both annual and monthly data for the communications, energy, water, and transportation industries. Page 2 presents annual trend data, and Page 3 through Page 6 report data by industry for the current month. For context, the report also includes comparable data from the previous month. Page 7 presents contact data specifically related to safety concerns, by industry. A glossary of terms used in this report can be found on Page 8.

The Consumer Protection and Enforcement Division serves as the first line of support for consumers of CPUC-regulated services. CPED collects and resolves consumer informal complaints, enforces laws and regulations governing transportation carriers, and investigates allegations of utility waste, fraud, and abuse.

Overview

1,772 CONTACTS (July 2018)



Overall, 1,772 total informal consumer contacts were received during July 2018 across the four regulated industries. July shows an increase of approximately 6.2% from the 1,668 informal contacts received during June 2018; and a 6.0% decrease from the prior 12-month average of 1,892.

Communications: 947 categorized informal contacts related to Communications were received during July 2018, which is a decrease of 1.5% from the 961 contacts received during June 2018. The contacts received during July shows to be 2.9% lower than the prior 12-month average of 975.

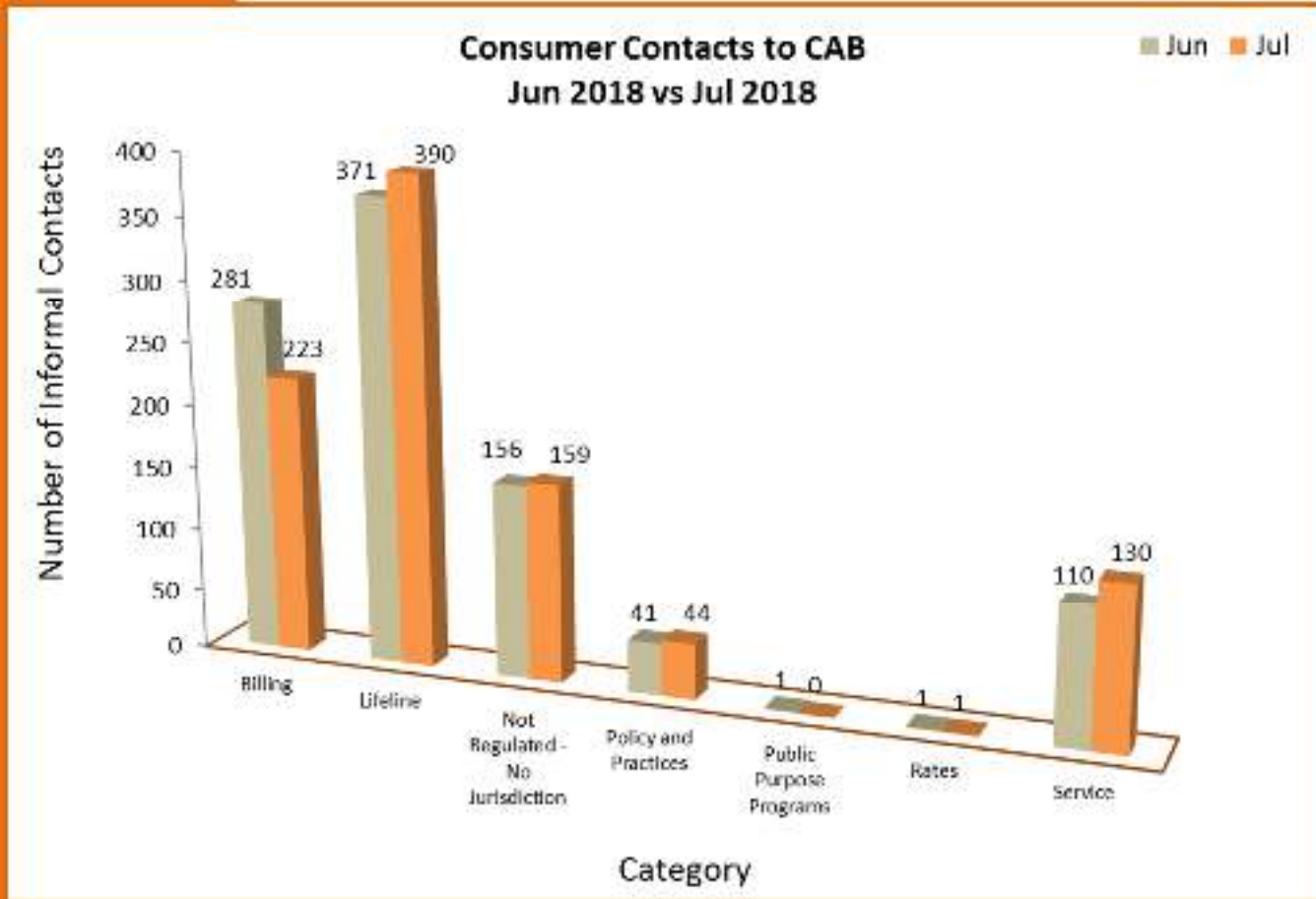
Energy: 755 categorized informal contacts related to Energy were received during July 2018, which is an increase of 21.6% from 621 contacts received during June 2018. Contacts received in July 2018 are 6.7% lower than the prior 12-month average of 809.

Water: 53 categorized informal contacts related to Water were received during July 2018. This is a 6.0% increase from the 50 contacts received in June 2018. Water contacts remain below average, with July 2018 being 28.0% lower than the prior 12-month average of 74.

Transportation: 17 categorized informal contacts related to Transportation were received during July 2018. July 2018 Transportation contacts are 52.8% lower than the 36 contacts in June 2018 and 48.7% lower than the prior 12-month average of 33. (Note: Transportation is no longer processing Household Good Carriers and Private Carrier complaints as of July 1st 2018, pursuant Senate Bill 19 (Hill, 2017))

Communications

947 CONTACTS (July 2018)



During July 2018, CAB received 947 Communications-related informal contacts, allocated into one of the defined categories of Billing, LifeLine, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

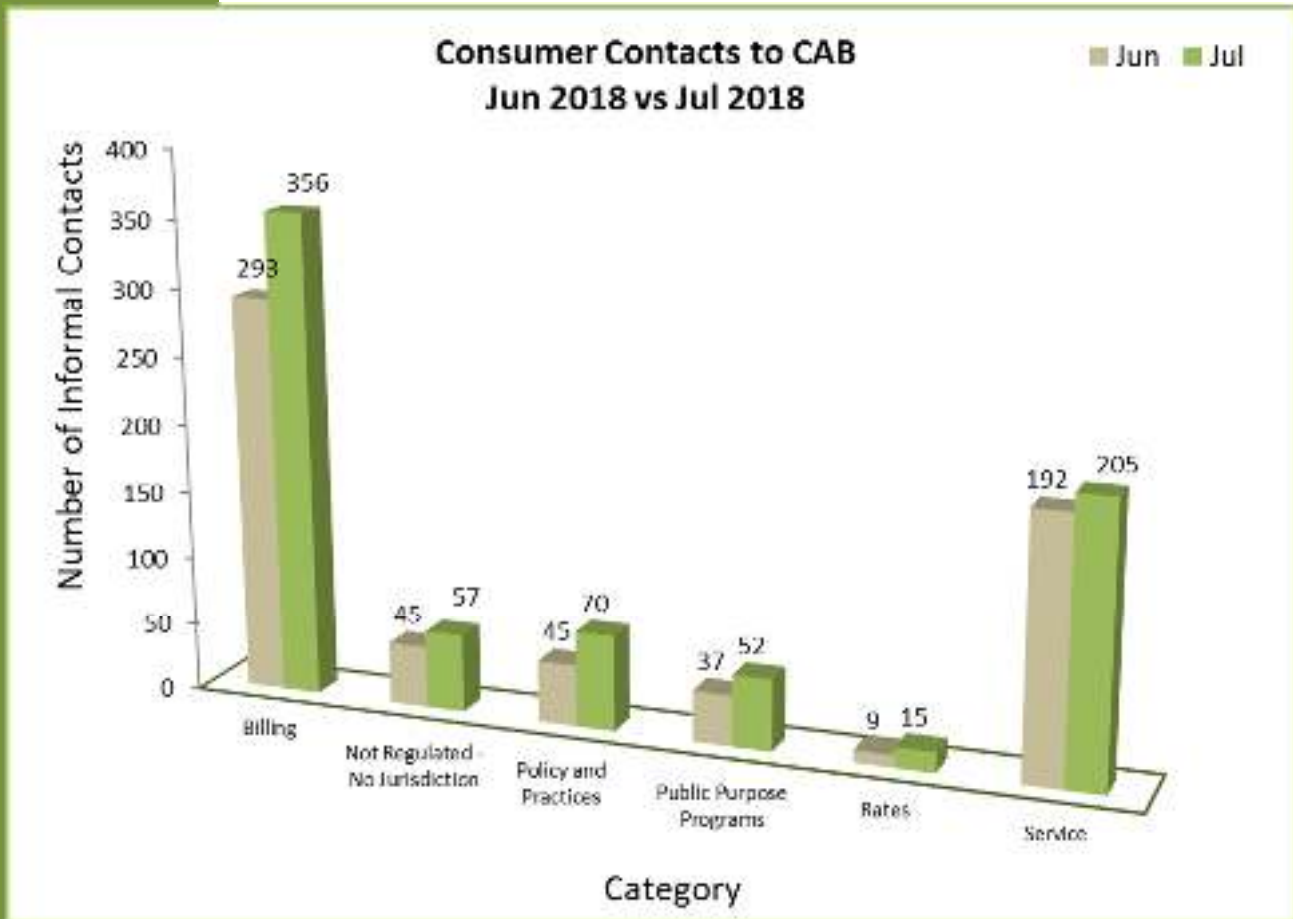
The Billing category shows a 20.6% decrease in contacts from June to July. There was no primary driver for the decrease in Billing contacts in July; likewise, the decrease was not associated with a particular carrier.

Service related cases rose due to the increase in Outage & Delayed appointment related cases. Although there was no primary driver for Delayed appointment cases, AT&T stood out as the primary driver for Outage related contacts in July.

In addition to the 947 categorized contacts, CAB received 151 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

Energy

755 CONTACTS (July 2018)



In July 2018, CAB received 755 Energy-related informal contacts allocated amongst the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

Energy Billing cases show a 21.5% increase from June to July. While several subcategories under Billing experienced an increase, High Bill was the most significant; this is common during the summer months. The majority of the High Bill contacts were spread across consumers of PG&E, Southern California Edison and San Diego Gas & Electric.

Policy and Practices contacts increased by 55.6% due to the increase of “Wildfire” related Safety contacts with PG&E in July. These contacts cover concerns regarding failing PG&E utility infrastructures that could result in Wildfires. This information is also captured on page 7 of this report under safety concerns by industry.

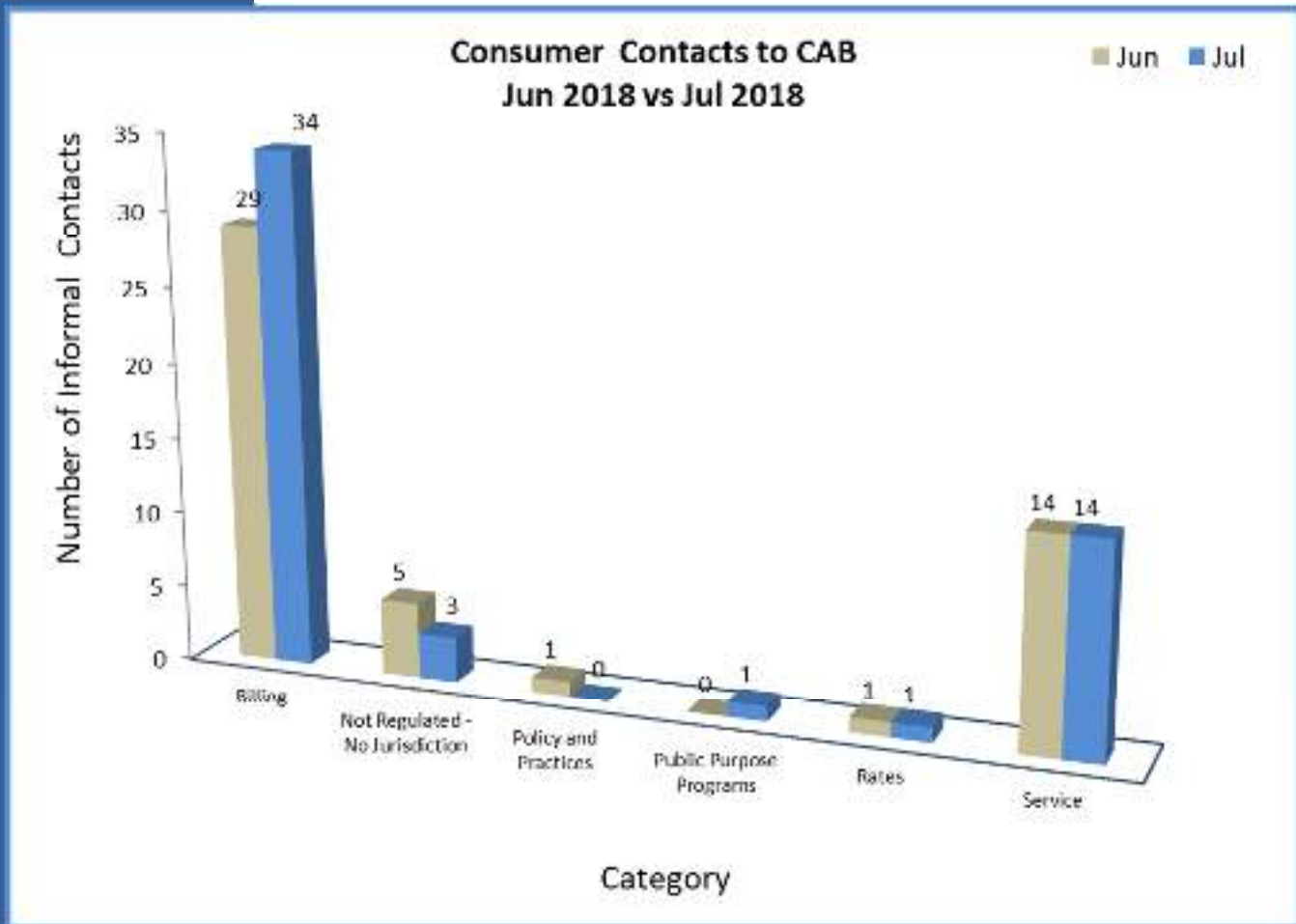
Public Purpose Programs related contacts increased by 40.5% from June to July. The main contributors for the increase are Net Energy Metering cases for both PG&E and Southern California Edison which rose equally from June to July.

In addition to the 755 categorized contacts, CAB also received 50 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.



Water

53 CONTACTS (July 2018)



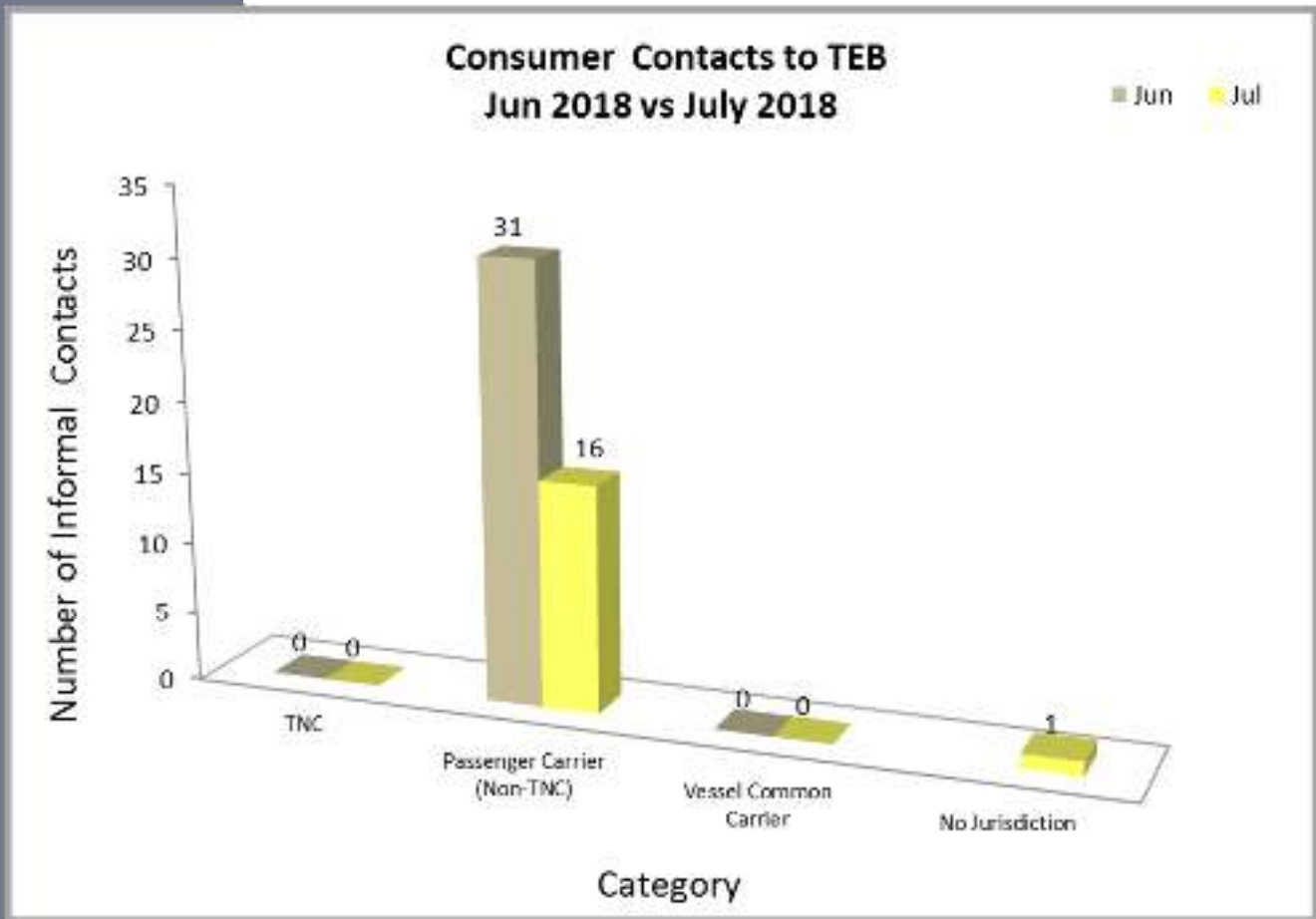
CAB received 53 Water-related informal contacts in July 2018, allocated into one of the six defined categories of Billing, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, or Service.

There is a noticeable increase of 17.2% in Billing-related contacts from June to July. The combination of a slight rise in contacts in High Bill and Payment Arrangement cases contributed to the total increase with no particular company as a primary driver.

In addition to the 53 categorized contacts, CAB also received 26 uncategorized (pending processing and misdirected) contacts.

Transportation

17 CONTACTS (July 2018)



In July 2018, TEB received 17 written complaints versus 36 for the month of June, a decrease of 55%.

The complaints decreased in part because the Commission no longer regulates household good carriers. Senate Bill 19 (Hill, 2017) transferred that function to the Department of Consumer Affairs effective July 1, 2018.

Passenger carrier complaints (limo, buses) decreased from 31 to 17 or about 55%. June 2018 passenger complaints included (9) for operating or advertising without a permit, (6) for loss and damage and (1) for safety issues.

Each of the complaints involved a specific carrier, so no trend or pattern could be attributed to the complaints relative to the over 9,000 carriers under CPUC jurisdiction.

Safety Concerns Across Industries

During July 2018, CPED received **59** safety-related contacts identified as having a safety concern component across the four reported industries. The contacts presented below are a subset of those presented on pages 3-6 of this report. Safety contacts are classified by the type of safety concern. *The increase in Energy Utility Infrastructure contacts in July was due to complaints pertaining to PG&E's failing or broken utility infrastructure that are perceived to affect Wildfire safety.*

Communications	9
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	4
Property Restoration	1
Utility Infrastructure	4

Energy	41
Consumer Property	3
Emergency Services/Health Concerns	4
Gas Leak	4
Property Restoration	8
Utility Infrastructure	22

Water	
No Safety Contacts	

Transportation	9
Operating Without Active Authority	9

Definitions for Safety-Related Contacts:

Company Practice includes service-related issues perceived to impact consumer safety such as lengthy appointment wait times for service restoration.

Consumer Property includes issues with consumer owned property such as unsafe appliances (heaters, stoves, etc.)

EMF/Power Surges/Voltage fluctuations include cases related to Electromagnetic Field (EMF) concerns (e.g. Smart Meters), consumer household power surges and electricity voltage fluctuations.

Emergency Services/ Health Concerns include immediate or perceived concerns due to potential outages or events, such as inability to reach 911 during phone outage, or failure of medical equipment during power outages.

Gas Leak includes any concerns related to gas leaks in the utility distribution system or in the consumer's premises.

Operating Without Active Authority involves operations without a valid permit or certificate, including operations with a suspended or revoked permit or certificate.

Property Restoration includes issues regarding ground hazards such as holes, trenches, tripping hazards, debris removal, tree trimming and street lighting.

Security Concerns includes issues perceived to impact consumer security such as phone line privacy issues, unlisted phone numbers, or utility personnel identification.

Utility Infrastructure includes issues regarding infrastructure that is faulty or in disrepair such as hanging cables, exposed wires, leaning utility poles, analog meters and transformers.

Water Safety or Quality includes immediate or perceived concerns relating to water quality such as color, odor or presence of chemicals in drinking water.

Definitions

Consumer Affairs Branch

The following definitions were compiled to assist with understanding consumer contacts information.

Type of Contacts Definitions	
Informal Consumer Contacts	Informal Contacts are consumers' communications received by CAB via phone calls, letters and electronic submissions (email/web form). Contacts can consist of complaints, questions, or feedback from consumers regarding the policies and practices of specific utilities or the CPUC. These contacts are reported as Categorized or Uncategorized.
Categorized Contacts	These are informal contacts which have sufficient information to be allocated into one the defined categories: Billing, Lifeline, Not Regulated-No Jurisdiction, Policy and Practices, Public Purpose Programs, Rates, and Service based on the primary (overarching) reason for the contact.
Uncategorized Contacts	These are contacts which are pending assignment, lack sufficient information to be processed (Unknown), or contacts in which the consumer intended to contact some other entity, and mistakenly contacted CAB (Misdirected).

Category Definitions	
Billing	Consumer contacts related to disputed items appearing on a consumer's utility bill, the appearance of the bill, or other utility charges.
Lifeline (Billing & Appeals)	Consumer contacts related to the Lifeline Program, which assists low income telecommunications customers. It includes items related to Lifeline Appeals or Lifeline Billing disputes.
Not Regulated – No Jurisdiction	Consumer contacts related to concerns, disputes, and issues where the CPUC does not have jurisdiction.
Policy and Practices	Consumer contacts related to utility and/or CPUC policies and practices.
Public Purpose Programs	Consumer contacts related to programs that assist utility consumers, including income-based and disability-based programs.
Rates	Consumer contacts related to rate design, rate protests and baseline rates.
Service	Consumer contacts related to the service provided to the consumer by the utility.
Uncategorized Definitions	
Misdirected	Consumer contacts intended for some other entity such as consumer attempting to contact their utility. CAB assists these consumers by redirecting them to the entity best able to address their concerns.
Pending Assignment	Category not identified due to case pending processing.
Unknown	Category not identified due to lack of information from consumer.