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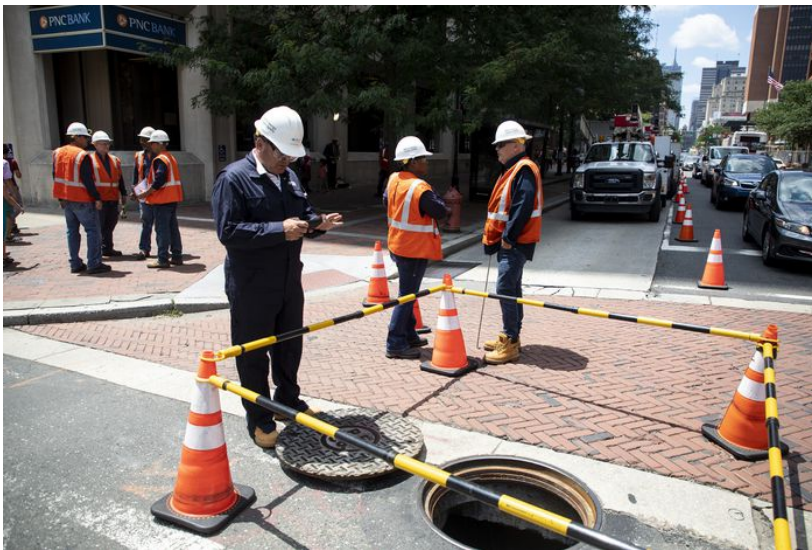
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Business



# Peco seeks electric rate hike that would boost bills by 9.65%, citing grid costs and COVID-19

The Philadelphia utility said the increase is needed to pay for billions of dollars in investment to modernize the grid and meet clean energy demands, including more electric vehicle charging.



Peco workers investigate an outage in underground cable at Fourth and Market Streets in 2019. The Philadelphia utility is seeking a ... [Read more](#)  
TYGER WILLIAMS / Staff Photographer



by Andrew Maykuth  
Published Mar 30, 2021



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relief, on Tuesday [filed a request](#) seeking a \$246 million electric rate increase that would boost a typical monthly residential bill by about \$9.68, or 9.65%.

The Philadelphia utility, which serves 1.6 million electric customers in Southeastern Pennsylvania, said the increase is needed to pay for billions of dollars in investment to harden and modernize the local energy grid to accommodate clean energy demands, including more electric vehicle charging and solar energy generation in homes and businesses.

## CORONAVIRUS COVERAGE

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As part of its proposal, Peco is seeking \$1.5 million of incentives for electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support commercial, industrial, and public transit customers, “with a focus on reducing emissions in disadvantaged communities,” according to a company statement.

The rate hike, which would go into effect on Jan. 1, 2022, would be about 10 times as big as the [\\$24.9 million increase](#) that went into effect in January 2019, the last time the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission granted the company a rate boost. In 2019, the PUC increased a typical Peco bill by 1.2%, only about a third of its initial request. Utilities, customer advocates and PUC staff typically will negotiate a settlement that reduces the utility’s original request.

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“We recognize that the effects from COVID-19 are far from over and that the pandemic continues to impact customers who are struggling financially,” Mike Innocenzo, Peco’s president and chief executive, said in a statement. “However, we’ve seen just how critical it is to have uninterrupted electric service during this challenging time.”

The Peco proposal would provide \$2.7 million in bill relief for low-income customers and \$1 million in bill credits to qualifying small businesses in low-income communities impacted by the pandemic.

It’s unclear from the [initial information](#) provided by Peco how much of the increase is attributable to uncollectible accounts that have soared during the pandemic. Advocates for low-income people say they plan to challenge several utility rate increase requests this year and will ask regulators to force utility owners to absorb some of the costs related to the coronavirus, rather than to recover them from customers through higher rates.

A PUC [moratorium on service shutoffs](#) is set to be lifted Thursday. The state has ordered utilities to offer more generous payment terms for low-income customers, though the low-income advocates say 847,000 households are at imminent risk of losing heat, electric, and water service. At the end of February, 146,000 Peco electric and gas customers were at risk of shutoffs. They [owed \\$218.5 million](#), up 88% from a year ago.

The rate increase would affect only Peco’s distribution charges, which make up more than half of a typical residential bill. The increase would not affect energy



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default service customers that it supplies.

If approved, Peco said, the typical monthly bill for a residential customer who uses 700 kilowatt hours a month would increase from \$100.31 to \$109.99, or 9.65%. A typical small-business customer would see a monthly bill increase of about \$44.74, or 5.49%.

Published March 30, 2021








Andrew Maykuth  

I cover how we produce and use energy, as well as its impact on the economy and the environment.

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Economy



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## The U.S. economy added 850,000 jobs in June as the labor market showed renewed strength

The news is likely to be seen as a good sign for the economy more than one year into the pandemic.

Eli Rosenberg, Washington P... 31 minutes ago

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## New York, New York Launches New Policy For Cars Used Less Than 49 Miles/Day

by [Comparisons.org](https://www.comparisons.org)



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## Buick Envisions fighting BMW and Lexus, but some jerks stand in the way

Buick redesigns the Envision for 2021, and it does bring comfort and beauty to the small luxury SUV party. But many aspects of the drive don't match up to SUVs that aspire to be even less.



Scott Sturgis 4 hours ago

### Health



## Hospitals, insurers invest big dollars to tackle patients' social needs



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effective.

Phil Galewitz, Kaiser Health ... 4 hours ago

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Healthcare



## Worker shortages are real in the Philly region's nursing homes

Staffing challenges — long a problem but exacerbated by the current tight labor market — have added to the woes of nursing homes hammered by high costs and lost revenue during the pandemic.



Harold Brubaker 5 hours ago



Elena Jaya Gooray  
@elenagooray



ICYMI, this excellent opinion piece breaks down how richer neighborhoods are more likely to have trees (and so lower temps, better air) than low-income ones thanks to redlining—using philly as a prime example [nytimes.com/interactive/20...](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/20...)



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## U.S. weekly jobless claims fall to 364,000, a new pandemic low

Applications for unemployment benefits have fallen more or less steadily since the year began.

Paul Wiseman, The Associate... Jul 1, 2021

### Health



## Doctors share the future of the health care workforce and how to better support women and people of color





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Resa E. Lewiss, For the In... Jul 1, 2021

Business

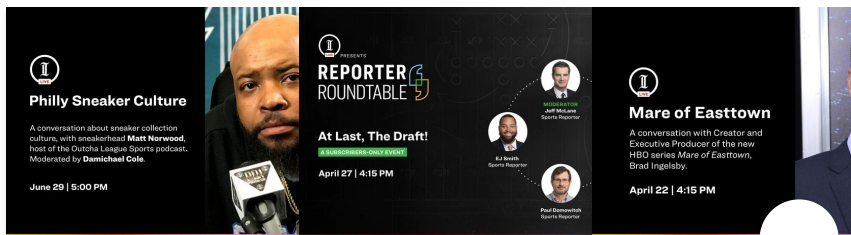


# Philly's backyard chickens are surging despite a city law that forbids it

The number of backyard chickens being raised in Philadelphia has been climbing during the pandemic.

 Frank Fitzpatrick Jul 1, 2021

## Inquirer LIVE



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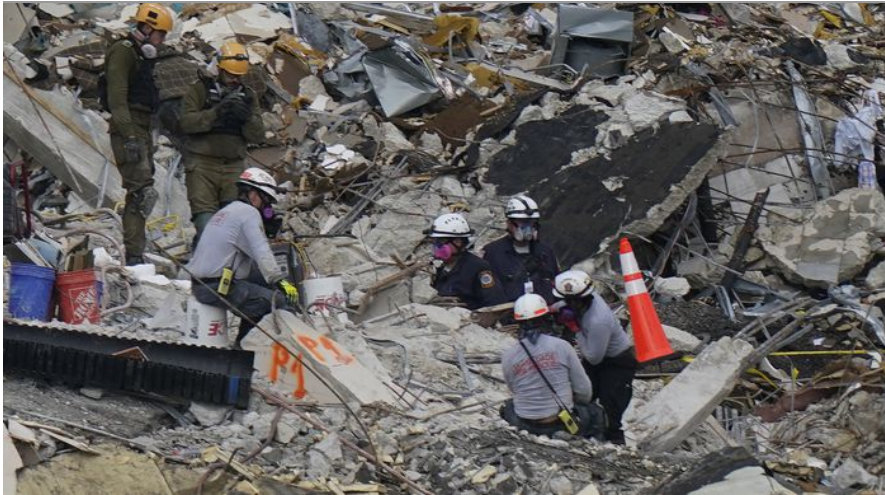
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Business



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## Philly lawyer is on scene near the Surfside condominium collapse. How condo owners can protect themselves

A Philadelphia-based lawyer who has handled the region's biggest building collapse cases is in Florida meeting with prospective clients.



Christian Hetrick Jul 1, 2021

### Healthcare



## Joel Freedman fires managers, throwing Hahnemann bankruptcy into chaos

The highly unusual move shocked lawyers involved in the bankruptcy.



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## Residential Real Estate



# RENTERS FEEL PRESSURE AHEAD OF EVICTION BAN'S END

“It’s a race at this point to see if the city can process [rental assistance applications] and pay out the money fast enough,” one housing attorney said.



Michaëlle Bond Jun 30, 2021

## Spotlight PA





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## with plastic bag bans as Pennsylvania's preemption nears its end

The Republican-controlled legislature did not renew a statewide preemption on single-use plastics, opening the door for cities and municipalities to institute their own bans.

Lindsay Weber for Spotligh... Jun 29, 2021

Energy



## Supreme Court won't sidetrack plans for Pennsylvania-to-New Jersey natural gas pipeline

The 116-mile planned pipeline is to run from Pennsylvania's Luzerne County to Mercer County in New Jersey.

Jessica Gresko, The Associated... Jun 29, 2021



Kristen Graham  
@newskag



Oh yeah, Bill Cosby went there, touting his #PHLed Central 256 ties. Alums are not pleased:  
[inquirer.com/news/bill-cosb...](http://inquirer.com/news/bill-cosb...)



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Kristen A. Graham Jul 1, 2021

## Residential Real Estate



## U.S. home prices jumped in April at the fastest pace in more than 15 years

Economists say there is little sign that the housing market's blistering price increases are likely to cool off soon.

Christopher Rugaber, The Associat... Jun 29, 2021

## Philly Tips





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# THE SHORE

Marijuana has been legalized and decriminalized in New Jersey. But here's what to expect if you want to use it down the shore.



Nick Vadala Jun 29, 2021

## Business



## Time to consider an unlimited paid time off plan for your business

Employers are beginning to consider unlimited paid vacation plans to keep employees fresh and engaged and to help with retention.

Gene Marks, For The Inqui... Jun 29, 2021

## Healthcare



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## Legal battle over Joel Freedman's Hahnemann hospital real estate heating up

Joel Freedman's biggest creditor wants a say in negotiations over proceeds from the eventual sale of Hahnemann real estate.



Harold Brubaker Jun 29, 2021

### Business



## As SEC crackdown loomed and business fell, Par Funding's founders bought watches — for \$154,000

As a receiver goes after the goods owned by Par Funding's founders, he is putting a spotlight on two very expensive



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Opinion



## China-based WuXi AppTec wins \$19M from taxpayers for giant Delaware drug plant

Delaware has voted up to \$19 million in "capital development" and jobs grants and may add \$2 million for roads for Shanghai-based WuXi AppTec, which employs 600 in Philly.



Joseph N. DiStefano | Colu... Jun 28, 2021

Business







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## stock market

The COVID-19 pandemic is winding down and the economy is revving up.

Mark Zandi, For The Inqui... Jun 28, 2021

### News



## Facing fraud lawsuit, Montco financial salesman Dean Vagnozzi turns against his longtime lawyer

After a 16-year business relationship, Montgomery County financial pitchman Dean Vagnozzi has turned on his lawyer



Joseph N. DiStefano Jun 28, 2021

### Business



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## Women in the craft beer industry say they're treated as if they don't belong. Now, they're speaking up.

Women responded to a brewer's Instagram lament with stories that detailed harassment, toxic masculinity and even allegations of assault at some of the most reputable breweries.

Emily Bloch, Washington ... Jun 27, 2021

Business



## For beleaguered pension fund, mixed messages from a \$400,000 consultant



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Joseph N. DiStefano Jun 27, 2021

## Business



# Biden: Infrastructure vow was not intended to be veto threat

Aiming to preserve a fragile bipartisan infrastructure deal, President Joe Biden endorsed it “without hesitation” Saturday, walking back a veto threat if Congress didn’t expand the social safety net.

Lisa Mascaro and Zeke Miller, The A... Jun 26, 2021

## Drinks



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## To-go cocktails legislation appears dead in Pennsylvania Senate — at least for the summer

The bill also would have allowed extended outside serving areas, which have filled sidewalks in Philadelphia with diners and drinkers.



Harold Brubaker Jun 25, 2021

Philadelphia News



## Philadelphia police sued over fatal shooting last year in Grays Ferry

Giuseppe Particianone, 33, a South Philadelphia mechanic, died on April 10, 2020, after a police officer “let off a volley of



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