

# Georgia Power ranks number one in J.D. Power residential customer satisfaction study



Wednesday, July 12, 2017 - An increase in power outage information along with higher price satisfaction are the top drivers of the sixth consecutive year of improved customer satisfaction with residential electric utility companies, according to the J.D. Power 2017 Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study,<sup>SM</sup> released today.

Overall satisfaction averages 719 (on a 1,000-point scale) in 2017, a 39-point improvement from 2016. A 39-point increase in the power quality & reliability factor (767) and a 48-point increase in the price factor (659) are key contributors to the year-over-year improvement in overall satisfaction. Price satisfaction increases, as customers provide their utility with higher ratings for ease of understanding pricing, total monthly cost and fairness of pricing.

The study finds that more utility customers (66% vs. 59% in 2016) are getting critical information during a power outage, such as the cause of the outage, number of customers affected and estimates on when power will be restored. Overall satisfaction among customers who receive outage information is much higher than among those who do not receive such information (716 vs. 683, respectively).

Following are some of the key findings of the study:

**Customers believe their utility infrastructure is being updated:** A larger percentage of customers in 2017 believe their utility is focused on improving the infrastructure to improve safety and reliability, compared with 2016 (68% vs. 63%, respectively).

**Electronic bill-pay is increasing:** Utility messaging to encourage customers to move away from paying their bill with a check by mail has helped reduce mail payments by 3 percentage points year over year (17% vs. 20%, respectively).

**Paperless communications on the rise:** Less than half (43%) of customers recall communications from their utility; however, the source of communications is changing across the industry. Year over year, paper bill insert recall has decreased to 33% from 36%, while there has been an increase in the number of customers going directly to the utility website (15% vs. 12% in 2016) and those who

receive emails from their utility (25% vs. 21% in 2016).

**Website access is going mobile:** More than one-third (35%) of customers are now accessing their utility's website either by a mobile phone or by a tablet, which is a 15% increase from 2016.

### Study Rankings

The Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study ranks midsize, large and cooperative utility companies in four geographic regions: East, Midwest, South and West. Companies in the midsize utility segment serve between 100,000 and 499,999 residential customers, while companies in the large utility segment serve 500,000 or more residential customers.

### South Region

**Georgia Power** ranks highest in the large utility segment in the South region with a score of 761. Florida Power & Light (757) ranks

Following are some of the key findings of the study:

**Customers believe their utility infrastructure is being updated:** A larger percentage of customers in 2017 believe their utility is focused on improving the infrastructure to improve safety and reliability, compared with 2016 (68% vs. 63%, respectively).

**Electronic bill-pay is increasing:** Utility messaging to encourage customers to move away from paying their bill with a check by mail has helped reduce mail payments by 3 percentage points year over year (17% vs. 20%, respectively).

**Paperless communications on the rise:** Less than half (43%) of customers recall communications from their utility; however, the source of communications is changing across the industry. Year over year, paper bill insert recall has decreased to 33% from 36%, while there has been an increase in the number of customers going directly to the utility website (15% vs. 12% in 2016) and those who receive emails from their utility (25% vs. 21% in 2016).

**Website access is going mobile:** More than one-third (35%) of customers are now accessing their utility's website either by a mobile phone or by a tablet, which is a 15% increase from 2016.

### Study Rankings

The Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study ranks midsize, large and cooperative utility companies in four geographic regions: East, Midwest, South and West. Companies in the midsize utility segment serve between 100,000 and 499,999 residential customers, while companies in the large utility segment serve 500,000 or more residential customers.

### South Region

**Georgia Power** ranks highest in the large utility segment in the South region with a score of 761. Florida Power & Light (757) ranks Salt River Project (SRP) ranks highest in the large utility segment in the West region for the 16th consecutive year, with a score of 775. SMUD (750) ranks second, followed by Portland General Electric (746) in third and Southern California Edison (727) in fourth.

Clark Public Utilities ranks highest in the midsize utility segment in the West region for the 10th consecutive year, with a score of 776. Idaho Power (743) ranks second, followed Seattle City Light (741) in third and Colorado Springs Utilities (740) in fourth.

### Cooperatives Segment

SECO Energy ranks highest in the cooperatives segment with a score of 789. NOVEC (788) ranks second, followed by Sawnee EMC (786) in third and Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) and Walton EMC rank fourth in a tie (783 each).

The Electric Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study, now in its 19th year, measures customer satisfaction with electric utility companies by examining six factors: power quality & reliability; price; billing & payment; corporate citizenship; communications; and customer service. The study is based on responses from 99,145 online interviews conducted from July 2016 through May 2017 among residential customers of the 138 largest electric utility brands across the United States, which collectively represent more than 98 million households.