

City of Canton Electric Aggregation Program - Frequently Asked Questions (October 2011)

What are we voting on in the November 8 General Election?

City of Canton residents are being asked to allow the City Council to pursue an “opt-out electric aggregation program” similar to the natural gas aggregation program. Opt-out programs require a ballot initiative. If passed, the City will become certified by the PUCO as a Governmental Aggregator of electricity like 100+ other communities across Ohio. Opt-out programs have high participation rates and with the increased bargaining power, we are able to negotiate lower electric rates for our residents and small businesses.

What does the City have to do after the ballot passes?

- With the help of our consultant, Independent Energy Consultants, we will prepare a Plan of Operations and Governance that outlines our program.
- They will then lead 2 public hearings to explain the Plan to our residents.
- Our Council will adopt the Plan following the second public hearing.
- We will submit our Governmental Aggregator’s certification application to the PUCO and they will approve it 30 days later.
- We expect to be certified by the PUCO by mid-January.

Whom do I call if I have a problem with my electric service?

Ohio Power will continue to deliver your electricity, read your meters, and issue your monthly bills. You will continue to call them at (800) 277-2177 for emergency repairs, downed power lines, leaks, billing questions, etc.

What if I’m with another supplier and would like to join the City’s program?

Chances are you are not with another marketer. There has been no customer switching in the Ohio Power service territory. That’s why we are pursuing an electric aggregation program. Without it, our residents are likely to have no choice of supplier.

Will I get two bills?

No. You will continue to receive one bill from Ohio Power that shows their distribution charges and the supply charge of the selected supplier.

Will I still receive a delivery charge from my local utility?

Yes. Even though you have chosen a new supplier of electricity, Ohio Power will continue to deliver the electricity to our homes and businesses. Distribution charges and a flat monthly customer charge apply whether you choose a supplier on your own or remain supplied by Ohio Power.

Can I remain on budget billing?

Yes. If you are on budget billing you will remain on budget billing. If you would like to switch to budget billing, call Ohio Power at (800) 277-2177. Budget billing only applies to

the charges related to transmitting and delivering your electricity. It does not apply to the supply charges from the selected supplier.

Can I exit this program without penalty?

You will be given an initial 21-day period to opt-out free of charge and then another 7-day period as soon as a supplier is selected and enrolls you as their customer. Then, by law, you will be given a chance to opt-out free of charge at least once every 3 years. You can also opt-out free of charge if you move.

Who is eligible for the program?

1. Your local utility company must be Ohio Power ;
2. You must be a resident or business owner located within the City limits;
3. You must not be a PIPP (percentage of income payment program) customer;
4. You must not be in arrears on your bill payment; and
5. You must not be a mercantile customer (electric commercial accounts using over 700,000 kWh/year)
6. You must not be a commercial customer with a peak demand < 399kW

How will I sign up for the program?

Later this winter residents and small businesses will receive an opt-out notice from the selected supplier that explains the program rates, terms and conditions. The notice will also provide instructions on how to remove yourself from the program, if you think it is not right for you or your family. Residents will have 21 days to make that decision. If you would like to remain in the program, simply do nothing and you will be enrolled. You will be hearing much more about the program over the next few months. The next important milestone is passage of the ballot initiative at the November 8 General Election.

How did the City develop such a program?

The City used the services of Independent Energy Consultants, Inc. a PUCO certified broker and aggregator of natural gas and electricity - without using any taxpayer money. They have designed, implemented, and administered many successful aggregation programs across Ohio and have over 100 communities impacted by their gas and/or electric programs.

Is this related to our City's natural gas program?

The programs are similar, but independent. You do not need to belong to one, to participate in the other.

Does the City benefit from the program?

The City owned accounts are eligible to participate and recently suppliers have been offering civic grants to the general funds of local governments. We will find out what's available through the competitive bid process administered by our consultant.

Will small businesses, schools and churches be eligible?

Small commercial accounts using less than 700,000 kWh/year are eligible. Interested accounts using more than this amount, would need to contact our selected supplier to seek enrollment. Schools may already have their own contract.

Does this affect my distribution charges or the wires coming to my home?

No. Customer Choice programs in Ohio provide residents the ability to choose an electric *supplier* other than the local utility company. Maintenance of the wires coming to a resident's home continues to be the responsibility of the homeowner.

Where can I learn more about electric deregulation and assistance programs?

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio has approved a number of additional assistance programs to help customers with their energy bills. Eligibility and enrollment information can be found on the PUCO's website at www.puco.ohio.gov.