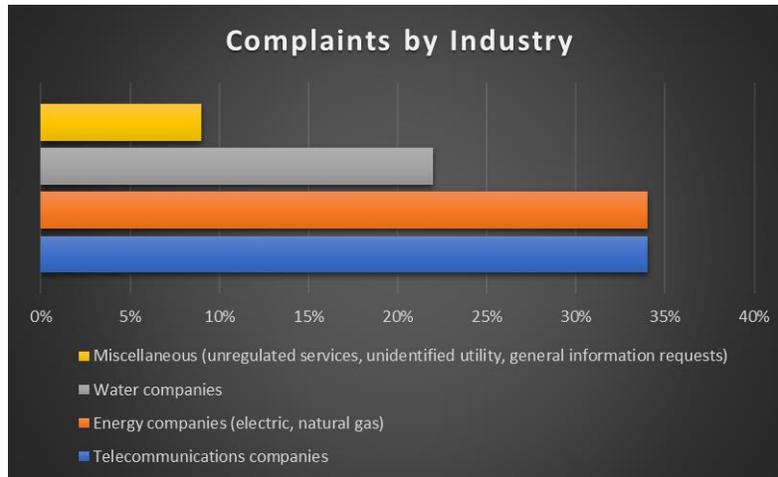


CONSUMER ASSISTANCE

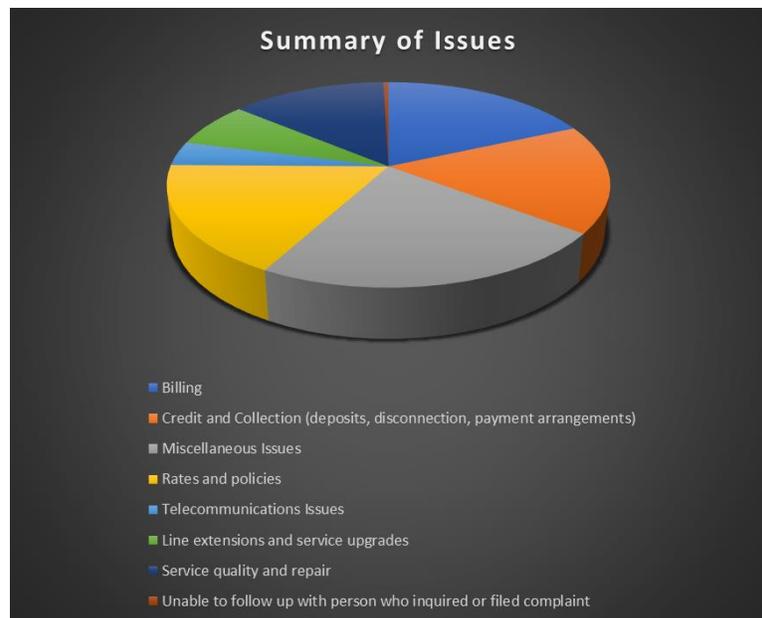
Commission issues annual consumer assistance report

The Consumer Assistance staff responded to 1,038 complaints and inquiries in fiscal year 2020, 98 percent of which were from residential customers.

The chart below illustrates the complaints and inquiries by industry.



The chart below summarizes the types of issues reported to the Commission. While the Consumer Assistance staff is able to respond to most inquiries without extensive research, about 75 percent of complaints required investigation by the staff. Approximately 52 percent of investigations resulted in reversal or modification of the utility’s original action. Payment terms were negotiated in 11 percent of the investigations.



REGULATING IDAHO'S RAILROADS

The Commission conducts inspections of Idaho's railroads to determine compliance with state and federal laws, rules and regulations concerning the transportation of hazardous materials, locomotive cab safety and sanitation rules, and railroad/highway grade crossings.

Hazardous material inspections are conducted in rail yards.

In 1994, Idaho was invited to participate in the Federal Railroad Administration's State Participation Program. The commission has a State Program Manager and one FRA certified hazardous material inspector.

The commission inspects railroad-highway grade crossings where incidents occur, investigates citizen complaints of unsafe or rough crossings and conducts railroad-crossing surveys.

The commission also plays a role when rail lines are abandoned.

More than 900 miles of railroad track in Idaho have been abandoned since 1976.

Federal law governs rail line abandonments, and the federal Surface Transportation Board (STB), formerly the Interstate Commerce Commission, decides the final outcome of abandonment applications.

Under Idaho law, however, after a railroad files its federal notice of intent to abandon, the Idaho commission must determine whether the proposed abandonment would adversely affect the public interest. The commission then reports its findings to the STB.

In reaching a conclusion, the Commission considers whether abandonment would adversely affect the service area, impair market access or access of Idaho communities to vital goods and services, and whether the line has a potential for profitability.

Railroad Activity Summary

Rail Safety Category	Totals
Idaho Railroad Track Miles	1710/996 Class I *
Hazmat Inspections	332
Rail Cars inspected	16,455
Railcar Violations	24
Railcar Defects	637
Railroad Grade Crossings Inspected	170
Crossing Accidents Investigated	2
Crossing Complaints Investigated	3
Crossing Complaints Validated	7
Locomotives Inspected	3
Locomotive defects	0

*Source: ITD `(2017)

REGULATING IDAHO'S PIPELINES

Idaho Code 61-515 empowers the Commission to require every utility to “maintain and operate its line, plant, system, equipment, apparatus, and premises in such a manner that promote and safeguard the health and safety of its employees, customers and the public.”

Pursuant to 49 U.S.C. Section 60105, Chapter 601, the Commission is a certified partner with the U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline Hazardous Material Safety Administration.

The federal/state partnership provides the statutory basis for the pipeline safety program and establishes a framework for promoting pipeline safety through federal delegation to the states for all or part of the responsibility for intrastate natural gas pipeline facilities under annual certification.

Under the certification, Idaho assumes inspection and enforcement responsibility with respect to more than 8,300 miles of intrastate natural gas pipelines over which it has jurisdiction under state law. With the certification, Idaho may adopt additional or more stringent standards for intrastate pipeline facilities provided the standards are compatible with federal regulations. The Idaho Commission has a state program manager and three trained and certified pipeline safety inspectors who conduct records audits and field installed equipment inspections on all intrastate natural gas pipeline operators under its jurisdiction.

Pipeline Summary Activity

Regulating Idaho's Pipelines	
Standard inspection days	146.5
Compliance inspection days	4
Damage prevention inspection days	7.5
Construction inspection days	125
Operator Qualification inspection days	5
Integrity Management Program inspection days	10.5
Incident/Accident inspection days	0
Operator Training inspection days	28

Compliance Enforcement Actions	
Notice of probable violation	17
Notice of amendment	0
Warning letters	0

This report satisfies Idaho Code 61-214; this is a “full and complete account” of the most significant cases to come before the commission during the 2020 calendar year. (The financial report on Page 7 covers Fiscal Year July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2020.) Anyone with access to the Internet may also review the commission’s agendas, notices, case information and decisions by visiting the IPUC’s Web site at: www.puc.idaho.gov. Commission records are also available for public inspection at the commission’s Boise office, 11331 W. Chinden Blvd., Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission, as outlined in its Strategic Plan, serves the citizens and utilities of Idaho by determining fair, just and reasonable rates for utility commodities and services that are to be delivered safely, reliably and efficiently. During the period covered by this report, the commission also had responsibility for ensuring all rail services operating within Idaho do so in a safe and efficient manner. The commission also has a pipeline safety section that oversees the safe operation of the intrastate natural gas pipelines and facilities in Idaho.

Costs associated with this publication are available from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission in accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code, PUC 12-100-2019.

