



Press Release

J.D. Power and Associates Reports: The Average Monthly Bill of Residential Customers of Natural Gas Utilities Declines for a Fourth Consecutive Year

Citizens Gas; Intermountain Gas Company; MidAmerican Energy; New Jersey Natural Gas; NSTAR Gas; Oklahoma Natural Gas; South Carolina Electric & Gas; and Southern California Gas Company Each Rank Highest in Residential Natural Gas Utility Customer Satisfaction in Their Respective Regions

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 19 September 2012 — Residential natural gas customer satisfaction increases by seven points year over year, as the average reported monthly bill in 2012, \$78, decreases by \$9 from 2011, according to the J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM released today.

The study, now in its 11th year, measures residential customer satisfaction with gas utility companies across six factors (listed in order of importance): billing and payment; price; corporate citizenship; communications; customer service; and field service. Overall satisfaction with natural gas utility companies has increased slightly, averaging 634 (on a 1,000-point scale), compared with 627 in 2011.

Residential natural gas customer satisfaction with price is 570, an increase of 14 points from 2011. In addition to the decline in monthly bill amount, a lower proportion of customers recall hearing about natural gas price increases from their utility provider in 2012 (24%), compared with 2011 (29%). Further, when customers are aware of energy-efficiency programs offered by their utility, satisfaction with price is 87 points higher than when they are not aware of these programs.

“Each year, as natural gas prices continue to drop, satisfaction with price will continue to be positively affected,” said John Hazen, senior director of the energy practice at J.D. Power and Associates. “Additionally, both communication and customer service efforts by utility providers are also contributing to the overall satisfaction increases from last year.”

Communication and Customer Service

The study finds that the media is presenting a more positive portrayal of gas utilities, with the proportion of customers recalling positive media coverage increasing by 6 percent year over year to 27 percent in 2012. Adding to the positive trend in communications, the percentage of customers who recall having received a communication from their utility has increased to 44 percent in 2012 from 35 percent in 2011.

Gas utilities are also improving their ability to resolve customer problems the first time they contact the utility, as the rate of first-call resolution has improved to 76 percent in 2012, compared with 70 percent in 2011. This improvement, along with a 10-point increase in customer satisfaction with the online experience, has contributed to a 14-point improvement in customer service satisfaction from 2011.

“Areas such as customer service and communications are very personal to customers and provide an opportunity for utilities to make a significant impact on customer satisfaction,” said Hazen. “Utilities that make the most of these opportunities often perform well in overall satisfaction.”

The study ranks large and midsize utility companies in four geographic regions: East, Midwest, South and West.

Companies in the midsize utility segment serve between 165,000 and 399,999 residential customers, while companies in the large utility segment serve 400,000 or more residential customers.

East Region

Among large utilities in the East region, New Jersey Natural Gas ranks highest for a fourth consecutive year. Following in the segment rankings are UGI Utilities and PECO, respectively.

In the East region midsize utility segment, NSTAR Gas ranks highest, followed by Yankee Gas and South Jersey Gas, respectively.

Midwest Region

MidAmerican Energy ranks highest among large utilities in the Midwest region, followed by We Energies and DTE Energy, respectively.

Among midsize utilities in the region, Citizens Gas ranks highest, followed by Metropolitan Utilities District and Alliant Energy, respectively.

South Region

Oklahoma Natural Gas ranks highest in the large utility segment in the South region, followed by PSNC Energy and CenterPoint Energy-South, respectively.

Among midsize utilities in this region, South Carolina Electric & Gas ranks highest. Following in the segment rankings are TECO Peoples Gas and CPS Energy, respectively.

West Region

Southern California Gas Company ranks highest among large utilities in the West region for a second consecutive year. Following in the segment rankings are NW Natural and Questar Gas, respectively.

Among midsize utilities in this region, Intermountain Gas Company ranks highest for a third consecutive year, followed by Cascade Natural Gas and Avista, respectively.

The 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study is based on more than 63,500 responses from residential customers of the 75 largest gas utilities across the continental United States. These utilities serve nearly 54 million households. The study was fielded between September 2011 and July 2012.

About J.D. Power and Associates

Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power and Associates is a global marketing information services company providing performance improvement, social media and customer satisfaction insights and solutions. The company's quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. For more information on [car reviews and ratings](#), [car insurance](#), [health insurance](#), [cell phone ratings](#), and more, please visit JDPower.com. J.D. Power and Associates is a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies.

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Media Relations Contacts:

John Tews; J.D. Power and Associates; Troy, Mich.; (248) 312-4119; media.relations@jdpa.com

Syvetril Perryman; Westlake Village, Calif.; (805) 418-8103; media.relations@jdpa.com

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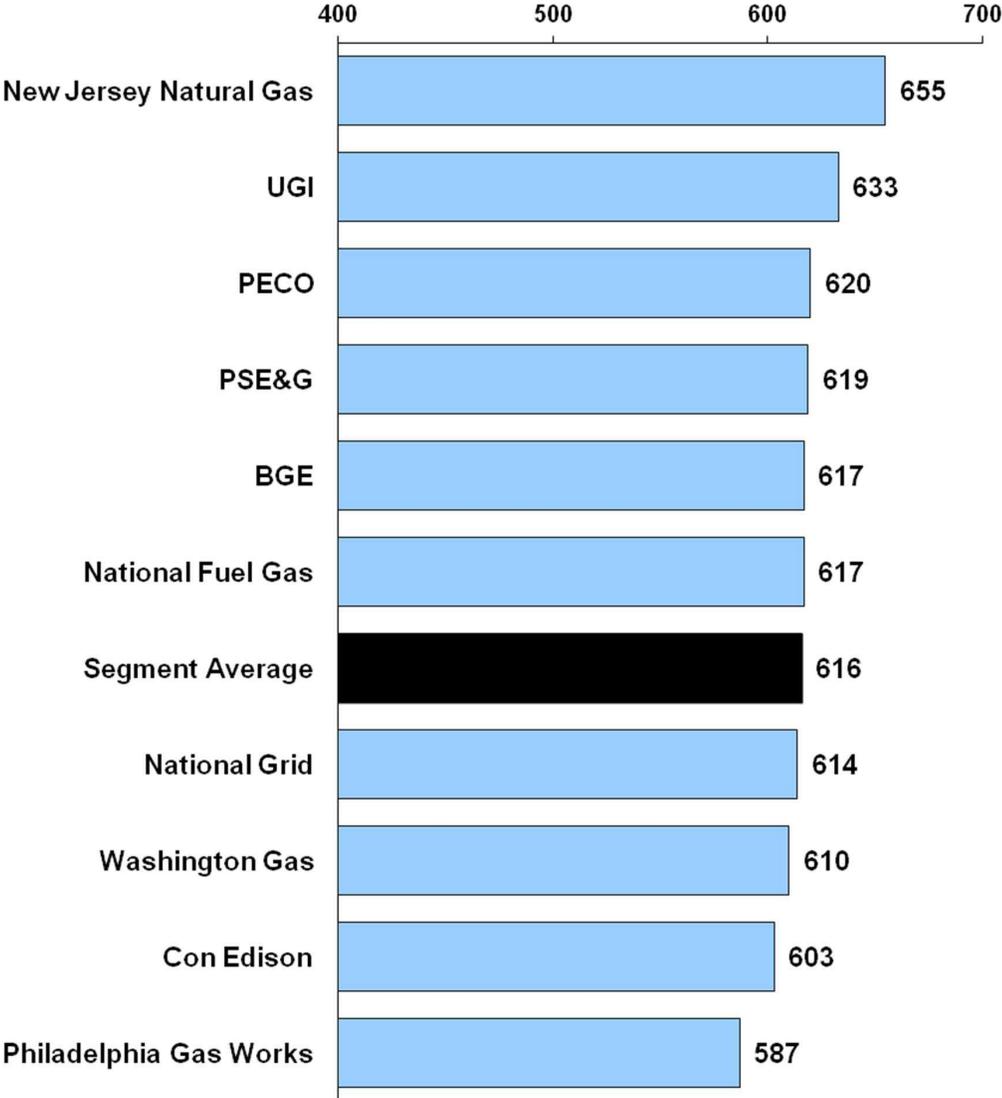
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NOTE: Eight charts follow.

J.D. Power and Associates SM 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study

East Large Segment Average

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



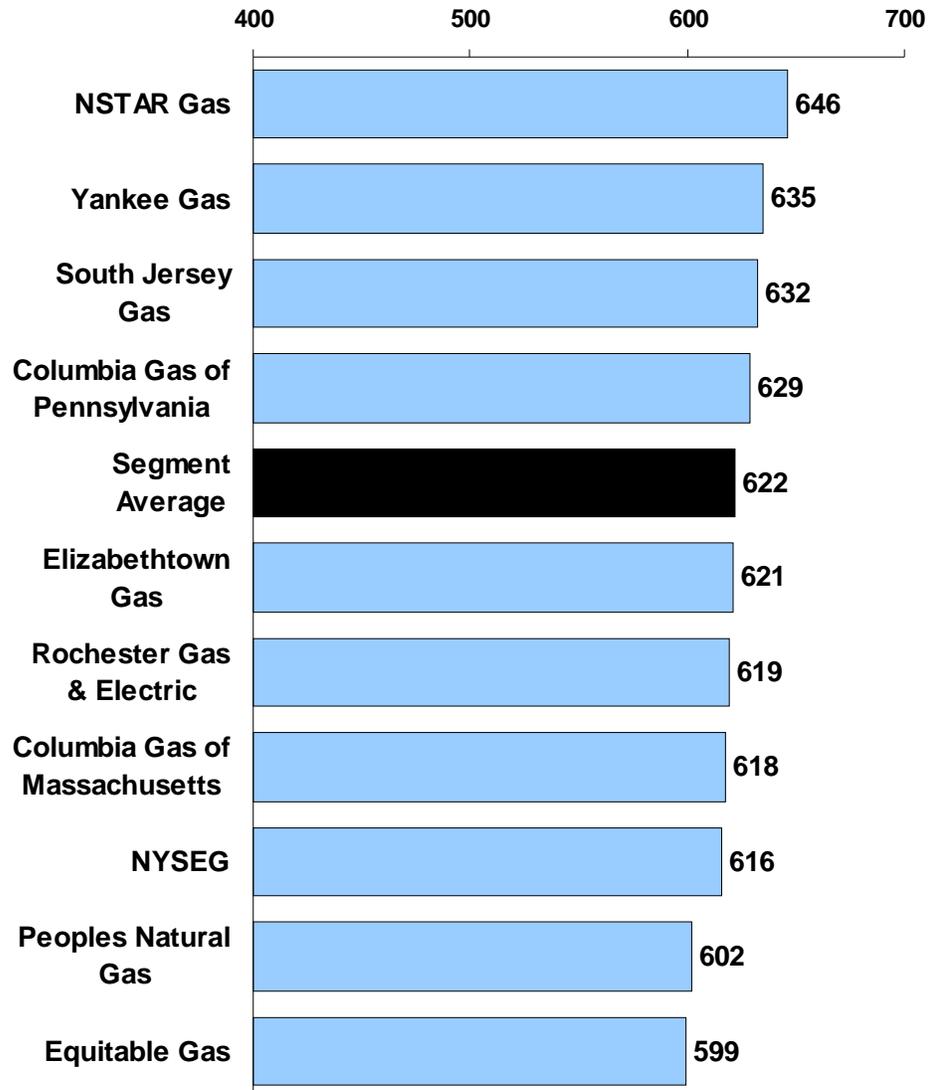
Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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East Midsize Segment Average

(Based on a 1,000-point scale)



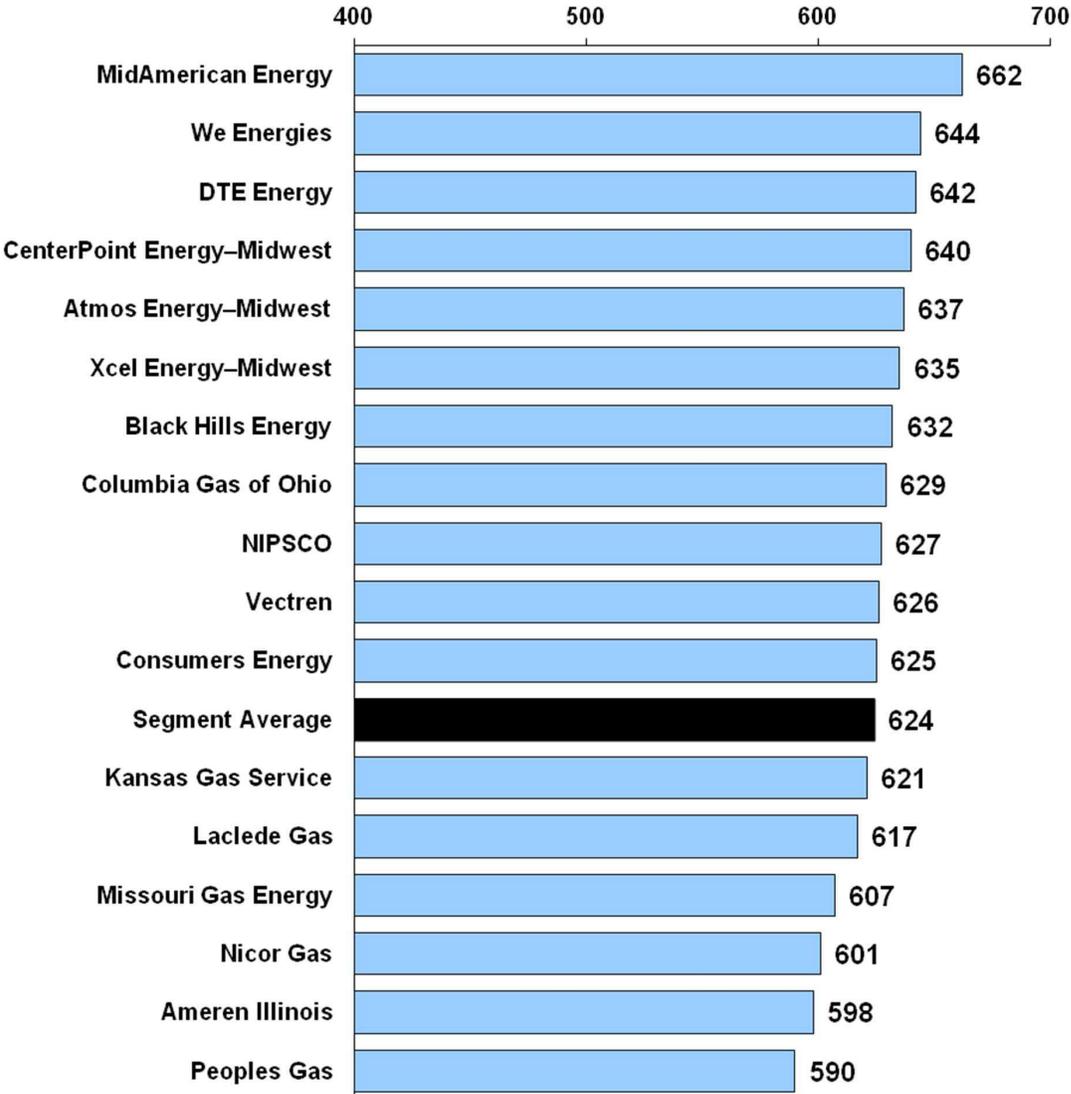
Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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J.D. Power and Associates SM

2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction Study

Midwest Large Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

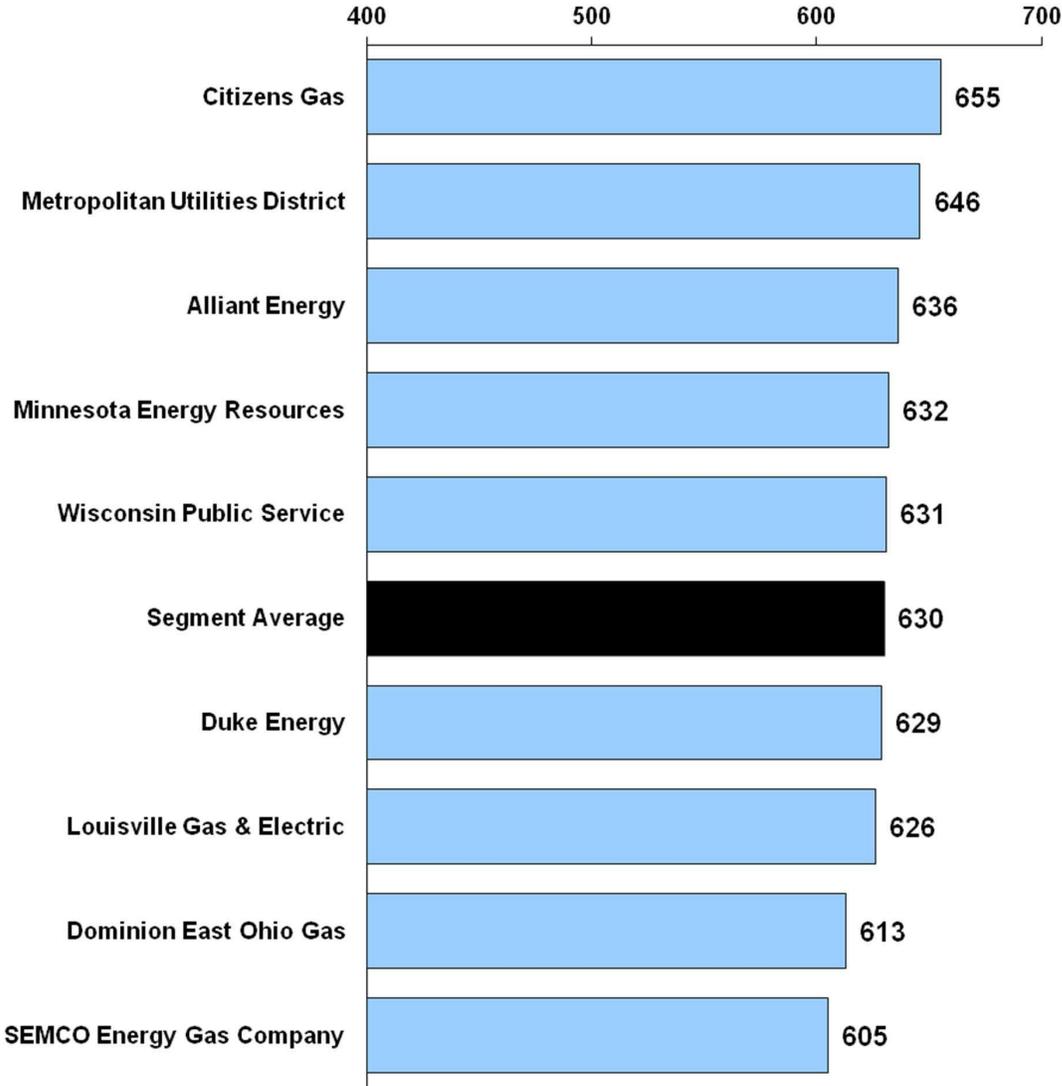


Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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Midwest Midsize Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

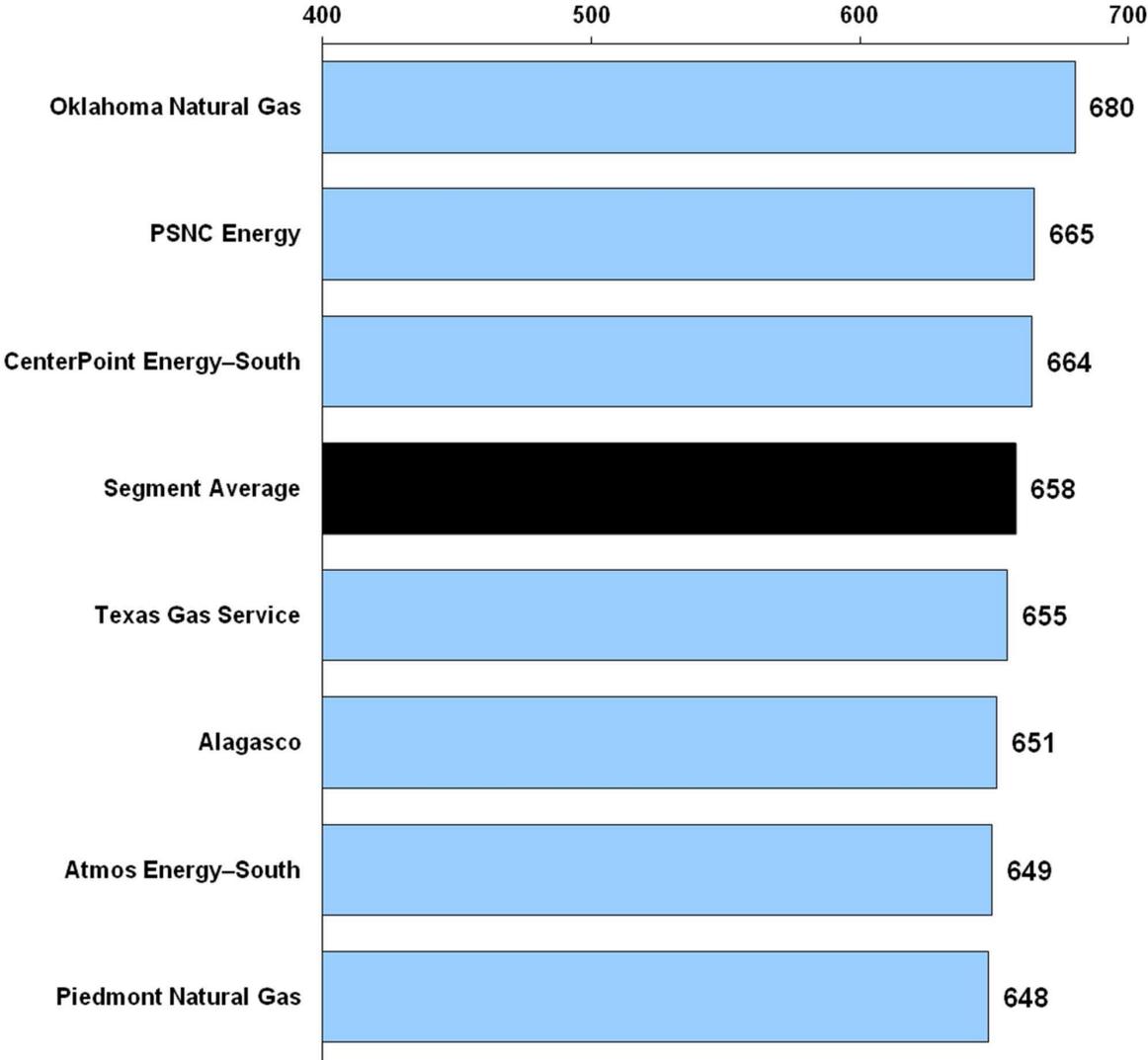


Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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South Large Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

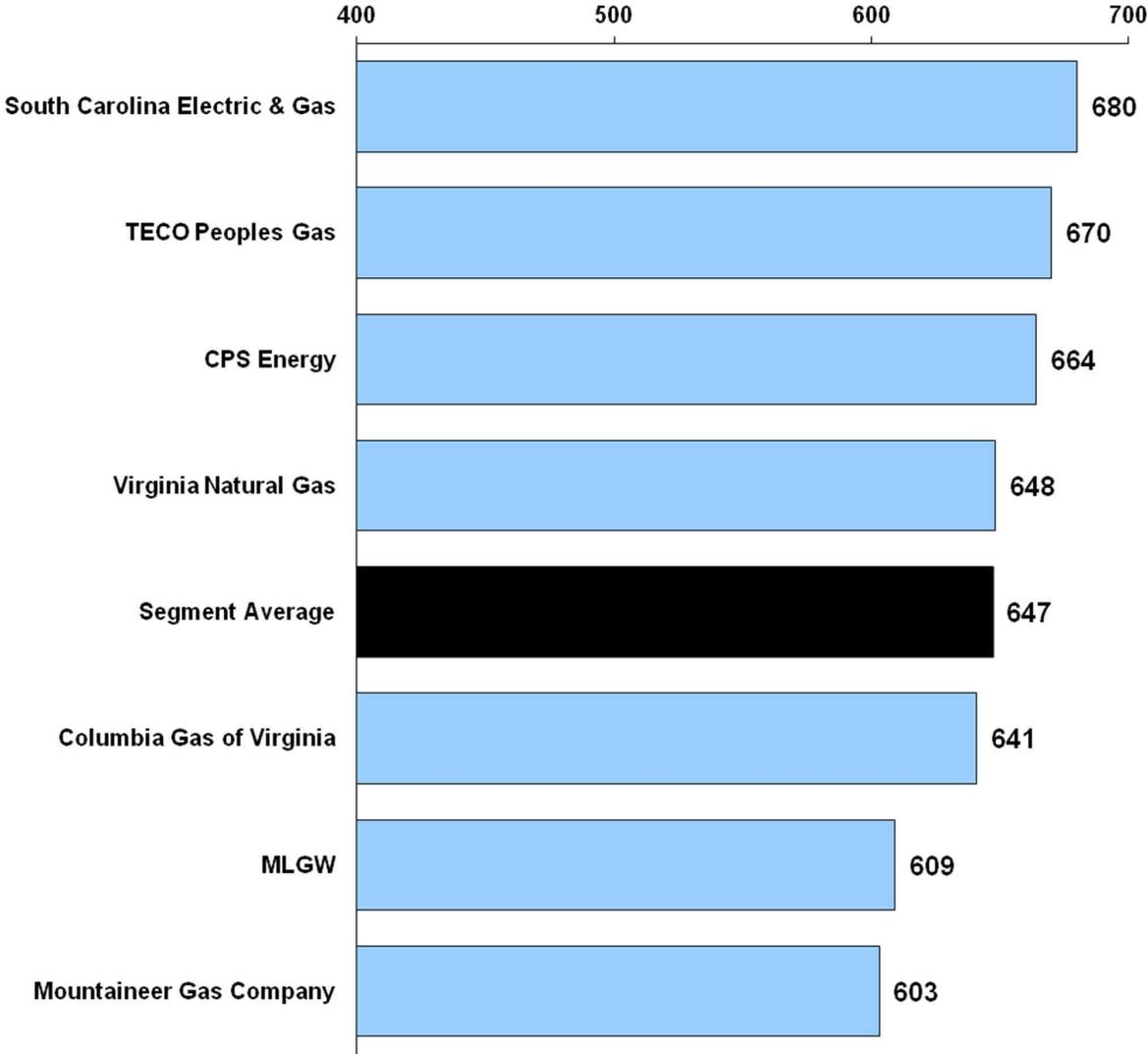


Source: J.D. Power and Associates 2012 Gas Utility Residential Customer Satisfaction StudySM

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South Midsize Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

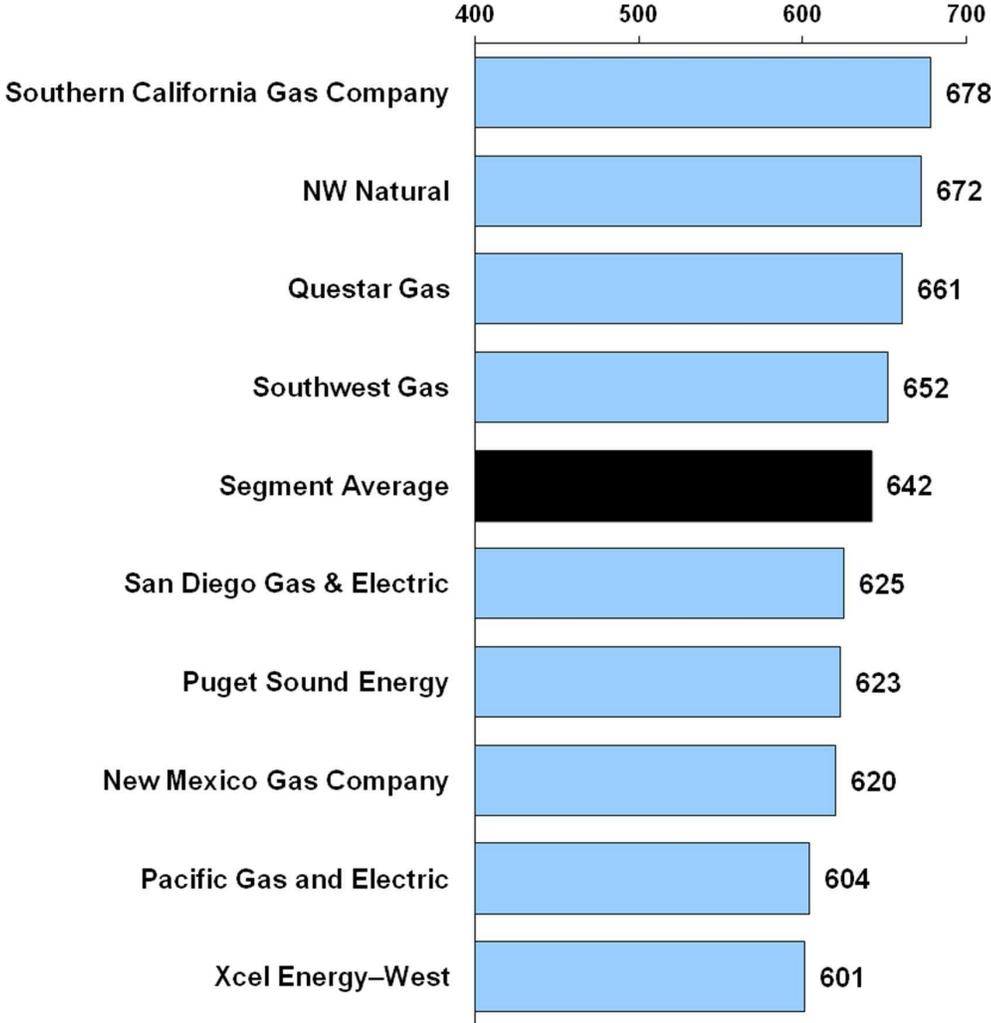


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West Large Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)

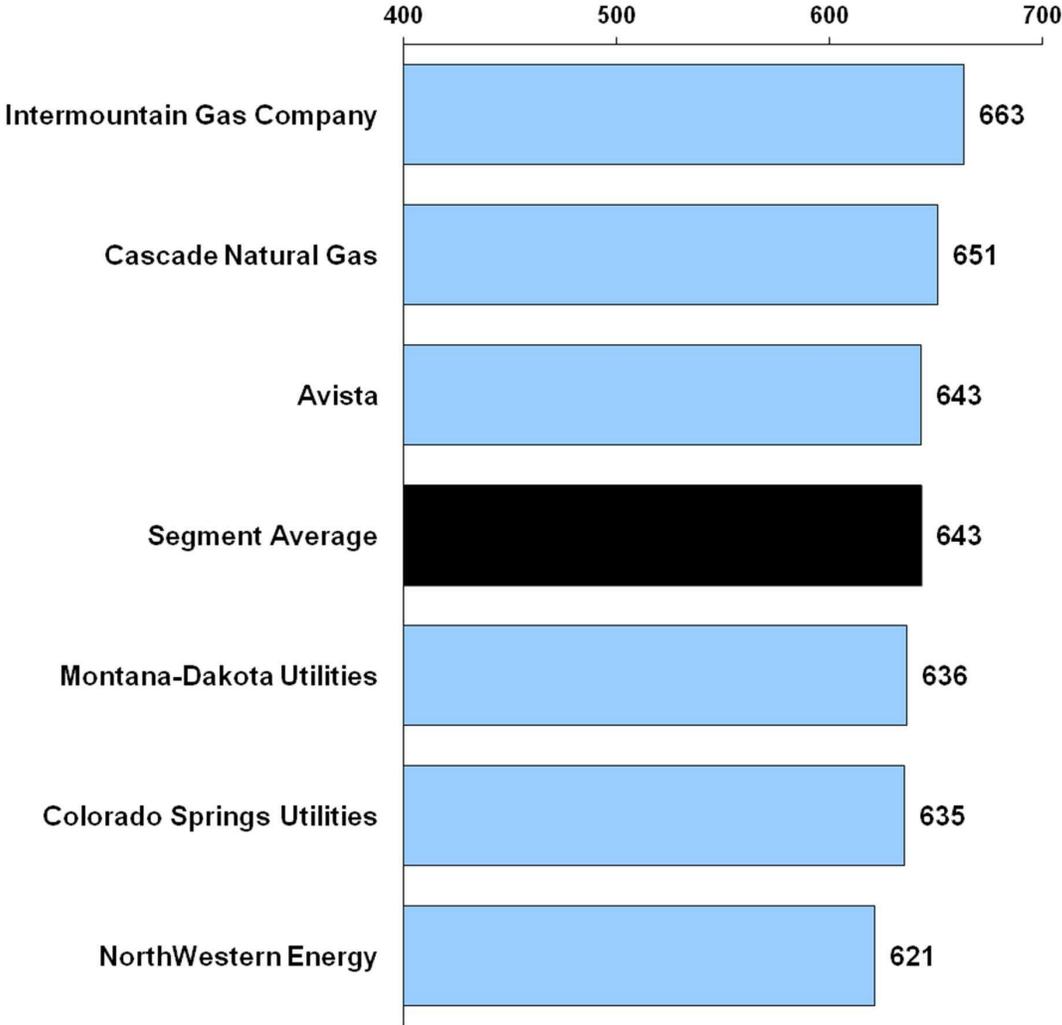


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West Midsize Segment Average (Based on a 1,000-point scale)



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