

# ENERGY

## FOCUS

A NEWSLETTER BY THE INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSION

# SUSTAINABLE ENERGY THE WAY FORWARD

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# DOMINICA GEOTHERMAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (DGDC) LICENCE

In July 2020, the Dominica Geothermal Development Company (DGDC) Ltd. applied for a utility scale generation license as required for any electricity generation company within the electricity sector and in keeping with the provisions of Electricity Supply Act No. 10 of 2006. Part VI Clauses 28 to 31.

Upon receipt of the application the Commission immediately applied and followed its rules and regulations from its License procedures document reference 2009/001/D.

The notice of application was advertised in both local newspapers for sixty days to September 3rd, 2020. The Commission received no objections from the public associated with the application and have proceeded to work with the DGDC in ensuring that all areas are covered by the license that will be

awarded to them.

Legal assistance in reviewing the license document for the Commission was obtained from Tractebel; the DGDC's legal team also had some input. The final draft license document was developed and met with no objections from any of the parties related to the negotiation.

The license has been finalized.





# SUSTAINABLE RENEWABLE ENERGY PLAN (S-REP) CONSULTATION

A virtual public consultation on the Sustainable Renewable Energy Plan (S-REP) was held on August 12th, 2020 as per its mandate provided for under the Electricity Supply Act No. 10 of 2006 Part VIII, Clause 40 (j) and (k). It was well attended by thirty-one stakeholders. This S-REP was officially delivered and accepted by the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica as the road map to Dominica developing its sustainable renewable energy base as well as securing all its electricity needs from renewable energy by the year 2030.

Various scenarios are depicted in the S-REP from which the economic viability of various generation mixes was assessed with due consideration given to the optimal generation mix that least cost tariffs can be derived from.

The Commission is committed to follow this road map as a guide. Changes with the electricity sector such as the increase in the size of the geothermal

plant to be built at Laudat and the associated 66kV transmission line to be built to move that power efficiently from the Roseau Valley has warranted studies that will provide updates to this S-REP.

A non-confidential copy of this S-REP can be downloaded from the Commission's website at [www.ircdominica.org](http://www.ircdominica.org).



## IRC INCOMING STAFF

### WELCOME!

The Commission welcomes its newest employee in the person of Miss Nikita Sylvester. Ms. Sylvester came on board as the Accounting Officer of the Commission on July 1<sup>ST</sup> 2020.



# UPCOMING TARIFF REVIEW-2021

A new tariff review for DOMLEC has been on the table since the inception of the Independent Regulatory Commission (IRC). The initial outcome of the early processes by the Commission to implement this tariff review in 2014 was met with resistance from DOMLEC that led to DOMLEC seeking redress from the Court since their request for a review of the methodology (used in the derivation of the critical inputs), that was employed by the Commission was denied.

DOMLEC suffered severe damage to its network infrastructure and generation plants by the passage of Hurricane Maria in September 2017. With due consideration of the damage done to DOMLEC's assets by this hurricane and the costs incurred in the restoration and rebuilding of these damaged

assets the Commission thought it fitting to extend a concession to DOMLEC by forfeiting the tariff determination for 2014 on the premise that the Court matter against the IRC be discontinued and any new tariff review exercise undertaken would be as if it was the first

A concession was extended to DOMLEC by the Commission whereby consideration was given to the fact that DOMLEC spent a huge amount in reconstructing and restoring their network and generation plant and that in all prudence thought it expedient to forfeit the tariff determination for 2014 if DOMLEC discontinues the Court matter against the IRC and start afresh with a new tariff review exercise.

Consequently, the Commission communicated its position to DOMLEC and after one year and six months DOMLEC decided to discontinue the Court matter. Consequently, this has now cleared the path for a new tariff review that should start in the new year, 2021.

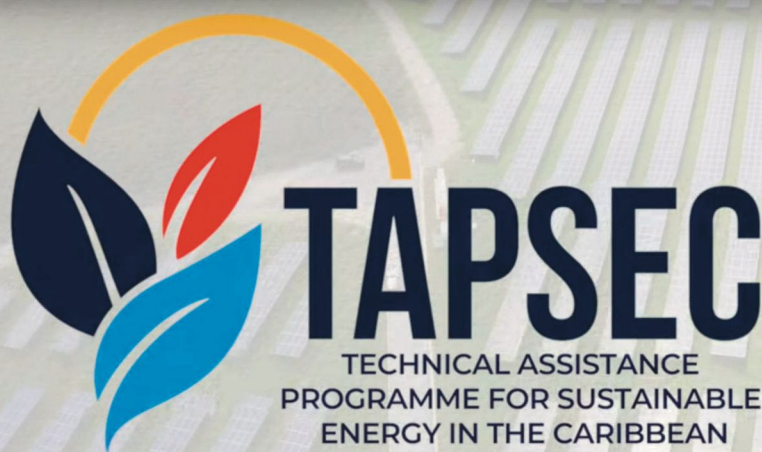
The Commission is in the process of developing a public relations campaign geared at educating and informing the public as to the process as well as exposing them to some of the costs that DOMLEC incurred and must recover in order to repay the huge sum of money that was used to rebuild their system.





# TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY IN THE CARIBBEAN (TAPSEC)

TAPSEC was created to assist islands in the Caribbean region in their transition to a more sustainable and efficient low-carbon and climate-compatible development by developing a pathway for increasing and improving access to modern, affordable and sustainable energy services for all citizens of the Caribbean.



Their mission is to lead the implementation of policy, information and capacity development, and finance interventions towards the implementation of the CARICOM Energy Policy (CEP), the Caribbean Sustainable Energy Road Map (C-SERM) and the various national energy policies and strategies of Caribbean states.

Consequently, their help desk that receives request for assistance was launched in mid-2020. The CARICOM Energy Policy and Regulations Help Desk aims to provide CARICOM Member States with the required technical support to develop an enabling environment to accelerate the Sustainable Energy transition.

To realize this mandate, the CARICOM Energy

Policy and Regulations Help Desk will facilitate the provision of technical assistance services for:

1. The modernization of energy policies and legislation as well as the implementation of actions/programmes consistent with national policy objectives; and
2. The review or modernization of regulatory frameworks, regulatory support and electric utility services.

After becoming aware of the existence of TAPSEC, the Commission proactively approached the help desk for more information as to the assistance that is offered and proceeded based on the information communicated to apply for assistance.

Further information on TAPSEC can be obtained at <https://tapsec.org/policyhelpdesk/>

The Independent Regulatory Commission (IRC) has deposited two applications to TAPSEC for implementation under Lot 2 – which is TAPSEC's categorization for utility and regulation support.

The first application speaks to a study for the determination of the optimal intermittent renewable energy (RE) facilities that can be connected to the national grid appended with an economic analysis that will feed into the development of a policy framework for guiding these RE interventions; and

The second application requests assistance on the review and development of existing regulation and legislation for the electricity sector.

TAPSEC is currently reviewing these applications. TAPSEC's mandate ends in November 2021

# HOME ELECTRICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST & RECOMMENDED REMEDY



**Are there young children in the home and if so, do all unused electrical outlets have safety covers?**

Be very mindful that children can suffer serious shock burn injuries if they insert objects into outlets

**Are all outlets and switches cool to the touch?**

Usually warm outlets or switches may indicate an unsafe wiring condition exist such as a loose electrical connection that can start a fire. It is best to stop using them until an electrician checks the problem.

## IN THE LIVING ROOM

**Is your entertainment equipment placed in a manner that air can circulate around it?**

Blocking air flow to an equipment can cause overheating and possibly a fire hazard. Move equipment so it has room to “breathe” Avoid

closing equipment in a cabinet without proper openings and do not store papers around equipment.

**Is any cord placed where it might be stepped on?**

Cords placed in the path of traffic are tripping hazards. They can also be damaged when stepped on hence creating a shock hazard. Move all cords so they are out of the path of foot traffic.

## IN THE BATHROOM

**Are all appliances unplugged when not in use?**

Even when turned off, plugged-in electrical appliances may cause a shock hazard if they fall into water. Sometimes, a worn switch may get turned on with no one touching it: Unplug all small appliances when not in use.

**Is there smoke, sparks or a funny noise etc. while using a specific appliance?**

Irregular operation is a sign of damage to electrical parts. Damaged appliances can become a shock or a fire hazard. Discard appliances or have them repaired.

## ELECTRICAL GARDEN TOOLS

**Are corded electrical power tools used around ponds or other wet or damp areas?**

An electrical tool in water is a potential electrocution hazard. Avoid using corded tools in damp or wet location. If a tool gets wet, unplug it before touching it. If a tool was accidentally immersed in water, have it tested at a qualified repair center before trying to use it again.

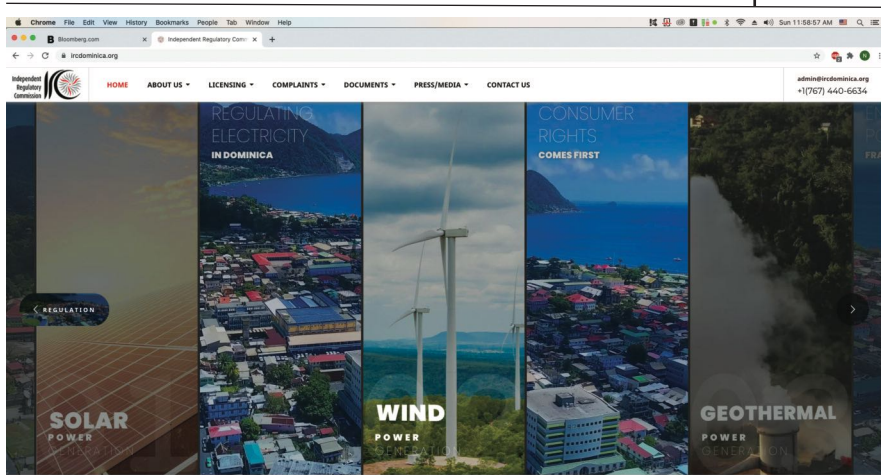
**Are all power cords in good conditions e.g. free of cracks or exposed wires?**



# INDEPENDENT REGULATORY COMMISSION - NEW WEBSITE

The new website for the Independent Regulatory Commission has been launched with a new look and feel. This enhanced website is a significant update to the previous. It is hoped that the tech-savvy

members of the public will encounter a new and enriched website experience that will allow them to navigate efficiently in obtaining any or all information that is sought.



The Commission is now looking into Phase II of its online presence that will allow for expanding the reach of the Commission through the efficient use of appropriate social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Live Chat, Linked-In and Instagram.

Notwithstanding the above, the traditional forms of disseminating information to the general public will still be utilized.

## UPDATE ON PROSPECTIVE SITE FOR UTILITY SCALE PHOTO-VOLTAIC GENERATION PROJECT

In the last issue, mention was made of this utility scale photovoltaic project for Tarou. To date, the de-risking of the site has been implemented with the establishment of the survey boundaries, the geo-technical survey and other related activities, except for the environmental, social impact analysis. The size of the plant for the acreage

available was also derived.

Additionally, the consultants that were engaged through the Ministry of Energy that is the Clinton Climate Initiative(CCI) performed an economic analysis to determine the best ownership model that would allow for the best benefit to the Government and the public.



It is noteworthy that both qualitative and quantitative inputs based on prevailing circumstances will be given due consideration as the Commission works towards a decision that is workable for all parties involved.



# GENERATOR SAFETY TIPS

**Here are a few tips that would be useful in protecting you from hazards that could arise from generating your own electricity.**

**If you are generating from a diesel generator ensure the following:**

- Use a qualified electrician to install your backup generator
- Never fill the generator tank with fuel while it is in use. This is a serious fire hazard. Turn off the generator and allow it to cool before refueling. Do not smoke or have open flames nearby when dealing with fuel.
- Keep generators positioned outside at least 15ft away from open windows so exhaust does not enter your home/business or a neighboring home or business. Be conscious of ventilation. Exhaust scrubbers can also be used in order to reduce emissions from generators.
- Do not overload your generators- it is necessary to be aware of the kilowatt (kw) rating of your generator. Overloading your generator can damage the generator and can be a fire hazard. Do not try to plug every appliance into the generator if it does not have the power rating necessary.
- Disconnect the utility's (DOMLEC) power source coming into your home/business. If this is not done, the power can be sent back along DOMLEC's line causing an electrocution hazard for linesmen and the general public. This is particularly important if lines are down after a storm.





# OLD UNSAFE DOMLEC UTILITY POLE – REMOVAL PROJECT



have all these old unsafe poles removed as a matter of protecting the safety to life and property of the public as required. The Independent Regulatory Commission in the exercising of its mandate in regulating the electricity sector as per the Electricity Supply Act 2006 No.10 of 2006. Specifically Part VI Clause 30 (6) has the responsibility to protect the environment and ensure the security of the public from unsafe practices by the electric utility.

DOMLEC is cooperating in having all unsafe poles removed and by extension is working with the telecommunication companies to execute this project

However the lack of cooperation by these telecommunication entities have resulted in these old unsafe poles

Based on DOMLEC's reporting, approximately over 1,000 old and unsafe poles remain in service with telecommunication hardware that does not allow ease of removal unless this hardware is transferred.

The Commission has been proactive in writing the telecommunication companies and given its legal mandate in regulating the electricity sector have set a deadline of April 2021 for these companies to comply in the removal of their hardware from DOMLEC's old and unsafe poles in order that these poles can be disposed of in a safe manner.

Removal of these old and unsafe poles will serve to protect the environment and enhance the safety of the public and aesthetics of the surrounding space

Post Hurricane Maria saw a total rebuilding of the DOMLEC Transmission and Distribution Network. New poles were installed to carry new lines to interconnect the entire island in rebuilding the national grid. DOMLEC installed a number of new poles in rebuilding the network, however since some poles were not cast down by the hurricane, these old unsafe poles with telecom infrastructure still installed thereupon could not be removed and remain installed alongside the new DOMLEC poles to this day.

DOMLEC has pole sharing agreements with FLOW and Digicel. This agreement allows for these telecommunication companies to share DOMLEC's distribution poles in installing their hardware to carry their service to their customers. DOMLEC charges a fee for allowing these entities to share their asset.

From the last quarter of 2018 to present on the bidding of the Commission, DOMLEC agreed to





# ENERGY CONSERVATION TIPS

Ever wonder what you can do to keep a few extra dollars in your wallet?

- Turn off lights when not in use and unplug seldom used appliances. By so doing you will reduce your electricity consumption and lower your bill.
- Prevent the loss of cold air by keeping the freezer open for a minimum time as possible.
- Try not to iron frequent small portions but do large batches. For e.g. some people iron several times a week. It is best to do all the ironing required instead of small and frequent batches since the iron takes a lot more energy every time it has to be reheated.
- Repair or replace faulty appliances as faulty appliances can contribute to wasting energy.
- Use energy saving bulbs at home.





# IRC FAMILY FUN DAY

The Commission's annual Family Fun day activity was held on Saturday August 15th 2020. Staff and Commissioners of the IRC embraced the sunny weather and headed to the breathtaking scenery of Red Rock in Pointe Baptiste Calibishie. At Pointe Baptiste, it was delighting to gaze at the magnificent coastal formation of the red earth and the various shapes which they bashfully exhibited. Staff and Commissioner's made a twenty- minutes' walk on the expanse of red rock, and were quite captivated by the landscaping which they formed. The nearby caves were also

quite a sight to observe as well as the lively waves in the background.

Later, a visit to the Chocolate Factory about ten minutes' drive away, allowed for a small tour around the factory by the proprietor, as well as for the sampling from a variety of chocolates.

After the Chocolate Factory tour, the crew paused for lunch. Later, some persons resorted to a therapeutic sea bath at the adjoining beach front.

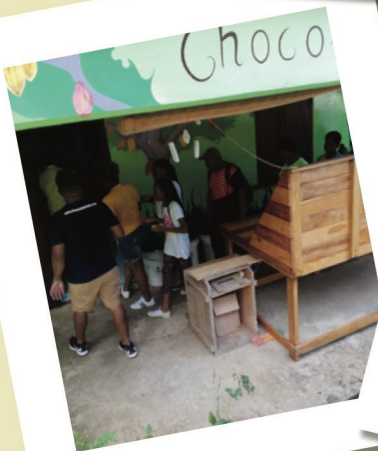


# IRC FAMILY FUN DAY: On the Rocks!





# IRC FAMILY FUN DAY: Chocolate Factory



# REVISION OF INTERMITTENT DISTRIBUTED RENEWABLE ENERGY INTERCONNECTION POLICY

Efforts are underway to revise the Intermittent Distributed Renewable Energy Interconnection Policy. This revision was deemed necessary since there exist shortcomings in the existing policy. These shortcomings have been identified in the areas of:

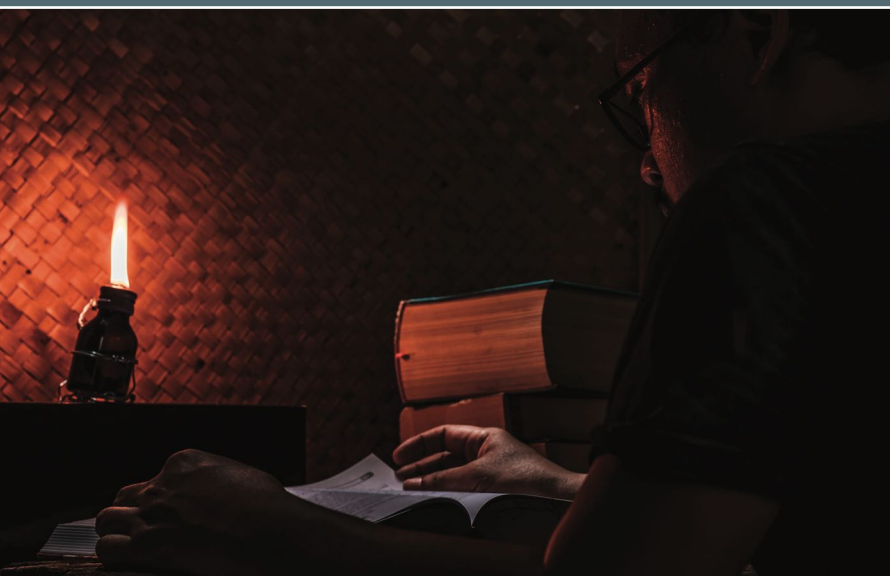
1. The power quality testing of renewable energy facilities, with prescribed approach and form of reporting;
2. Establishing the entity that will perform the testing; and
3. Updating other aspects of the document to reflect improved harmony with the new international standards.

A committee has been formed with strategic stakeholders from the IRC, DOMLEC and Electric Service Providers. They have already had one meeting in 2020 and have started work on this revision





# DON'T BE LEFT IN THE DARK!!



**It is up to the customer to ensure that they get the service they deserve from their electricity provider.**

The Commission has instituted Quality of Service Standards to ensure that consumers of electricity get the service they deserve. These comprise of Guaranteed Standards and Overall Standards.

Guaranteed Standards are a set of service standards which the utility (DOMLEC) must guarantee as a basic level of service to individual customers.

Overall Standards are a set of service standards which affects the electricity system generally, and consequently service/quality of electricity supplied to large group of customers will be affected.

**A Guaranteed Standard is said to be breached, where DOMLEC has not met the service criteria for a given standard.**

- **ARE YOU AWARE** that after the customer has settled overdue amounts, including reconnection fee, or has made an agreement on a payment schedule, the reconnection of the consumer's service

must be made **within 24 hours**, and that should the expiration of the 24 hour period fall on a Sunday or a Public Holiday, reconnection should be effected on the next business day? Are you aware that failure to do so on the part of the DOMLEC will result in an amount of \$12.00 automatically credited to your account if your connection is for domestic purposes and \$33.00 if it is for commercial purposes?

- **ARE YOU AWARE** that where it relates to emergency calls from individual customers, regarding burnt fuse, burnt service connections, DOMLEC must respond and take corrective action within 4 hours of the time that the call is lodged? Failure on the part of DOMLEC will require the customer to file a claim at the office after which the customer will be entitled to a credit of \$12.00 if the connection is Domestic and \$33.00 if the connection is Commercial?

- **ARE YOU AWARE** that the service provider must mail your first bill within forty five (45) days after providing a new connection or establishing a new account – and that a **breach** on the part of the service provider, allows the **consumer to file in a claim** at the office of the service provider, after which, the customer will be entitled to a credit of \$12.00 if it is a Domestic connection and \$33.00 if it is for a Commercial connection?





NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

# COVID-19

2019-NCOV

The Pandemic continues to threaten human life worldwide. As such, we must remain vigilant. We must persist in taking all the necessary steps to ensure that we not only stay safe, but that we do all that is within our power to stop the spread.

***"The future depends on what we do in the present"***  
**- Mahatma Gandhi**

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