



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF CONSUMER COUNSEL
NEWS RELEASE**

Acting Consumer Counsel Richard E. Sobolewski

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**ACTING CONSUMER COUNSEL RICHARD E. SOBOLEWSKI ANNOUNCES
RELEASE OF MUNICIPAL SURVEY ON PUBLIC UTILITY RESPONSE TO
TROPICAL STORM ISAIAS**

Connecticut Municipalities Impacted by Tropical Storm Isaias are Encouraged to Submit Responses Detailing Recovery and Outreach Efforts by Eversource and United Illuminating

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (October 13, 2020) – Acting Consumer Counsel Richard E. Sobolewski announced today that the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) has released a [survey](#) to all Connecticut municipalities seeking information on the municipalities’ experiences regarding the response and restoration efforts by Connecticut’s public utilities in the wake of Tropical Storm Isaias. Municipal officials are encouraged to provide responses to the survey, which seeks additional information on electricity, water, natural gas, telecommunications, and Internet service disruptions as well as the outreach, communications, and assistance provided to municipalities by the public utilities and other relevant entities. Survey results will assist the OCC in identifying and prioritizing areas of concern related to the storm response and will inform the OCC’s advocacy on behalf of ratepayers in upcoming investigative and enforcement proceedings being conducted by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA).

“Our towns and cities were on the fronts lines of the response to Tropical Storm Isaias and their input and experiences are crucially important to the OCC as we move forward,” said Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski. “In the aftermath of Isaias, we need the help of municipalities to better understand which response protocols worked, which ones did not, and what needs to change. I encourage all municipalities to respond to the survey.” Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski thanked the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities for their input in developing the survey.

“Following Irene, the October Snowstorm, and Sandy, the feedback we received from municipalities allowed OCC to identify major trends in what went wrong with the utility storm responses and what worked,” said John R. Viglione, an Economist with the OCC. “Obtaining similar data related to Isaias will allow us to build a more comprehensive picture of the storm response and advocate for meaningful reforms during PURA’s investigation.”

The OCC issued a similar survey to Connecticut municipalities following the 2011 and 2012 storms. The responses to that survey aided the OCC and other stakeholders in advocating for the various storm response reforms that PURA ultimately imposed on Eversource and United Illuminating. By assembling a comparable set of data nearly a decade after those storms will assist the OCC in understanding how the response to Isaias differed and what the on the ground impacts on municipalities entailed.

The OCC's municipal survey may be accessed at this [link](#) and should be completed by an appropriate public official from each municipality. The survey is also available on the OCC's [website](#). Respondents with questions about the survey or that require additional assistance or accommodation should contact the OCC by telephone at 860-827-2900 or by e-mail at occ.info@ct.gov.

PURA is currently conducting a proceeding to investigate the utility response to Isaias in Docket No. 20-08-03. PURA is scheduled to hold three upcoming public comment hearings on the response to Isaias on October 21, 22, and 23 via Zoom. Full evidentiary hearings are scheduled to commence in December. The OCC intends to actively participate in this proceeding to ensure that the views of ratepayers are adequately represented. Many of the municipalities most severely impacted by Isaias are also directly participating. Up to date information on upcoming public hearings and registration information may be accessed by the public on PURA's [Calendar of Events](#).

Acting Consumer Counsel Sobolewski thanked his staff involved in this matter, especially Attorneys Thomas Wiehl, Andrew W. Minikowski, and Burt Cohen, Economist John R. Viglione, and Secretary Melody Mendez.

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The Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) is the State of Connecticut's advocate for consumers on issues relating to electricity, natural gas, water, and telecommunications. For more information, visit www.ct.gov/occ.