

What is Community Choice Electricity Aggregation?

Community Choice Electricity Aggregation (CCE) is a program in Massachusetts that came out of the **Restructuring Act of 1997, specifically Chapter 164: Section 134. Aggregation of electrical load by municipality or group of municipalities; adoption of energy plan.** The Act empowers cities and towns to create large buying groups of residential and business electricity accounts in order to seek bids for cheaper supply rates, essentially bulk-purchasing. The purpose of the Act was to ensure that the benefits of energy deregulation were passed on to residential customers and businesses by providing the ability to “aggregate” their accounts within their municipal boundaries in order to obtain competitive bids from Third Party Suppliers (TPS). Grouping residential accounts together creates economies of scale, enabling participating municipalities to achieve greater savings for account holders as a whole. You may find more information about the electric industry in the state by visiting the [Department of Public Utilities \(D.P.U\) website](#) or the [Department of Energy Resources website](#) on municipal aggregation.

What are the objectives of community choice electricity aggregation?

The objective of CCE is simply to lower the cost of electricity bills through the formation of a buying group composed of residents and businesses of one or more municipalities without interfering with the level of service provided by the utility, in this case, National Grid, distributing the electricity supply.

How does community choice electricity aggregation work?

First, the municipality must pass an article at Town Meeting. Charlton then selected a consultant, Good Energy, L.P., to seek bids from TPS to obtain competitive electricity rates for participants. An account holder will be able to opt out of the program during a 30-day period at the onset of the program. They may also leave the program at any point with no associated termination penalties or fees.

How does community choice electricity aggregation impact my electricity bill?

The goal of CCE is primarily savings and long-term price stability, though savings cannot be guaranteed, due to the fact that there is no visibility into future rates. Participants will see no change in their utility bill other than a change in price on energy supply. They will continue to receive a single bill, make one payment, and continue to receive the same level of service from National Grid.

Will the single bill come from National Grid?

Yes, your single bill will continue to come from National Grid.

When will the community choice electricity aggregation go into effect?

The program was launched in July 2017.

What do I need to do in order to participate?

If you are currently receiving your electricity supply from your National Grid’s basic service, you

do not need to do anything. You will automatically be enrolled in the program unless you choose to opt out.

Do I have to participate in the community choice electricity aggregation program if I don't want to?

No, residents and businesses can opt out without penalty during a 30-day opt-out period. Opt-out notices are provided via USPS mail prior to the program commencing for eligible account holders. Simply return the opt-out notice within 30 days and your account(s) will not be included. Participating account holders may leave the program at any time without penalty.

What part of my electricity bill will this program affect?

Your electricity bill has two cost components – delivery and supply. The aggregation program only changes the supply component of your bill. The delivery portion of your bill will not be affected.

When will I begin seeing a change in my electricity bill?

Enrollment took place in June 2017. The program began in July. Changes were reflected on the following billing cycle.

What happens if I move my residence or business from one location to another within the town and want to remain in the program?

If you move within the municipal boundaries of the town, you may preemptively contact Public Power, LLC, the winning supplier for the program, in order to enroll. They may be reached by phone Monday through Friday from 9AM to 5PM EST (excluding holidays) at (800) 830-2944, or via email at <mailto:customercare@ppandu.com> to re-enroll your new account in the aggregation program at the original rate for the duration of the term. If you do not contact Public Power, you will receive an opt-out notification letter which details the program. Simply disregard the opt-out notification letter if you wish to participate in the program. Please note that your first month of service will default to National Grid basic generation service supply, but will then transition to the Charlton program on your next available billing cycle.

Under the program, can I continue to participate in my utility's budget billing/equal payment plan?

Yes, you can continue to participate in a budget billing/equal payment plan. No action is required to remain in the budget billing/equal payment plan.

Will the community choice electricity aggregation program include both electricity and natural gas?

No, the program will focus exclusively on electricity.

What if I choose to leave the program early?

Residents and businesses who are enrolled in the program may terminate their participation at any time without any early termination or exit fees.

How will I be notified that my account(s) was successfully enrolled in the community choice electricity aggregation program?

Each eligible account holder should have received written notification after the bid informing them of the winning supplier price compared to National Grid's rates, in addition to the account holder's right to opt out. After the 30-day opt-out period has ended and the program has begun, each eligible account holder that did not opt out will see the following indicated on your National Grid bill:

"As of your next cycle meter read your supplier will be Public Power, LLC."

This is the only notification from National Grid confirming participation in the program that account holders will receive.

Can businesses participate in the program?

Yes, any account currently on basic service that is not enrolled with a TPS is eligible and will be automatically enrolled unless they choose to opt out.

I switched to a third party supplier and a few months later, my rate increased and I was paying much more than the utility rate. How do I know this won't happen again by participating in this program?

Your rate will remain fixed at \$0.09366/kWh through your January 2018 meter read. It will increase to \$0.10130/kWh beginning with your January 2018 meter read and remain fixed at that rate until the end of the program term in January 2020. Barring any regulatory changes, no other adjustments to your rate will occur. Any regulatory changes which may occur impact all ratepayers in the National Grid service territory, regardless of participation in the program.

How do I know the community choice electricity aggregation rate will always be below the utility rate?

The consultant has extensive knowledge of how utility tariff rates are determined, and as such, has structured a term with the goal of providing annual savings throughout the term of the contract.

How are we sure that a competent and reputable supplier will be selected?

Only TPS licensed by the state were eligible to bid. In addition, an in-depth request for proposal was disseminated by the energy consultant to interested TPS requiring them to provide their qualifications. Among other things, the request required suppliers to demonstrate financial strength, experience, in addition to customer service capabilities.

Will my utility be eligible to bid?

No, by law, utilities are not permitted to bid. With regard to supply, the utility only provides default service, however, the utility will always be responsible for delivering your electricity.

How long is the supply contract term for my community's program?

The contract term will be 30 months in duration.

Do I have to sign a contract?

No, there is no contract to sign. The program is designed to be as easy as possible for participants. Accounts are automatically enrolled as long as they are currently receiving basic service from National Grid. Regular updates will be posted as necessary on the Charlton's website.

If I opt out, can I opt back in at a later date?

Residents and small commercial accounts that are enrolled in the program may terminate their participation in the program at any time without any early termination or exit fees. They may also re-enroll in the program at a later date with no associated re-enrollment fees at the rates scheduled under the original program terms. The aggregation program rate will be reflected on the account holder's utility bill on the next available billing cycle. Because switching suppliers requires at least two days for National Grid to process, you are encouraged to re-enroll in the program at least five business days prior to the meter read date indicated on your National Grid bill in order to ensure re-enrollment occurs on a timely basis.

What if I have a photo-voltaic or solar panel system?

Having a solar system which allows you to earn net metering credits does not preclude you from participating in the aggregation program. As long as the account holder is receiving supply from National Grid, they are able to participate in the aggregation program and will continue to receive net metering credits from National Grid. Net metering will work in the same way as before you joined the CCE program. Your net metering credits will continue to appear on your National Grid bill and will continue to be calculated based on National Grid's Basic Service price. In addition, there is no change in SREC eligibility or the ability to sell the SRECs. For a more detailed explanation, please click [here](#).

Who do I call if there is an outage or issues with my electricity bill?

All service and billing questions will continue to be directed to National Grid at (800) 233-5325.

How do I contact the winning supplier?

Public Power, LLC is the winning supplier for the program. They may be reached by phone Monday through Friday from 9AM to 5PM EST (excluding holidays) at (800) 830-2944, or via email at <mailto:customer@ppandu.com>.

Will National Grid take longer to restore my electricity if I am with a third party supplier?

No, the delivery of your electricity is always the responsibility of the utility. As a result of energy deregulation in 1997 in Massachusetts, utilities are only able to collect revenue from delivering the power to your meter, not from the actual supply. This is why utilities in Massachusetts are indifferent to the supply portion of the bill. Simply put, National Grid does not make any money on the actual electricity they supply to your account(s). They only generate revenue from the delivery of that electricity.

Will I be charged a higher delivery rate?

Delivery rates do not change based on participation in a CCE program. Utility delivery rates are regulated by the state and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

I am currently receiving offers from third party suppliers promising lower electricity rates. What should I do?

TPS are currently very active within the Commonwealth. This is due to the recent significant increases in electricity rates for all utilities within Massachusetts. We strongly advise any account holder to read the complete contract fine print and have a clear understanding of any termination penalties, along with rate details, before agreeing to purchase electricity from a TPS.

Will other third party supply offers stop if I participate in the program?

No, unfortunately you may continue to receive other TPS offers. It is important, therefore, to remember the details of the aggregation program, i.e., the duration of the program, rate, etc. Very often, due to the length of time commonly associated with these types of programs, participants often forget the program is still in effect, when in fact there may be months or even years remaining. Sometimes this results in a participant inadvertently leaving the program for what they may believe to be a better offer. You are encouraged to remember that the CCE program is operated under the due diligence of your municipality and though not impossible, it is unlikely that other offers will be more competitive. Please regularly visit this site for updates.

Does my municipality profit from the program?

No, Charlton does not profit from a CCE program.

What administrative functions will the municipality be performing related to this program?

The energy consultant will be responsible for managing all aspects of the program and keeping Charlton appropriately informed.

How can I get more information about the community choice electricity aggregation program?

Please check for announcements from your municipality and local news outlets. You may also call and speak to a Public Power representative at (800) 830-2944.

What if the selected supplier goes out of business or is bought?

Good Energy's due diligence process requires bidding suppliers to meet strict qualification requirements. Among other things, the request requires suppliers to demonstrate financial strength and experience, as well as customer service capabilities. This process minimizes any chance of a supplier going out of business. If the supplier is bought, the purchasing entity will continue to provide supply service under the existing contract terms.

Is there any change to my meter? If so, how/who reads the meter?

No, there are no changes to your current meter. National Grid continues to read your meter.

Is a deposit required?

No, no deposit is required.

What happens at the end of the community choice electricity aggregation supply contract term?

Good Energy will work with Charlton to obtain renewal pricing. Similar to the original term, eligible customers will be given the opportunity to opt out.

Does the municipality pay any administrative fees?

No, Charlton does not pay any administrative fees.

What is the history of aggregation programs in the Commonwealth?

In 1997, the State of Massachusetts became the first state to pass municipal electric aggregation legislation, a [type of program](#) designed to save consumers money on their electricity bills. In fact, in 1997, the Commonwealth formed the Cape Light Compact, the first municipal electric aggregation program in the country. Six other states have since followed. The programs go by different names in different states, but the bulk-purchasing principles upon which they operate are largely the same. By aggregating, or grouping, a large number of electric accounts together, economies of scale are created, enabling participating municipalities to achieve greater savings for consumers than could normally have been achieved by the individual customer.

Who is Good Energy, L.P.?

Good Energy, L.P. is a leading national energy management and consulting firm that has been implementing large and small community choice aggregation programs in various states across the country since 2008. They have partnered with your municipality to design and operate this CCE program. Good Energy is headquartered in New York City and is currently the retained community electricity aggregation consultant for over 200 communities across the country. Charlton selected Good Energy to serve as its energy consultant through a competitive process, in partnership with neighboring cities and towns.