

ASSEMBLY, No. 5874

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 14, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman HERB CONAWAY, JR.

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman KEVIN J. ROONEY

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Dunn

SYNOPSIS

Requires electric, gas, and water public utilities to disseminate outage information to customers through autodialed telephone call, text message, and electronic mail alert service.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/24/2021)

1 AN ACT requiring electric, gas, and water public utilities to
2 disseminate information concerning service outages through
3 autodialed telephone calls, text messages, and electronic mail
4 and supplementing Title 48 of the Revised Statutes.

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6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
7 of New Jersey:

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9 1. a. An electric, gas, and water public utility, as defined in
10 R.S.48:2-13, shall develop and implement a plan to disseminate to
11 customers, through an autodialed telephone call, text message, and
12 electronic mail alert service maintained by the public utility,
13 information concerning a service outage using the customer contact
14 information on record with the utility. The disseminated
15 information shall include, but not be limited to:

16 (1) the location and estimated length of the service outage;

17 (2) contact information for the public utility and emergency
18 services;

19 (3) information on how to report any other service problem
20 related to the service outage; and

21 (4) any relevant updates to address the service outage as the
22 situation progresses.

23 b. The Office of Emergency Management, the Division of State
24 Police, and any other appropriate State, county, or municipal entity
25 may disseminate information made available by a public utility
26 pursuant to subsection a. of this section.

27 c. As used in this section:

28 “Autodialed telephone call” means a telephone call made using
29 equipment that makes a series of telephone calls to stored telephone
30 numbers using an artificial or prerecorded voice message.

31 “Service outage” means any discontinuance of electric, gas, or
32 water public utility service beyond the control of the public utility
33 providing that service. “Service outage” shall not include the
34 discontinuance of service to a customer for bill nonpayment.

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36 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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41 This bill requires an electric, gas, and water public utility
42 (utility) to develop and implement a plan to disseminate information
43 concerning service outages through an autodialed telephone call
44 (robocall), text message, and electronic mail alert service, using the
45 customer contact information on record with the utility. The
46 robocall, text message, and electronic mail alert service is to be

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1 maintained by the utility and is to disseminate information such as
2 the location and estimated length of the service outage, contact
3 information for the utility and emergency services, information on
4 how to report any other service problem related to the service
5 outage, and any relevant updates as the situation to address the
6 service outage progresses.

7 The bill allows appropriate State, county, and municipal entities
8 to disseminate information made available by the utilities through
9 their own robocall, text message, and electronic mail alert services.