



**COMMUNITY  
POWER COALITION**  
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
*For communities, by communities.*

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



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# Community Power 101

## 1. What is Community Power?

New Hampshire cities and towns that adopt Community Power by their local legislative body (e.g., Town Meeting or City/Town Council) can establish their own locally controlled electricity provider. Community Power provides the actual energy known as generation or energy supply, and replaces the energy supply charge from your utility company (Eversource, Unitil Corporation, Liberty Utilities, or New Hampshire Electric Co-op). The utility will continue to charge you for their transmission and delivery service. Community Power is enabled by [New Hampshire RSA 53-E](#).

## 2. Why adopt Community Power? What's the point?

The [New Hampshire Legislature found](#) that allowing municipalities and counties the local control to aggregate retail electric customers for the purpose of accessing competitive markets for supplies of electricity and related energy services was beneficial for lowering costs and creating cost effective and innovative energy solutions with careful consideration of local conditions and opportunities.

Community Power creates more choices for customers, the collective buying power to drive down cost, and the local control to allow New Hampshire communities to chart their own energy futures.

## 3. What is Community Power

Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, also known as "the Coalition," is a public power agency, created by New Hampshire cities and towns as a non-profit on October 1, 2021. The Coalition is governed by a Board of Directors of elected staff, and volunteers appointed by each of our local mu. id county members. The Coalition provides comprehensive services

# Coalition of New Hampshire?

to launch and operate Community Power programs. Visit [www.cpcnh.org](http://www.cpcnh.org) to learn more.

## 4. How is Community Power funded? Are taxpayer funds used?

Community Power is financed by the revenues received from our customers based on the electricity they consume. Community Power programs are self-funded and provide electricity supply and customer services without using any tax dollars, which ensures that any financial benefits directly serve the community.

## 5. Does Community Power replace my current utility company?

No. Your utility company (Eversource, Liberty, Unitil, or NH Electric Co-op) continues to provide all electric delivery, consolidated billing, and power line maintenance services.

Community Power only replaces the electric generation and supply services with your choice of energy product at competitive rates.

## 6. I'm a Liberty Utilities customer and having trouble finding my account number. Can you help?

Liberty Utilities implemented a new billing system recently. Consequently, all customers have been assigned different account numbers. You will need your new account number to opt-out or opt-in to Community Power service, or to opt-up to choose a different product.

Apparently, a significant number of customers have not been told what their new Liberty account numbers are. Note that your old account number was a 16-digit string of numbers separated by a dash in the middle (for example, "1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 — 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8"), whereas your new account number will be a 12-digit string of numbers without any dashes.

Please contact Liberty Utilities directly to obtain your new account number.

## 7. Who do I call with questions about my

If you ever have questions about Community Power or the electricity supply charges on your bill, email us at [Info@CommunityPowerNH.gov](mailto:Info@CommunityPowerNH.gov) or call us at [1-866-603-P](tel:1-866-603-P)

**Please note, it is important that you dial 866, and not some other prefix like 800, 888, etc. Unfortunately, there can be scams that are associated with other prefixes. Our customer service representatives will never ask for a credit card number or need any payment from you.**

If you have questions about the rest of your utility bill, please contact your utility directly at:

- [Eversource](#)
- [Liberty Utilities](#)
- [NH Electric Cooperative](#)
- [Unitil](#)

## Opting In, Out, and Up!

### 8. Can I switch between the Granite Basic, Granite Plus, Clean 50 and Clean 100 power options?

Yes, you can “opt up” to Granite Plus, Clean 50 or Clean 100 at any time, and you can “opt down” to Granite Basic. And if you want to switch back again, just call and let us know or log-on to our website [CommunityPowerNH.gov](http://CommunityPowerNH.gov) and make the change there. Have your utility account number from Eversource, Liberty, Unitil or NH Electric Cooperative handy so we can easily process your request.

Some communities — including Hanover, Peterborough, and Plainfield — offer Granite Plus and 10% more clean power as their default option. Customers in these communities may choose to opt-down to Granite Basic.

### 9. Do I have to participate in Community Power? Can I opt out?

You get to decide! Any customer may opt out of their Community Power program without fee or cost. Just call [1-866-603-POWER](tel:1-866-603-POWER) (during normal business hours), visit [CommunityPowerNH.gov](http://CommunityPowerNH.gov), or email us at [info@CommunityPowerNH.gov](mailto:info@CommunityPowerNH.gov).

Customers who have already received an enrollment notice in the mail and do not choose to opt out will be enrolled onto Community Power service after 30 days (upon your next regularly-scheduled electricity meter reading date). Customers who already shop with a competitive supplier will not be automatically enrolled, but may choose to opt-in (see Question 12).

## 10. Can I return to Community Power after I opt-out?

Customers who opt out of Community Power service may return at any time so long as adequate notice is provided in advance of the next monthly billing period and meter read by the utility company.

## 11. Why is Community Power opt-out instead of opt-in?

New Hampshire was the first state in the nation to pass Community Power legislation in 1996. However, our market lay dormant for more than twenty-five years because the original legislation had a flaw that made it defective: it only allowed for opt-in programs.

Opt-in programs fail to realize benefits for customers because they are unable to achieve the required economy of scale to effectively lower costs. In 2019 and 2021, leaders from our Coalition worked with the New Hampshire legislature to pass bills to bring our Community Power Act up to date with national best practices, and to allow for opt-out programs.

Community Power is voluntary. It is a way to add additional affordable choices for customers that are more aligned with local interests, while maintaining other existing choices such as utility default supply, and third-party options. Customers are free to opt-in and opt-out as they choose.

## 3rd Party Supply, NHSaves, Electric Assistance & NH Electric Co-op

## 12. I buy power from a 3rd party electricity supplier — does this affect me?

Customers in Community Power municipalities and counties who already shop for electricity using a third-party provider will receive a mailed notification about the commencement of the program, just like other customers. However, these customers will not be automatically enrolled. Unless you choose to enroll, nothing will change for you.

If you're interested in signing up for Community Power, please call us at [1-866-603-POWER](tel:1-866-603-POWER) to discuss your options. (Don't forget to check with your current provider to determine if there are any early termination fees or penalties for leaving their supplier.)

### 13. Are Community Power customers still eligible to receive rebates from NHSaves for energy efficiency?

Yes. The Public Utilities Commission authorizes Eversource, Liberty, and Unitil to collect fees (called Systems Benefits Charge) from all customers to fund NHSaves energy efficiency incentive programs. NH Electric Co-op, while not regulated by the Public Utilities Commission, similarly funds NHSaves programs. The utilities will continue to collect these fees and Community Power customers will remain eligible for these incentives and services. Visit [NHSaves.com](https://www.nhsaves.com) to learn more about saving money by saving energy.

### 14. Will I continue to receive my Electric Assistance Program (EAP) discount?

Yes. Electric Assistance Program discounts continue to be available to Community Power customers and provides the same discount regardless of enrollment with Community Power. Customers enrolled in Community Power continue to receive their Electric Assistance Program discount. There is no need to reapply. For Community Power customers, EAP discounts for supply or generation services may be displayed in the 'Delivery' section of the bill. New Electric Assistance Program enrollments and renewals for Community Power customers are processed by [local Community Action Agencies](#).

### 15. Does Community Power serve customers in the New Hampshire Electric Co-op territory?

Yes, however, in some communities, customers in New Hampshire Electric Co-op's territory will NOT be automatically enrolled (Canterbury, Enfield, Hanover, Plainfield) but may choose to opt-in. If you'd like to discuss your options, please call us at [1-866-603-POWR](tel:1-866-603-POWR).

## Rate Setting, Net Metering & Special Products

### 16. How are my Community Power

If your city, town or county program is an active Coalition member, rates are set through Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire, a public non-profit governed by our member towns and counties. The Coalition ensures you'll have a steady,

## rates set?

predictable outlook on your rates. You'll also have the satisfaction of working with a local provider, governed by local leaders whose interests are aligned with yours.

The Coalition sets and adjusts rates with the objective of saving customers money and increasing power options. We offer at least one supply option at a discount relative to your utility supply rate along with cleaner 'opt up' choices. Most utility rates are set from February 1 to July 31 and from August 1 to January 31. The Coalition's default rates will change for the next six-month utility rate period.

The Coalition's Board and Committee meetings are open to the public. Customers can always know about rate changes 30 days in advance, and rates are publicly posted on the [NH Department of Energy's website](#) alongside the rates of other electricity supply options.

## 17. Does Community Power serve Net Metering customers?

Please view Net Metering FAQs to learn more:

[NET METERING FAQs](#)

## 18. Does Community Power offer Time-of-Use rates?

Community Power programs can serve 2-part Time of Use customers in Liberty Utilities and Eversource territories. These customers' current time-of-day rate only varies by time of day for the utility's distribution charges. They pay a fixed rate for supply from the utility and will continue to pay a fixed rate for supply provided by Community Power programs.

While the Coalition is fully capable of offering advanced time-varying supply rate structures for electric vehicle, battery storage, and customers that want electricity rates that vary by time of day — which we very much want to do! — unfortunately, the utilities do not currently provide the data and billing services necessary for Community Power programs to offer these rates to customers.

There are two main barriers preventing Community Power programs from fully serving 3-part Time of Use customers:

1. The first issue is that utilities will not allow Community Power programs to provide anything other than a flat, fixed supply for use in calculating customer bills (when the utility performs the calculations and issues the bill on behalf of Community Power programs, as they do for most customers).
2. The second issue is that the utilities will only tell Community Power programs how much electricity Time of Use customers have used over the course of each month and will not tell us how much electricity they've used during the 3 different periods of the Time-of-Use rate. Without this data, Community Power programs have no ability to independently offer customers a 3-part Time-of-Use rate and bill the customer directly for their supply charges.

Consequently, customers currently on a three-part Time-of-Use rate with a supply charge that varies by time of day will NOT be automatically enrolled in Community Power programs and do not need to opt-out at this time.

Customers can still elect to opt-in but would have to accept a fixed rate at this time (a flat rate that does not vary by time of day). It therefore may or may not financially benefit Time of Use customers to take service from Community Power programs. The Coalition recommends that customers assess whether their Community Power program's fixed rate is a better option for them as compared to their utility's 3-part Time-of-Use rate before making their decision.

If you are a 3-part Time-of-Use customer, please call us at [1-866-603-POWER](tel:1-866-603-POWER) to discuss your options.

## 19. Does Community Power offer monthly variable rates?

Yes. Subject to certain limitations and considerations imposed by utility billing systems, Community Power offers customers a monthly variable rate if they are on a monthly variable rate provided by their distribution utility prior to being enrolled in Community Power.

Customers in the following rate classes are eligible for monthly variable rates: Eversource Class GV customers, Liberty Utilities G1 and G2 Class customers, and Unitil Corporation Domestic and Non-G1 Class customers that are currently on Unitil's default supply rate.

Eversource and Liberty Utilities provide Community Power programs with the data necessary to identify customers who are currently on monthly variable rates. Consequently, these customers are eligible to be automatically enrolled in Community Power monthly variable rates.

Unitil Corporation has been unresponsive to our requests to identify which default service Domestic and Non-G1 Class customers are currently on monthly variable rates. Consequently, Domestic and Non-G1 Class customers need to email [info@CommunityPowerNH.gov](mailto:info@CommunityPowerNH.gov) to verify that they're currently on a monthly variable rate provided by Unitil Corporation. (Absent verification, customers will be enrolled onto our fixed period rates.) We apologize for the inconvenience and are engaging with the Public Utilities Commission to resolve this situation.

Community Power monthly variable rates change on the first day of each month. These rate changes are submitted to the customer's utility each month, so that the utility can calculate customer supply charges to present on monthly bills.

Unfortunately, however, Eversource and Unitil Corporation impose limitations on how supply charges are calculated for customers on monthly variable rates:

- While all three utilities currently "pro-rate" their own default supply rates that vary based on calendar month — such that a customer whose billing cycle begins on May 15th and ends on June 15th would be charged the May rate for usage in May, and the June rate for usage in June — only Liberty Utilities provides the same billing service to Community Power programs.
- Eversource and Unitil Corporation, in contrast, will calculate customer bills by applying the monthly rate applicable at the start of each customers billing period to all usage within that billing period. Consequently, a customer whose billing cycle begins on May 15th and ends on June 15th would be charged the May rate for all electricity used between May 15th and June 15th.

The limitations imposed by Eversource and Unitil Corporation are non-compliant with regulatory rules. Utilities are supposed to provide the same billing services to customers regardless of whether they are served by the utility or a Community Power program. We are engaging with the Public Utilities to bring Eversource and Unitil Corporation into compliance to resolve this issue.

## 20. What new products does Community Power offer large commercial & industrial customers?

We are working to design a "pass-through" index product offering for large commercial & industrial, under which they'd would be charged the wholesale market cost of supply based on how much electricity they use each hour, as well as their individual capacity tag, our administrative costs, and the cost of complying with NH's Renewable Portfolio Standard.

The intent of this new rate is to incentivize demand response and flexibility, by passing-through the benefits of shifting electricity usage to low-cost time periods, and allowing large customers to retain the cost-savings that result from lowering capacity charges by decreasing their onsite usage during the one hour of the year that determines their "ICAP" capacity tags.

We intend to finalize and offer this product during the Summer of 2023 (soon after the launch of the first Community Power programs in April and May).

If you are a large commercial & industrial customer, please email [info@CommunityPowerNH.gov](mailto:info@CommunityPowerNH.gov) or call us at [1-866-603-POWR](tel:1-866-603-POWR) to discuss your options. The Coalition is also interested in learning what types of other products and rate options you would like Community Power programs to offer.

## 21. How does Community Power provide lower-cost electricity to customers?

The Coalition was incorporated as a Joint Powers Agency to serve as a nonprofit wholesale energy supplier on behalf of Community Power programs. To do so, the Coalition purchases power from the New England regional wholesale electricity market (ISO-NE) and ladders contracts with counterparties over time in ways that support the least-cost provision of all-requirements electricity supply for Community Power customers.

Under NH law, Community Power programs also have the option of hiring a broker, and then contracting with an existing for-profit power supplier for a fixed term (which is how Eversource, Unitil Corporation, and Liberty Utilities provide default supply service). The Coalition's approach is comparable to how the NH Electric Cooperative manages the cost of electricity, which has historically achieved lower rates for customers — and has been endorsed by New Hampshire's Consumer Advocate ([online here](#)).

To oversee and actively manage our power portfolio, the Coalition's Risk Management Committee convenes regularly to review current and forecasted market conditions that may impact power prices and to evaluate opportunities to adjust our hedged positions (by authorizing new contracts or by liquidating existing positions).

The Coalition is also responsible for (1) procuring Renewable Energy Certificates to satisfy New Hampshire's Renewable Portfolio Standard and higher renewable content supply options, (2) collecting revenues and accruing financial reserves to offset future market price increases and provide rate relief for customers, (3) developing energy programs and [net metering rates](#) for customers, and (4) facilitating competitive solicitations to contract for the construction of new, cost-effective local energy projects — which will lower our costs while diversifying our power portfolio over time, create local jobs in our communities, and strengthen our energy resilience.

For additional information, please refer to our Energy Portfolio Risk Management Policy and Regulations ([online here](#), listed under our "Key Documents"). Both documents have been approved by our Board of Directors and adopted by the governing bodies of each Community Power program prior to launch.

## 23. How does Community Power comply with New Hampshire's Renewable Portfolio Standard? And what are customers buying when they choose to opt-up to Granite Plus, Clean 50, or Clean 100?

To meet state law, and to verify the increased renewable content for customers who "opt-up" the Coalition purchases Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs).

- New Hampshire's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires all electricity providers to acquire specific percentages of RECs sourced from five different categories of renewable resources: Class I (new renewable resources), Class I thermal (useful thermal energy), Class II (new solar), Class III (existing biomass / methane), and Class IV (existing small hydroelectric).
- One REC represents the renewable attributes of one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity, or the equivalent amount of useful thermal energy generated, and each REC is issued and tracked through the New England Power Pool Generation Information System (NEPOOL GIS).

- Electricity providers are required to submit annual reports (by July 1st) demonstrating that they've secured the legally required number of RECs for the prior year reporting period and make alternative compliance payments for any RPS component for which RECs are not secured and retired. For 2023 the minimum renewable requirement will be equivalent to 23.4% of customer electricity consumption, as reported by the distribution utilities.
- Refer to the NH Department of Energy's website for additional information regarding RPS compliance requirements ([online here](#)), and to the Coalition's RPS overview page ([online here](#)).

Pursuant to the Coalition's Retail Rates Policy ([online here](#), listed under our "Key Documents"), opt-up products offered by Community Power programs may provide either (1) additional NH RPS compliant RECs, with a preference for sourcing in-state generation, or (2) carbon-free generation, which is also tracked and reported by NEPOOL GIS, to cover the following percentages of customer electricity usage: Granite Plus (33%), Clean 50 (50%), and Clean 100 (100%).

For example, when a customer elects Clean 100, the Coalition would need to purchase RECs for complying with NH's RPS standard, to cover 23.4% of the customer's total electricity consumption for the year, and then the remaining 76.6% would be covered either by sourcing carbon-free power from specific generators (such as large hydro that doesn't produce RECs) or by acquiring additional NH RPS compliant RECs, or a combination of the two.

During the initial period of operations starting in 2023 the Coalition procures NH RPS-compliant RECs for any customer that has elected Granite Plus, Clean 50, or Clean 100 products. In the future, we may procure carbon-free power by contracting directly with clean energy generators. These arrangements will be documented in our Environmental Disclosure Labels.

As the Coalition launches Community Power programs, and as customers make their product elections (for example, by selecting Clean 50 or Clean 100), the amount of renewable power that all customers are choosing to purchase will become known and the Coalition will purchase RECs through competitive solicitations — overseen by the Coalition's Risk Management Committee — to satisfy the combined RPS and voluntary purchase obligations elected by customers taking service from Community Power programs.

The Coalition's Retail Rates Policy and products offered to customers are subject to change, and evolution, over time. For example, our policy provides that Community Power programs that have begun developing new projects in New Hampshire may offer the electricity generated for sale to customers under a "Local Power" product — and we are engaging at the Legislature to advance legislation supportive of local project development:

- During the current legislative session, the Coalition has been supporting legislation that would enable Community Power programs to contract for new local projects, which we estimate would lower electricity supply costs by 30%, on average, in comparison to continuing to source and pay for the delivery of electricity from the regional wholesale market.
- If you would like to stay informed, and/or support our public advocacy efforts on behalf of your community, refer to "[How can I get involved with advancing policy reforms?](#)" below.

## 24. Will I still be able to use the Budget Billing option I have been using with my electric distribution utility?

Yes. When you join Community Power, your budget billing program may reset. In the event of your budget billing resetting, if you have an outstanding balance with your utility, it would come due. If you have an outstanding credit with your utility, you would receive that credit.

# Advancing Energy Policy Reforms

## 25. How can I get involved with advancing policy reforms?

The Coalition represents your community's interests before state policymakers and regulatory agencies, including the Public Utilities Commission (a quasi-judicial board that supervises Eversource, Liberty Utilities, and Unitil Corporation).

### **Our ability to advance reforms to energy policy depends on your support.**

Over the last several years, communities in the Coalition have worked to achieve important victories at the Legislature and Public Utilities Commission, including to implement Community Power, enable customer battery storage systems, create a statewide electricity and natural gas data platform for customers, extend net metering credits for low and moderate income customers, and authorize pilot programs to compensate local renewables and battery storage systems for the financial benefits they create using market-based mechanisms.

The Coalition is a community-governed power agency that can facilitate new local projects on behalf of Community Power programs. We estimate that building new community-scale renewables and battery storage systems in New Hampshire costs up to ~30% less than continuing to purchase and import power from the New England regional electricity market. Doing so would also enhance community energy resilience and invest money back into NH communities instead of continuing to pay so much for imported power. Unlocking this opportunity to lower electricity rates requires the political will to put in place new market mechanisms that appropriately compensate local projects for the benefits they create for our customers and communities.

[Contact Us](#)

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advance energy reforms — you can **go to [www.cpcnh.org](http://www.cpcnh.org) and click on the “Action Alerts” button at the bottom** of the page. This will bring you to the sign-up form, along with additional links to read more about the Coalition's public advocacy victories.