

TOWN OF STOUGHTON
COMMUNITY CHOICE POWER SUPPLY PROGRAM
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE “COMMUNITY CHOICE POWER SUPPLY PROGRAM”?

The Community Choice Power Supply Program is a municipal aggregation program which allows local government to combine the purchasing power of its residents to achieve savings on electricity costs. In doing so, it creates competition among competitive suppliers which helps ensure aggressive rates. Consumers are no longer “stuck” with the cost and fluctuation of Basic Service rates because the Program offers them another option.

2. HOW DID THE TOWN OF STOUGHTON JOIN THIS PROGRAM?

Following the approval of Article 41 at Town Meeting in May 2016, the Town of Stoughton developed and published its Aggregation Plan (“Plan”) in compliance with Massachusetts law regarding municipal aggregation of electric consumers (M.G.L. c. 164, § 134). The Select Board approved the Plan in January 2019, and a power supply agreement was executed this October to take effect January 2023.

3. WHAT IS A “COMPETITIVE SUPPLIER”?

A competitive supplier is a power supplier other than National Grid. Competitive suppliers provide power supply to consumers either through a municipal aggregation program or through a competitive supplier program. Your electricity is currently being supplied by National Grid unless you have switched to a competitive supplier program on your own. Your electric bill is divided into two parts: **Delivery and Supply**. The supply is no longer regulated and therefore can be provided by a competitive supplier. Delivery is still regulated and can only be provided by National Grid. National Grid will continue to deliver your power supply over the wires. However, the power running through those wires can be provided by a competitive supplier.

4. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROGRAMS ADVERTISED TO “LOWER YOUR ELECTRIC BILL” AND MUNICIPAL AGGREGATION PROGRAMS?

Programs you see advertised are competitive supplier programs in which the competitive supplier contracts directly with the individual consumer. While both programs seek to lower your electric bill, they are run very differently. Competitive supplier programs set their own terms and conditions. Once signed up, it is up to the consumer to monitor the rates. Competitive supplier programs usually have a clause in the terms and conditions that states the consumer remains in the program after the original rate and term have ended unless specific action is taken to cancel the contract. In many cases, there may be an exit fee. Municipal aggregation programs are run by cities or towns. Once signed up, it is up to the city or town to monitor the rates. Having knowledge of the electricity market, the city or town continually looks out for their citizens’ best interests. Their goals are to provide low, stable rates and possibly green options to their citizens. Municipal aggregation programs have no entrance or exit fees.

BEWARE OF OTHER ENERGY OFFERS claiming to be associated with your community or National Grid. You may receive direct mail, phone calls or even visits to your door from energy marketers for the competitive supplier programs mentioned above. These marketers are NOT associated with the Community Choice Power Supply Program or with National Grid. The Community Choice Power Supply Program will notify you of the Program ONLY through mail direct from your community (look for your Town's seal).

5. WHY HAVE I RECEIVED A CONSUMER NOTIFICATION LETTER?

Your Town has signed a contract with a competitive supplier on behalf of your community as part of their Community Choice Power Supply Program.

6. WHY HAVEN'T I RECEIVED A CONSUMER NOTIFICATION LETTER?

You will not receive a Consumer Notification Letter if National Grid has your account listed as being contracted with a competitive supplier or if you have requested National Grid put a "Supplier Block" on your account so that it is removed from all supplier marketing lists. However, there is a lag between the date the utility provides the account data and the date the Consumer Notification Letters are mailed so there may be some accounts that are categorized wrong at the time of the mailing.

7. HOW WILL BEING A PART OF THIS PROGRAM AFFECT ME?

You will receive the benefit of potentially lower rates on your electricity and therefore a lower electric bill. Otherwise, YOU WILL NOT NOTICE ANY CHANGE. The only difference you will see is that the name of the chosen competitive supplier will be printed under the "Supply/Generation Services Charge" section of your monthly bill. You will continue to receive one bill from National Grid. You will continue to send your payments to National Grid for processing. National Grid will continue to read meters and maintain the distribution and transmission lines. Reliability and quality of service will remain the same. Furthermore, you will continue to have all existing consumer rights and protections.

8. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

If you have received a Consumer Notification Letter AND you have not opted out AND your account is not listed with National Grid as having a "Supplier Block" (a request to have your account removed from all supplier marketing lists), you will not need to do anything to participate. You will be automatically enrolled in the Program.

9. WHY HAVE I NOT BEEN ENROLLED, I THOUGHT IT WAS AUTOMATIC?

Enrollment is automatic ONLY IF you have received a Consumer Notification Letter and have not opted out. Enrollment is NOT AUTOMATIC if you have not received a Consumer Notification Letter OR if National Grid has your account listed as being contracted with a competitive supplier at the time of the enrollment. Also, you will not receive a Consumer Notification Letter, and therefore will not be enrolled, if you have requested National Grid put a "Supplier Block" on your account so that it is removed from all supplier marketing lists. If that is the case, consumers may have to call National Grid to be enrolled in the Program.

10. CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM IF I DID NOT RECEIVE A CONSUMER NOTIFICATION LETTER?

Yes, as long as your community has a DPU approved aggregation working with Colonial Power Group. You may OPT-IN AT ANY TIME by filling out the online Opt-In Form at colonialpowergroup.com/stoughton OR by calling the competitive supplier chosen by your community (listed on your community's page) OR by calling Colonial Power Group at (866) 485-5858 ext. 1. To avoid delays in your enrollment, before opting in, please make sure that if you have a "Supplier Block" on your account that it is removed. Also, if you have previously contracted with your own competitive supplier, you should confirm with them that you will not incur any fees for leaving their supply.

11. WHEN WILL MY ENROLLMENT TAKE EFFECT?

Your enrollment will start on the meter read date stated on the Consumer Notification Letter. You will see the new rate on your bill the following month. For example, if your meter read enrollment date is January 1, your usage from January 1 - January 31 will be charged the new rate and billed on February 1. If you opt-in at any other time, enrollment may take up to two billing cycles before taking effect.

12. WHAT IF I DO NOT WANT POWER FROM THIS SUPPLIER?

Each consumer has the right to choose his/her supplier. Enclosed in the Consumer Notification mailing is an Opt-Out Return Card. If you do not want to participate in the Community Choice Power Supply Program, you can sign and date the card, place it in the envelope provided and drop it in the mail OR fill out the Opt-Out Form at colonialpowergroup.com/stoughton OR call the competitive supplier chosen by your community (listed on your community's page) OR call Colonial Power Group at (866) 485-5858 ext. 1. You will then be removed from the list of participating consumers. The initial opt-out period is thirty (30) days from the mailing date of the Consumer Notification Letter.

13. WHAT IF I DECIDE I WANT TO OPT-OUT AFTER THE 30-DAY INITIAL OPT-OUT PERIOD?

Participation is designed to be as flexible as possible. You may leave the Community Choice Power Supply Program at no charge and be placed on National Grid Basic Service or choose another competitive supplier on your own. Opting out of the Community Choice Power Supply Program is easy. You may fill out the online Opt-Out Form at colonialpowergroup.com/stoughton OR call the competitive supplier chosen by your community (listed on your community's page) OR call Colonial Power Group at (866) 485-5858 ext. 1. It may take a couple of billing cycles before you are back on National Grid Basic Service. There is NO CHARGE to opt-out.

Commercial consumers (G2, G3), if you participate initially and then choose to leave the Community Choice Power Supply Program, you may return only if accepted by the competitive supplier and at prevailing market rates.

14. WHAT IF I HAVE ALREADY CHOSEN A COMPETITIVE SUPPLIER?

National Grid records should indicate that you already have a competitive supplier. If so, you will not be enrolled in the Community Choice Power Supply Program. However, there is a lag between the date the utility provides the account data and the date the Consumer Notification Letters are mailed so

there may be some accounts that are categorized wrong at the time of the mailing. This is why we recommend that you opt-out if you have received a Consumer Notification Letter but have contracted with a competitive supplier.

15. WHAT IF I HAVE ALREADY CHOSEN A GREEN POWER SUPPLY OPTION THROUGH MY UTILITY?

GreenUp is a renewable energy program, through National Grid, which allows you to choose to have all or part of your electricity generated from renewable resources. GreenUp only allows for enrollment with Basic Service not competitive supply (which includes municipal aggregation).

National Grid records should indicate that you already have a Green Power Supply Option. If so, you will not be enrolled in the Community Choice Power Supply Program. However, there is a lag between the date the utility provides the account data and the date the Consumer Notification Letters are mailed so there may be some accounts that are categorized wrong at the time of the mailing. This is why we recommend that you opt-out if you have received a Consumer Notification Letter but have chosen a Green Power Supply Option.

16. WHAT IF I AM ON A BUDGET PLAN OR ELIGIBLE LOW-INCOME RATE?

You will continue to receive those benefits from National Grid.

17. WILL I STILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR MASS SAVE PROGRAMS?

You will continue to be eligible for those incentives, which are sponsored by National Grid.

18. WHAT IF I OPERATE A BUSINESS AND HAVE A "TAX EXEMPT" STATUS, WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO MAINTAIN MY STATUS UNDER THIS PROGRAM?

Any applicable taxes will be billed as part of the Program's power supply charge. You will be responsible for identifying and requesting an exemption from the collection of taxes by providing appropriate documentation.

According to Massachusetts law, in order to maintain your tax exempt status for your electric bill, you must send a copy of your tax exempt certificate directly to the competitive supplier chosen by your community. (The competitive supplier's name is listed at colonialpowergroup.com/stoughton.)

19. WHAT IF I HAVE SOLAR PANELS ON MY RESIDENCE OR BUSINESS, OR WHAT IF I'VE JOINED A COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECT?

Net metering and on-bill credits will work the same way with the Community Choice Power Supply Program. You will continue to receive your net metering or on-bill credits while benefiting from the aggregation rate on your electricity. National Grid will continue to post your net metering or on-bill credits to your electric bill at National Grid's Basic Service rate.

20. WHAT IS THE MASSACHUSETTS RENEWABLE ENERGY REQUIREMENT?

By law, all electric supply products are required to include a mandatory minimum percentage of clean/renewable energy resources. The total Massachusetts Renewable Energy Requirement consists of several different state initiatives, each with different objectives and different resource types that qualify. Currently, the Massachusetts Renewable Energy Requirement equals the sum of the Clean Energy Standard (inclusive of RPS Class I), the Clean Energy Standard for existing resources (CES-E), and RPS Class II. A detailed breakdown of the different categories and the minimum requirements of each category can be found at colonialpowergroup.com/massachusetts-renewable-energy-requirement.

21. HOW LONG DOES THE COMMUNITY CHOICE POWER SUPPLY PROGRAM LAST?

The Community Choice Power Supply Program is in effect until the local government terminates the Program. Throughout the life of the Program, each subsequent contract will vary by rate, term and possibly competitive supplier. You will be automatically enrolled in the next contract at the new rate unless you opt-out. The new rate may be higher or lower than the current rate and the voluntary renewable energy content may change. The latest rates, terms and contracted competitive supplier can be found at colonialpowergroup.com/stoughton or by calling Colonial Power Group at (866) 485-5858 ext. 1.

22. SHOULD I EXPECT GUARANTEED SAVINGS?

Basic Service rates change every six months for Residential and Small Commercial accounts and every three months for Large Commercial and Industrial accounts. As a result, the aggregation rate may not always be lower than the Basic Service rate. The goal of the aggregation is to deliver savings over the life of the Community Choice Power Supply Program against National Grid Basic Service. However, such savings and future savings cannot be guaranteed.