

Consumer Affairs & Public Information

Vermont Department of Public Service

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Consumer Affairs & Public Information (CAPI)

The Consumer Affairs & Public Information (CAPI) Division at the Department of Public Service advocates for policies that protect consumer interests, educates consumers about utility issues, and helps people and businesses reach an informal resolution of their disputes with regulated and non-regulated utilities.

Contact Us

- For the staff person on call at Consumer Affairs dial toll free, 800-622-4496 or 802-828-2332
- [Consumer Contact Email Address:
psd.consumer@vermont.gov](mailto:psd.consumer@vermont.gov)
- [Online Consumer Complaint Form](https://capi.epsd.vermont.gov/) at <https://capi.epsd.vermont.gov/>

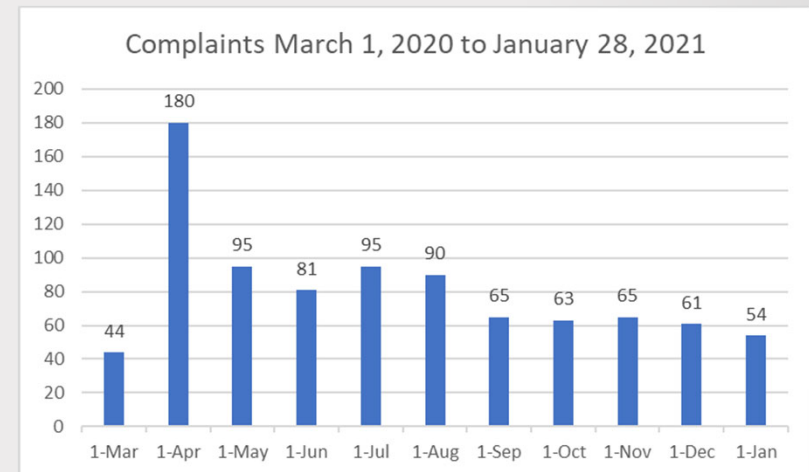
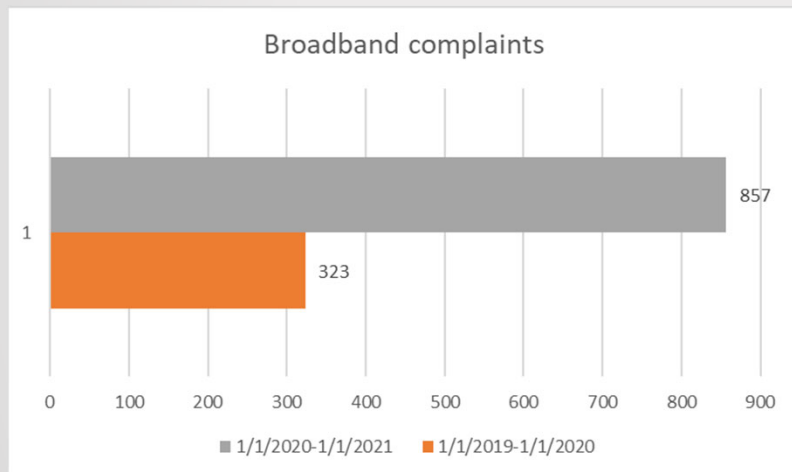
Informal Consumer Complaint Resolution

- CAPI attempts to informally resolve disputes between consumers and utilities.
- Specialists will research consumer complaints about utilities or companies that are subject to utility regulation by the Department and negotiate with utility staff and consumers to informally resolve complaints.
- If rule violations are found, utilities will be advised and provided training or support to make corrections as needed. When necessary, concerns are escalated.

Make Referrals to and Work with the Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program

- The AGO's CAP handles complaints about satellite TV (i.e., Dish and DirectTV) but refers complaints to CAPI about any bundled packages that include the provision of internet service.
- CAPI flags practices that might be UDAP violations (unfair or deceptive acts or practices in violation of the Consumer Protection Act) for referral back to the AGO's CAP for review or investigation. For instance, false advertising claims or situations where a business is closing are referred to the AGO.
- CAPI handles wireless complaints as well as internet service provider complaints (even though they aren't regulated by the Department) due to its internal resources and as outlined in our working agreement with the AGO.

Broadband Complaints Increased Dramatically at the Beginning of the Pandemic and Continued at More than Double the Normal Contact Rates



- ***Complaints re: Line Extensions for Internet*** 99 complaints in all, 65 were about cable bundles and another 34 complaints just for Internet line extensions
- ***Slow Speeds*** account for 34% of complaints made about broadband
- ***Unreliable*** 20% of the complaints cite service repairs & outages and another 5% cited reliability specifically

Affordability and Availability

53% of broadband complaints are about availability (19%) and service delivery (34%) including slow speeds, reliability, repeated service drops, etc. Just 11 complaints mention affordability specifically.