

## Produce your own electricity

Invest in green energy technology. Visit [www.dep.pa.gov](http://www.dep.pa.gov) and [www.energystar.gov/taxcredits](http://www.energystar.gov/taxcredits) to learn about any tax subsidies or assistance available.

## Take advantage of your electric company's programs to reduce costs

Many electric companies have created programs to help customers save on energy, including rebates for energy-efficient appliances and energy audits, incentives to install solar energy systems or geothermal heat pumps and other incentives for energy-efficient improvements. Your company also may offer budget billing or other customer assistance programs that can help you manage your electric costs.

Contact your electric company or visit its website to see what it has to offer.

## Choose an alternative supplier

Alternative suppliers offer electric generation rates that could be lower than your current electric company. If you choose an alternative supplier, you will continue to receive your monthly electric bill from your original electric company, which will contain all charges.

Additionally, your original electric company will continue to serve as the company that distributes the electricity to your home, maintains electric power lines, provides customer service and responds to emergencies. By shopping for the best price and choosing an alternative supplier, you are contributing to the generation of competition in the marketplace.

The amount you may save by choosing an alternative supplier will depend on:

- how much you pay now for electricity
- how much electricity you use
- how market prices change in the future
- what products and services are included in the new price
- the price offered by suppliers in your area.

More information about electric competition in Pennsylvania is available from:

- **The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission** – [www.papowerswitch.com](http://www.papowerswitch.com) or by calling the PUC's Competition Hotline at 1-888-PUC-FACT. Staff can answer questions and have up-to-date lists of licensed suppliers throughout the state.
- **Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate** – [www.oca.state.pa.us](http://www.oca.state.pa.us) or by calling 1-800-684-6560.



*Compliments of*  
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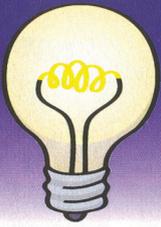
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# Guide to Managing Your Electric Bill



# **ELECTRIC CHOICE: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS**

**A 1996 law, the Electricity Generation Customer Choice and Competition Act, gives Pennsylvanians the right to choose which electric company generates their electricity.**

As an electric consumer, you can buy your electric power from any company you choose – whether it's to save money or take advantage of different service features or options.

Even if you choose a new company to generate your electricity, your current electric company still is responsible for bringing that electricity into your home or business, and the one you should call if you have an outage or repair needed. Also, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission continues to oversee the electric industry in Pennsylvania. That means the quality, reliability and maintenance of your electric service will not change should you choose a new generating company. Only companies licensed by the PUC are allowed to operate in Pennsylvania.

## **How to shop for electricity**

### *Price to compare*

All electricity bills are handled differently, which makes it difficult to compare prices. However each one will list a "price to compare." This figure allows you to compare the prices of different companies, and is given in cents per kilowatt hours (kWh). Check your recent electric bills for your price to compare. Also keep in mind that your price to compare may change monthly or quarterly.

Remember: If you're looking to save money, any supplier's price to compare should be less than your current electric company's price to compare.

Once you know your utility's price to compare and your own typical monthly usage, you can begin to shop for an electric supplier.

## **Now it's time to call suppliers, ask questions and compare prices and offers.**

### **Questions to ask:**

- What is your price to compare?
- Will the price stay the same for the entire time or can it change?
- Does the electric rate depend on how much I use or when I use it?
- Do I need to sign a contract? What is the length of the contract?
- Is there a penalty for canceling or switching suppliers?
- Are there any other charges or fees?
- Do you offer any special incentives or bonuses for signing up?
- Do you have a budget billing option or participate in any low-income assistance programs?
- Are you licensed by the PUC?
- Will I get one bill or two?
- What steps must I take to switch suppliers?

Visit the Public Utility Commission's website on Electric Choice:

[www.papowerswitch.com](http://www.papowerswitch.com) or

Pennsylvania's Office of Consumer

Advocate: [www.oca.state.pa.us](http://www.oca.state.pa.us).

**Both sites have comparison information for the various electric companies.**

**However, keep in mind that electric prices are subject to change, so it's always a good idea to verify the information with the electric company.**

