



Office of the Utilities Consumer Advocate (UCA)

October 2008



UCA Governance Advisory Board

- **Appointed in early 2008**
- **Includes:**
 - **AUMA**
 - **Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops**
 - **Federation of REAs**
 - **AAMD&C**
 - **Alberta Chambers of Commerce**
 - **4 Members-at-large**



Role of Governance Advisory Board

- **To provide the UCA with direction in regulatory matters through collaborative intervention**
- **To make recommendations to the Minister of Service Alberta regarding the budget of the Office, the appointment of the Advocate and Government policy**



History of the UCA

- **Established in 2003 to represent small consumers in utility regulation and policy matters**
- **Established a mediation centre for individual consumer concerns**
- **Provides information to consumers on the competitive energy market**



UCA represents



**Residential
consumers**



**Small commercial
consumers**



Farm consumers



Municipal Services



UCA's Key Functions

- 1. Regulatory representation**
- 2. Consumer education & information**
- 3. Mediation services**



Regulatory Representation

- **Intervened in hundreds of regulatory proceedings, court cases, negotiated settlements and EUB/AUC hearings**
- **Influenced policy to benefit consumers**
- **Achieved over \$375 million in reductions to requested rates**



Consumer Education

- **Website focusing on energy choices, energy conservation, reading bills and the industry**
The website averages about 200,000 visits per month
- **Speaking engagements throughout Alberta to gather information on consumer concerns and to discuss energy matters**





Consumer Mediation...

Since inception, assisted more than 50,000 Albertans by providing information, advice and mediation services related to energy issues.



The top three concerns are:

- Retail contracts**
- Billing**
- Customer service**



The UCA's future



- Increased emphasis on energy education and choices**



- Help consumers conserve energy more wisely**



- Efficient, collaborative regulatory intervention**



**Call the UCA at 310-4UCA
(310-4822)**

**Visit the website at
www.ucahelps.gov.ab.ca**