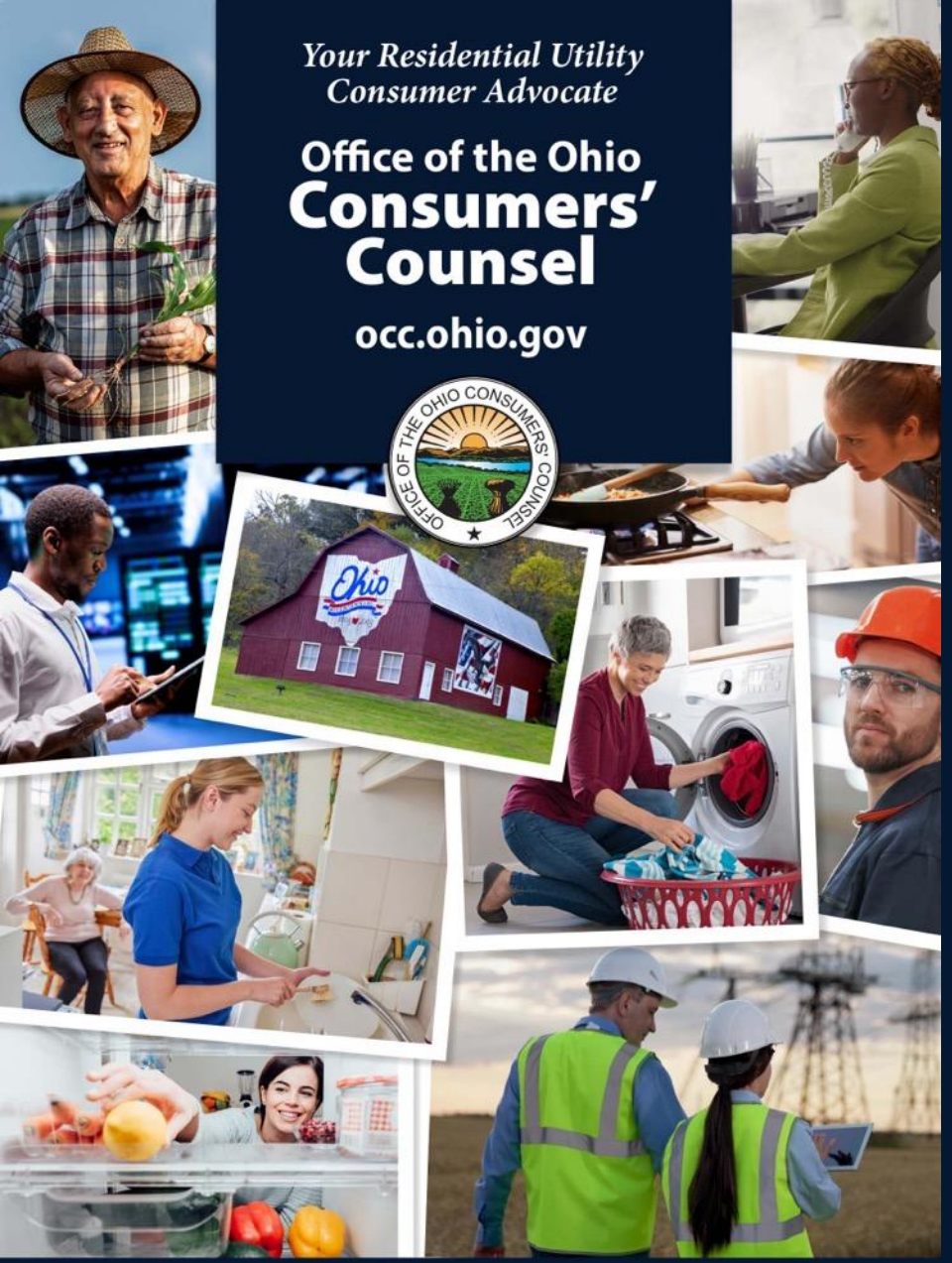


Managing Utility Bills

November 5, 2026

No Wrong Door
Washington County

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel
"Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate"
www.occ.ohio.gov





Presenter:
Kathryn Metz

Senior Outreach and Education Specialist

OHIO CONSUMERS' COUNSEL
1976 Celebrating 50 Years 2026

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

"Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate"

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Role of the Ohio Consumers Counsel

"The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel advocates and educates to secure for Ohioans affordable, reliable and equitable residential utility services that are essential to their well-being."



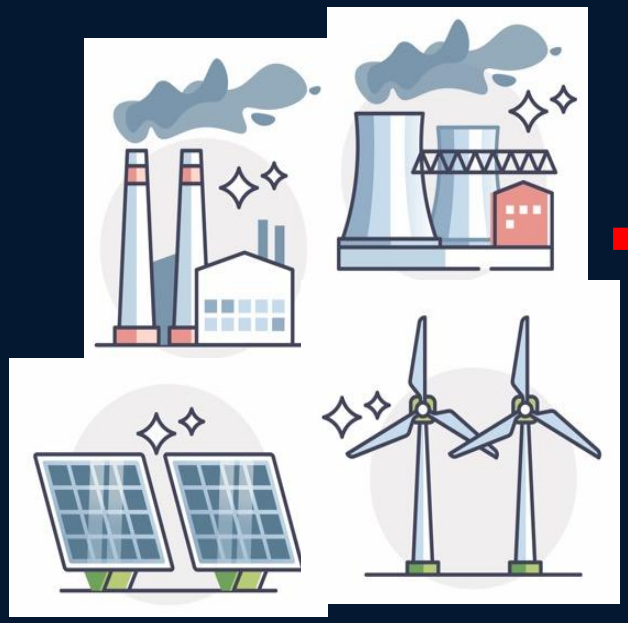
Outline

- Rising utility prices
- Understanding your bill
- Energy Choice
- Assistance
- Energy efficiency

Rising utility bills?

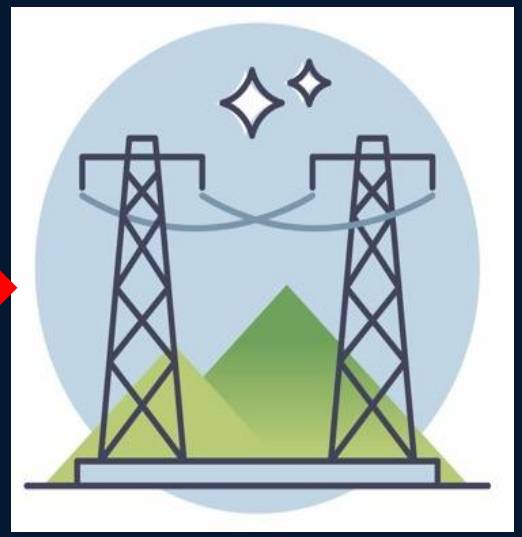
- Electricity prices have risen 34% since 2022
- Generation, transmission & distribution prices all rising
- Why?

Understanding Utility Services



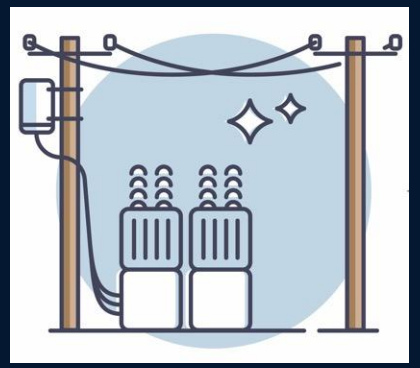
Generation (supply)

Shop for this



Transmission

Remains regulated by FERC



Distribution

Remains regulated by PUCO and provided by your local utility



Home



Business



Factory



Data Centers

- ✓ Massive Electricity Needs
- ✓ Increased Demand – Supply tightening
- ✓ Skin in the Game
- ✓ Cost Causer Pays – Bring Your Own New Supply

Data Centers in Ohio



- 258 data centers in Ohio – 5th most in the USA
- Central Ohio has **135 facilities** – 10th in North America for data center capacity
  - 1800% growth rate between 2020 & 2025
- Google, Meta, and Amazon Web Services (AWS) heavily concentrated in Central Ohio

Understanding Your Electric Bill

[redacted]

Electric Generation
Standard Service
$67.12

Electric Grid
Ohio Power Company
$77.96

Your Home
Electricity Cost
$145.08

Due Oct 28, 2026
$145.08

Your Selected Electric Generation Plan:
Standard Service Offer
Learn more about your plan and programs at OhioPowerCo.com/Account

Meter Reading Details

Reading: A Actual E Estimated Peak: On Off

Meter #767389760 Period 09/04 - 10/06 Multiplier 1

Previous	Current	Metered	Usage	Unit
38681 A	39340 A	659	659	kWh

Tariff 15 - Residential Service
Next scheduled read date should be between Nov 3 and Nov 6

For Informational Purposes Only: The below costs are NOT NEW CHARGES and are approximate values. AEP participates in programs required by the state of Ohio to support energy conservation and to secure renewable energy resources. For more information on energy efficiency, please visit OhioPowerCo.com/Savings.

- Renewable Programs: $1.26 / kWh
- Energy Efficiency Programs: $0.00
- Peak Demand Reduction Programs: $0.00

Notes from Ohio Power Company

Your bill has a new look. These updates make it easier to understand what you're paying for and why. This is only a format change and does not increase your bill or change how your charges are calculated

The amount due will be automatically deducted from your bank account on **October 28, 2026** because you are enrolled in our checkless payment plan.

Your current amount due is $145.08. If you were on the Average Monthly Payment (AMP) plan, your bill would have been $86.00. Log in to www.aepohio.com or call us to learn more about these programs.

Thank you for being a paperless customer! Sign up for billing and outage alerts to stay informed. You can manage your account by logging in at aepohio.com.

The Public Utilities Commission, in Case No. 26-47-EL-RDR, approved to adjust the Basic Transmission Cost Rider, effective with this bill. This rider, which is adjusted annually, recovers non-market-based transmission charges. A residential customer using 1,000 kWh per month will see an increase of $0.68 per month.

In Case No. 23-23-EL-SSO, the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio approved adjustments to Ohio Power Company's gridSMART rider. This rider allows the Company to recover costs for grid

Standard Service Electric Generation $67.12

Generation Energy Rider	659. kWh X $0.075080/kWh	$49.48
The cost of energy generated to meet your kWh usage. This is purchased through a competitive auction process, and Ohio Power Company makes no profit from it.		
Generation Capacity Rider Winter 1	659. kWh X $0.026590/kWh	$17.52
The cost of securing enough power generation capacity to meet your maximum kWh needs. This is purchased through a competitive auction, and Ohio Power Company makes no profit from it.		
Auction Cost Reconciliation	659. kWh X $-0.0037229/kWh	-$2.45
This line adjusts for differences in competitive auctions and what customers are charged, ensuring accurate cost recovery.		
Alternative Energy Rider	659. kWh X $0.0038973/kWh	$2.57
The cost of meeting renewable energy requirements set by the state of Ohio for your kWh usage.		

Ohio Power Company Electric Grid $77.96

Customer Charge	$13.50/Month	$13.50
The cost to ensure the electric distribution grid functions regardless of the amount of energy you use.		
Distribution Charge	659. kWh X $0.0347738/kWh	$22.92
The cost of using the electric distribution grid that delivers power to your home including substations, transformers, poles, wires—and the wages of the crew who build and maintain it.		
Electric Grid Base Rates Subtotal		$36.42
Basic Transmission Cost Rider	659. kWh X $0.0441180/kWh	$29.07
The cost of high-voltage transmission lines that carry electricity from distant power plants to your local area.		
kWh Tax Rider (First 2,000 kWh)	659. kWh X $0.004650/kWh	$3.06
A state tax mandated by the Ohio General Assembly.		
Energy Efficiency Rider	659. kWh X $0.0004541/kWh	$0.30
The cost of programs to help low-income customers use less electricity.		
PIPP Rider	659. kWh X $0.0063634/kWh	$4.19
Funding for an Ohio program that helps low-income households pay their utility bills.		
Enhanced Service Reliability Rider	0.0580236 Of Base Rates	$2.11
The cost of tree trimming and maintenance to help prevent outages and improve reliability.		
Distribution Investment Rider	0.0538996 Of Base Rates	$1.96
The cost of building new grid infrastructure to support growth and enhance reliability.		
Economic Development Cost Rcvry	0.0180190 Of Base Rates	$0.66
Funding for economic development programs in our service territory.		
Storm Damage Recovery Rider	$0.190/Month	$0.19
The cost of responding to severe storms that required extensive manpower and resources to restore power.		
Gridsmart Rider	$1.260/Month	$1.26
The cost of installing advanced meters and modern grid technologies to improve service reliability		

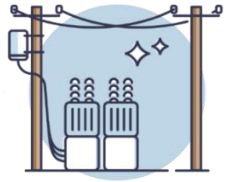
Generation/Supply (Deregulated)
Charge is generally based on usage



Customer Charge
Charge is fixed



Delivery
Includes distribution and transmission





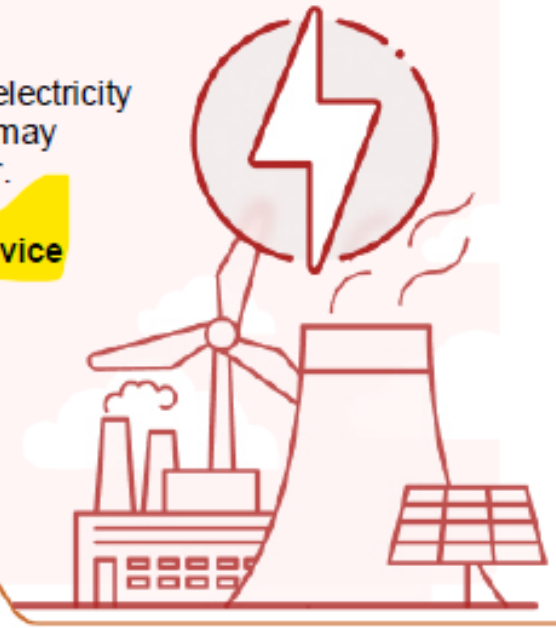
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Your Electric Bill Has Two Parts:

Electric Generation

This is the cost to generate the electricity you used. Under Ohio law, you may choose your generation provider.

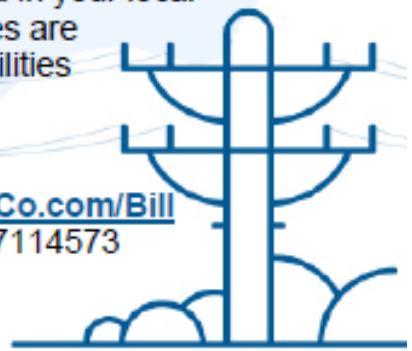
You have chosen **Standard Service**
Phone: 1-800-672-2231



Ohio Power Company Electric Grid

This is the cost of the electric grid that delivered electricity from the generator to your home via the transmission and distribution systems. Under Ohio law, Ohio Power Company is the designated "electric distribution utility" that operates the distribution electric grid in your local community. Ohio Power Company's rates are reviewed and approved by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio.

For more information, visit: OhioPowerCo.com/Bill
Service Delivery Identifier: 00040621017114573



Learn About Your Electric Generation

If you do not exercise your right under Ohio law to choose a generation provider, the electric distribution utility is required to provide you "standard service", which means the electric distribution utility – Ohio Power Company – is required to buy generation on your behalf. Ohio Power Company passes these charges through dollar-for-dollar and makes no money from them. For your rate schedule, the standard service rate (**Price to Compare**) is currently **$0.102/kWh**. That means a generation provider must offer you a rate lower than $0.102/kWh for you to save money. Contact Ohio Power Company to obtain an explanation of **Price to Compare**. To review available competitive generation offers, visit the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio's "**Energy Choice Ohio**" site: energychoice.ohio.gov.

Understanding Your Nat. Gas Bill

Credits and Charges Since Your Last Bill	
Balance from Last Bill	$61.17
Payment on Sep 4, 2026 - Thank You	62.00 CR
Balance	**$0.83 CR**
Current Charges	
Enbridge Gas Ohio Distribution Charges	
Basic Service Charge	$48.55
Usage-Based Charges	
2.8 MCF @ $1.0357	2.90
Tax Savings Credit	0.48 CR
Gross Receipts Tax (4.98%)	2.54
Total Enbridge Gas Ohio Charges	**$53.51**

For questions about Enbridge Gas Ohio charges, call us at 1-800-362-7557.

AEP ENERGY, INC. Charges	
Standard Choice Offer (SCO)	
Gas Cost 2.8 MCF @ $3.607	$10.10
Sales Tax	0.68
Total AEP ENERGY, INC. Charges	**$10.78**

*** Your gas cost per MCF recently changed from $3.425.

For questions about gas supply costs or contract terms and conditions, contact AEP ENERGY, INC. at 1-866-258-3782 or P. O. Box 340 Zelienople, PA 16063-2300 or aepenergy.com.

Total Current Charges	**$64.29**
Total Account Balance	**$63.46**

Rate Schedule: Energy Choice Transportation Service - Residential

Service Charge
Charge is fixed



Delivery
Usage + riders

Generation/Supply (Deregulated)
Charge is generally based on usage



Standard *Service* Offer (SSO)

Generation Supply Portion of a Current Electric Bill

October 1 – December 31, 2026



- ✓ Ohio Power Company's Current residential "Price to Compare" is **$0.1019/kWh**

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Standard *Choice* Offer (SCO)

Generation Supply Portion of a Current Natural Gas Bill

Oct. 9– Nov. 8, 2026



- ✓ Enbridge's current SCO rate is **$3.70 per MCF**

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Aggregation

Opt-out aggregation

- ✓Residents automatically enrolled
- ✓Supply portion of bill
- ✓Can opt out at any time without penalty
- ✓Eligibility restrictions



Electric Aggregation

Ohio Power's "Price to Compare" $0.1019/ kWh

Marietta – opt out deadline: Nov. 30

✓ $0.1159 per kWh through December 2027

(Dynegy) 1-833-241-4599

Washington County

✓ $0.0984 per kWh through Dec. 2026

(Constellation – 833-456-1537)

Belpre

✓ $0.1126 per kWh through June 2027

(AEP Energy – 877-648-1937)



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DYNEGY

Oct 19 - Nov 9, 2026

City of Marietta

City of Marietta

Community Electric Aggregation Notification

Dear Resident or Small Business,

Welcome to your community electric aggregation program. Members of our community voted in favor of government aggregation, a program authorizing local officials to purchase electricity from a retail electric generation supplier certified by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). Dynegy has been selected as our certified electric generation supplier.

How You Benefit

By participating, you'll receive the following exclusive pricing on the electric generation portion of your electric utility bill:

Your Electric Utility	Dynegy Fixed Price [1]	Current Term End [2]	Early Termination Fee
AEP - Columbus Southern	11.59 cents ($0.1159) per kWh	December 2027	None

Same Reliable Service

Your electric utility will continue to deliver your electricity, maintain the electric lines, and respond to emergencies. You will continue to receive a single, easy-to-read bill from your electric utility with the Dynegy generation supply charges included. There is no cost for enrollment, you will not be charged a switching fee, and **you do not need to do anything to participate.**

Opt Out Information

If you do not want to participate in the aggregation program, you must complete **one** of the following by the opt out deadline:

- **WEB** Enter your **Opt Out Code** online at dynegy.com/optout
- **PHONE** Call Dynegy at **1-833-241-4599**
- **MAIL** Return the enclosed **Opt Out Reply Form**

Opt Out Deadline
Nov 9 - 30, 2026

Natural Gas Aggregation

Marietta

✓ $4.62 per MCF through Nov. 2027 (Major Energy) 1-888-625-6760

Washington County – opt out until Oct. 26

✓ $4.90 per MCF through Dec. 2027 (IGS) 1-877-353-0162

Belpre

✓ $5.44 per MCF through May. 2027 (AEP Energy) 1-888-659-3888

Enbridge's SCO - $3.07 per MCF



Important Notice Regarding Your Natural Gas Service at <<Service Address>>

<<DATE>>

Dear <<Customer>>,

The City of Marietta has partnered with Major Energy to secure a special group rate of **$4.62** per Mcf* on natural gas supply for both residents and business owners. This means you get access to affordable natural gas through one of the nation's leading retail gas suppliers.

There are no switching fees or early termination fees, and there are no credit or deposit requirements. In order to get this new rate, you don't need to do anything – you will automatically be enrolled. You may opt-out of the program without penalty if you prefer not to participate.

Here are the program details:

- **Your Rate:** Fixed rate at $4.62 per Mcf.*
- **Your Term:** April 2026 billing cycle through November 2027 billing cycle.
- **How to Enroll:** You are automatically enrolled unless you opt-out.
- **How You Are Billed:** You will continue to receive your monthly bill from your local utility, Enbridge Gas Ohio.

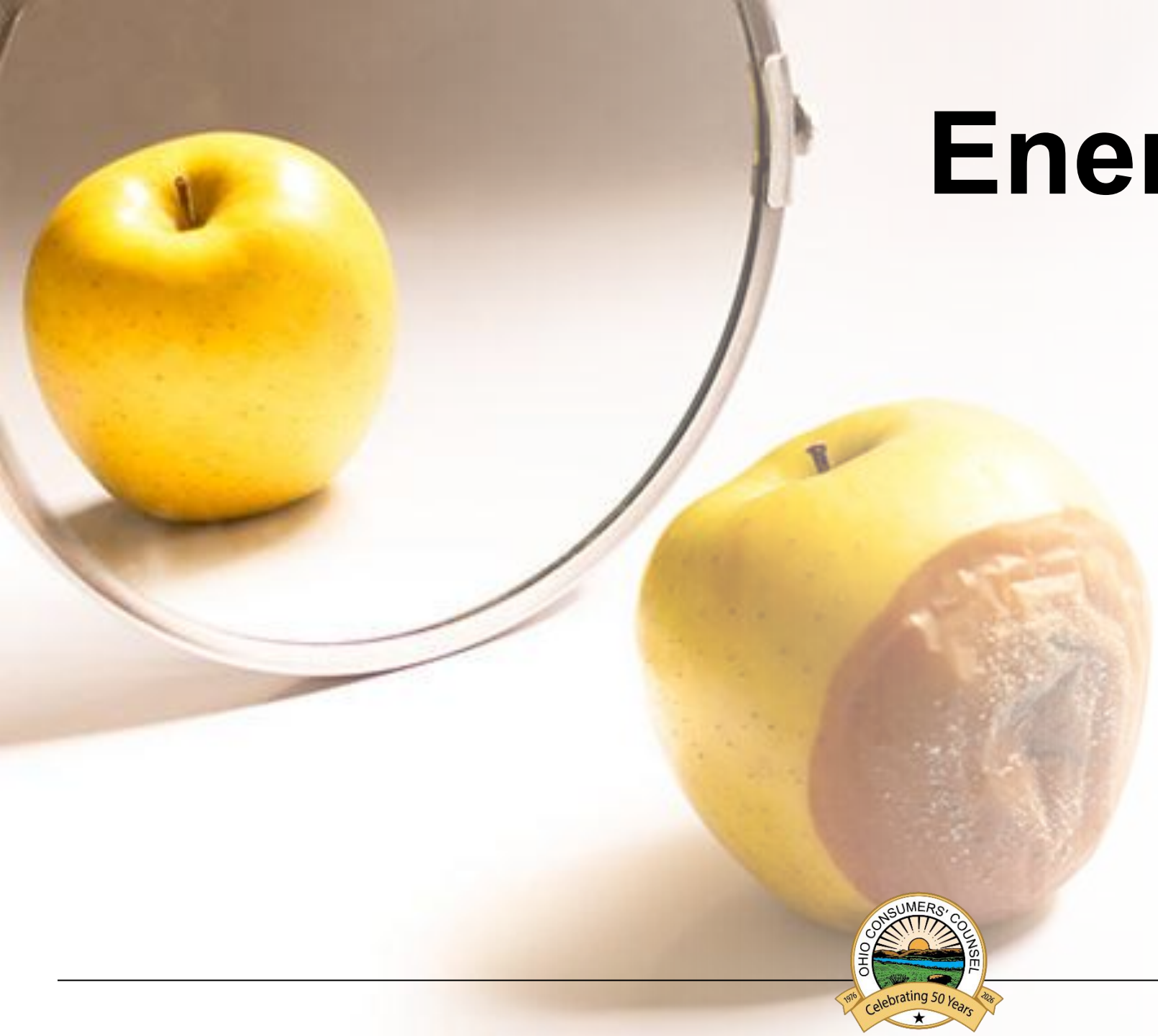
How to Opt-Out

If you do not wish to participate, you must respond by March 15, 2026 using one of the methods listed below. If you do not opt-out by this date, you will automatically be enrolled in the program, and you will receive a letter from your local utility confirming your enrollment. To remain in the program, you may disregard that confirmation letter.

- **Opt-Out By Mail:** Return the enclosed opt-out form in the pre-addressed, stamped envelope we've provided.
- **Opt-Out By Phone:** Call Major Energy at 1-888-625-6760.

To learn more about this program, please review the General Terms & Conditions, the Frequently Asked Questions enclosed, or call Major Energy at 1-888-625-6760.

City of Marietta



Energy Choice

- ✓ Beware of bad apples!
- ✓ Pay attention to monthly details –
  - termination fees
  - contract length,
  - fixed or variable offer promotional offers

Energychoice.ohio.gov

FEDERALLY FUNDED UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Regular HEAP

One-Time Benefit Credit

Direct Utility Payment: Applied directly to primary heating bills or bulk fuel costs once per heating season. Applications accepted until May 31, 2027.

Federal Income Limits

Eligibility Cap: Household income must be at or below 175% of Federal Poverty Guidelines (or 60% SMI for 9+ members).

Documentation Required

Proof Needed: Submit proof of income (last 30 days/12 mos), recent utility bills, and proof of citizenship for all members. Apply at local Energy Assistance Provider/Community Action Agency.

Income Guidelines (175% FPG)

2026–2027

Household Size	12-Month Limit	30-Day Limit
1 Person	$26,337.50	$2,164.72
2 People	$35,742.50	$2,937.74
3 People	$45,147.50	$3,710.75
4 People	$54,552.50	$4,483.77
5 People	$63,957.50	$5,256.78

FEDERALLY FUNDED UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

HEAP Winter Crisis Program

Program Availability

Season Timeline: Operates annually from **November 2 through March 31, 2027** for emergency heating assistance.

Who Qualifies

Emergency Eligibility: Income ≤ 175% FPG facing disconnection, shut-off notice, <25% bulk fuel, or service setup needs.

How to Apply

Application Process: Schedule an appointment with a local Community Action Agency (CAA); bring income proof, ID, & utility bills.

WCP Income Guidelines (175% FPG)

2026–2027

Household Size	12-Month Limit	30-Day Limit
1 Person	$27,930.00	$2,295.62
2 People	$37,870.00	$3,112.60
3 People	$47,810.00	$3,929.59
4 People	$57,750.00	$4,746.58
5 People	$67,690.00	$5,563.56

PUCO DISCONNECTION PROTECTION PROGRAM

Special Reconnect Order (SRO)

Program Eligibility

No Income Restrictions: Available to all residential customers of PUCO-regulated electric and natural gas utilities once per heating season (Oct 12 – April 16).

How It Works

Cap at $175: Pay a maximum of $175 to restore or avoid utility disconnect regardless of total balance. If both gas and electric are affected, the $175 can be split. The remaining balance will be put into a payment plan.

How to Utilize

Contact Utility Company: Inform your utility company directly that you would like to utilize the Special Reconnect Order.

Income-qualified households (≤175% FPG) can use HEAP Winter Crisis Program funds to cover the $175 payment.

PUCO Mandated

PUCO REGULATED UTILITY OPTIONS

Extended Payment Arrangements

One-Third Plan (Winter Season)

Pay **1/3 of the total balance** due each month (current bill + past due balance) during the heating season.

One-Sixth Plan (6-Month Plan)

Pay **1/6 of past-due balance** plus the full current monthly bill for 6 consecutive months.

One-Ninth Plan (9-Month Budget Plan)

Pay **1/9 of past-due balance** plus a budget calculation of estimated future bills for 9 months.

INCOME-BASED PLAN

PIPP Plus Program

Percentage of Income Payment Plan: Helps eligible low-income utility customers manage energy bills with fixed monthly payments.

- **Income Limit:** At or below 175% FPG
- **Payment Cap:** 5% of monthly income per utility (gas/electric)
- **Arrearage Forgiveness:** On-time payments credit past debt

Requires annual re-verification to remain active

COMPANY-SPECIFIC FUEL FUNDS & EMERGENCY GRANTS

Utility Provided Assistance Programs

ENBRIDGE GAS OHIO

Heat Care Fund

Emergency Heating Grant: Provides up to $300 in direct assistance for income-eligible customers (≤300% FPG) having received a disconnect notice, have been disconnected, or facing financial hardship (consumers over 60 years old).

Runs Dec. 1, 2026 – May 31, 2027 or until funds run out

Contact the Salvation Army.

COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO

HeatShare Program

Fuel Assistance Fund: Provides emergency grants up to $450 to prevent disconnection or restore gas service for households at or below 300% FPG. Available once per 12 months.

Administered by local Salvation Army centers.

OHIO POWER CO. (AEP OHIO)

Neighbor to Neighbor

Electric Utility Grant: Grants up to $500 applied directly toward past-due balances for households at or below 300% FPG. Customer must have an outstanding balance of at least $50, be at least 30 days behind and paid at least $75 on the account in the last 3 months before applying.

Consumers can apply at the Caring Connection – 411 Scammel St. 740-376-9903

Administered via Dollar Energy Fund.

“Watts” Driving Up Your Electric Bill?

While a typical household uses 750–1,000 kWh monthly, high bills are often driven by three tiers of power consumption—from major systems to "vampire" standby power—alongside administrative billing factors like estimated readings or rate changes.

The Three Tiers of Home Power Usage

Tier 3: Vampire Power

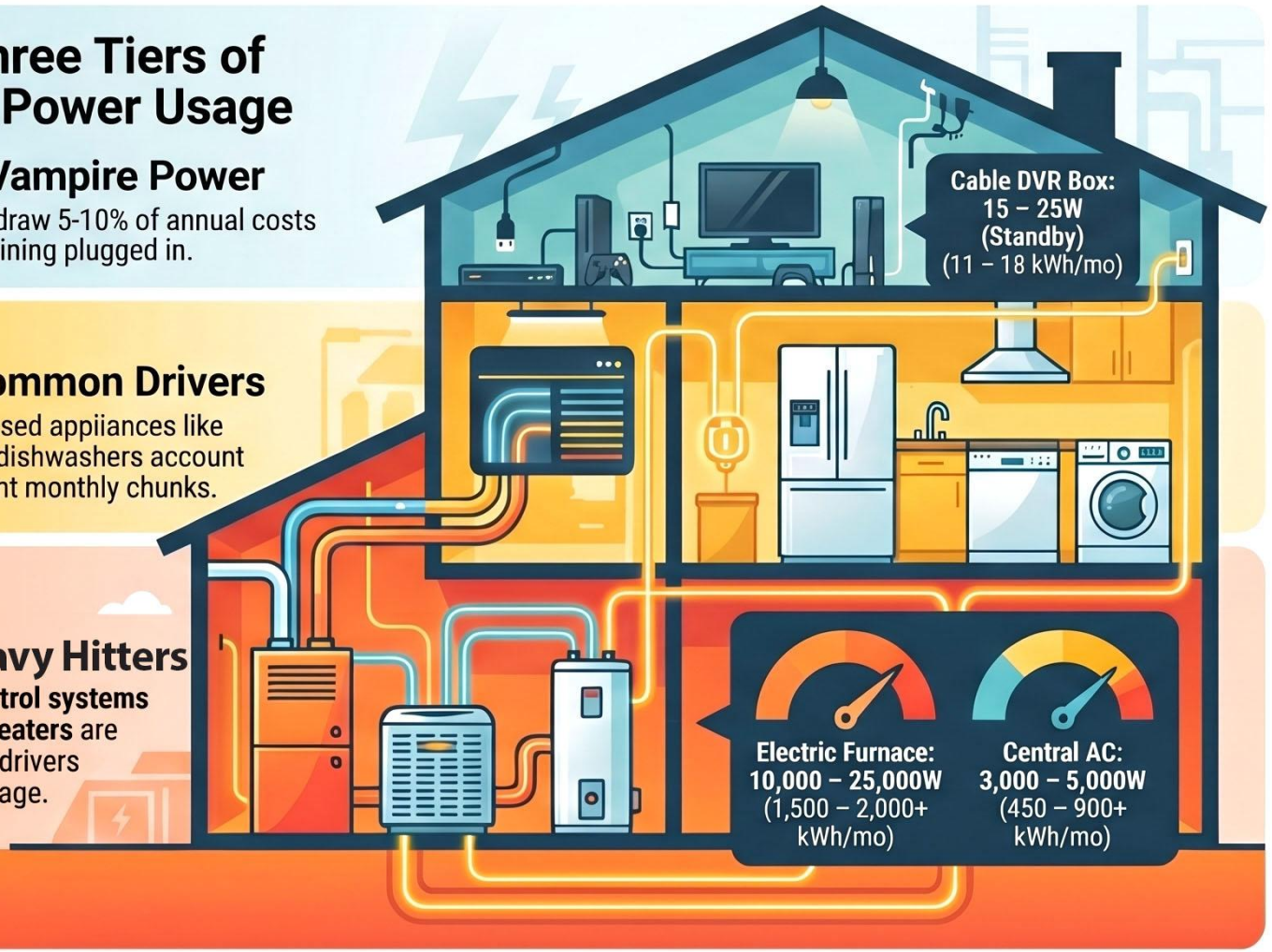
Electronics draw 5-10% of annual costs just by remaining plugged in.

Tier 2: Daily Common Drivers

Frequently used appiiances like fridges and dishwashers account for significant monthly chunks.

Tier 1: The Heavy Hitters

Climate control systems and **water heaters** are the primary drivers of high wattage.



Investigating High Bill Surprises



Check Your Reading Type

Verify if your bill is “Estimated” or “Actual” to ensure accuracy.



Seasonal vs. Rate Increases

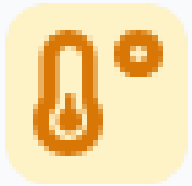
Determine if costs rose due to weather-driven usage or a supplier rate hike.



The Smart Meter Factor

New smart meters provide higher accuracy and may reflect more precise usage levels.

The Fall Energy Efficiency Pillars



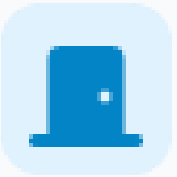
Set Thermostat to 68°F

Maintain 68°F when awake. Lower temperature 7–10°F overnight for 10% annual savings.



Replace Furnace Filters

Swap filters every 1–3 months. Clean filters eliminate airflow resistance and prevent 15% efficiency drag.



Seal Air Leaks

Seal gaps around windows, doors, and outlet covers to cut heating bills by 10% to 20%.

Sealing Critical Heat Leakage Points



Window & Door Frames

Apply exterior-grade silicone caulk along fixed joints and install weatherstripping along movable thresholds.

Outlet Covers & Switch Plates

Install flame-retardant foam gaskets behind electrical faceplates on all exterior-facing perimeter walls.

Maximizing Heating System Output

Smart Thermostat Automation

Automate 68°F daytime targets and 60°F night setbacks for effortless energy conservation.

Clean Air Filtration

Inspect monthly during peak heating months to ensure unhindered blower operation.

Clockwise Ceiling Fan Direction

Run fans clockwise at low speed to push warm air downward from ceiling space.

Water Heater Calibration

Lower water heater temperature setting to 120°F to reduce unnecessary standby heat loss.

Tackling "Vampire Power" Drain

$100+
Wasted Annually per Household

5% – 10%
Of Average Electric Bill

20 – 40
Active Standby Devices per Home

Unplug Unused Chargers
Disconnect phone and device chargers when not actively charging to stop continuous trickle draw.

Use Smart Power Strips
Employ advanced power strips with timer or current-sensing shutoff for TV and computer setups.

Fully Power Down
Shut down computers completely instead of sleep mode; power off cable boxes and game consoles.

Top 3 Holiday Energy Efficiency Tips



1. Switch to LED Lights & Smart Timers

80% Power Cut

LED string lights consume 85% less energy. Automate schedule using smart plugs.

2. Avoid Using Portable Space Heaters

High Power Draw

Space heaters draw up to 1,500W. Rely on efficient central heating and extra layers instead.

3. Utilize Small Cooking Appliances

Peak Efficiency

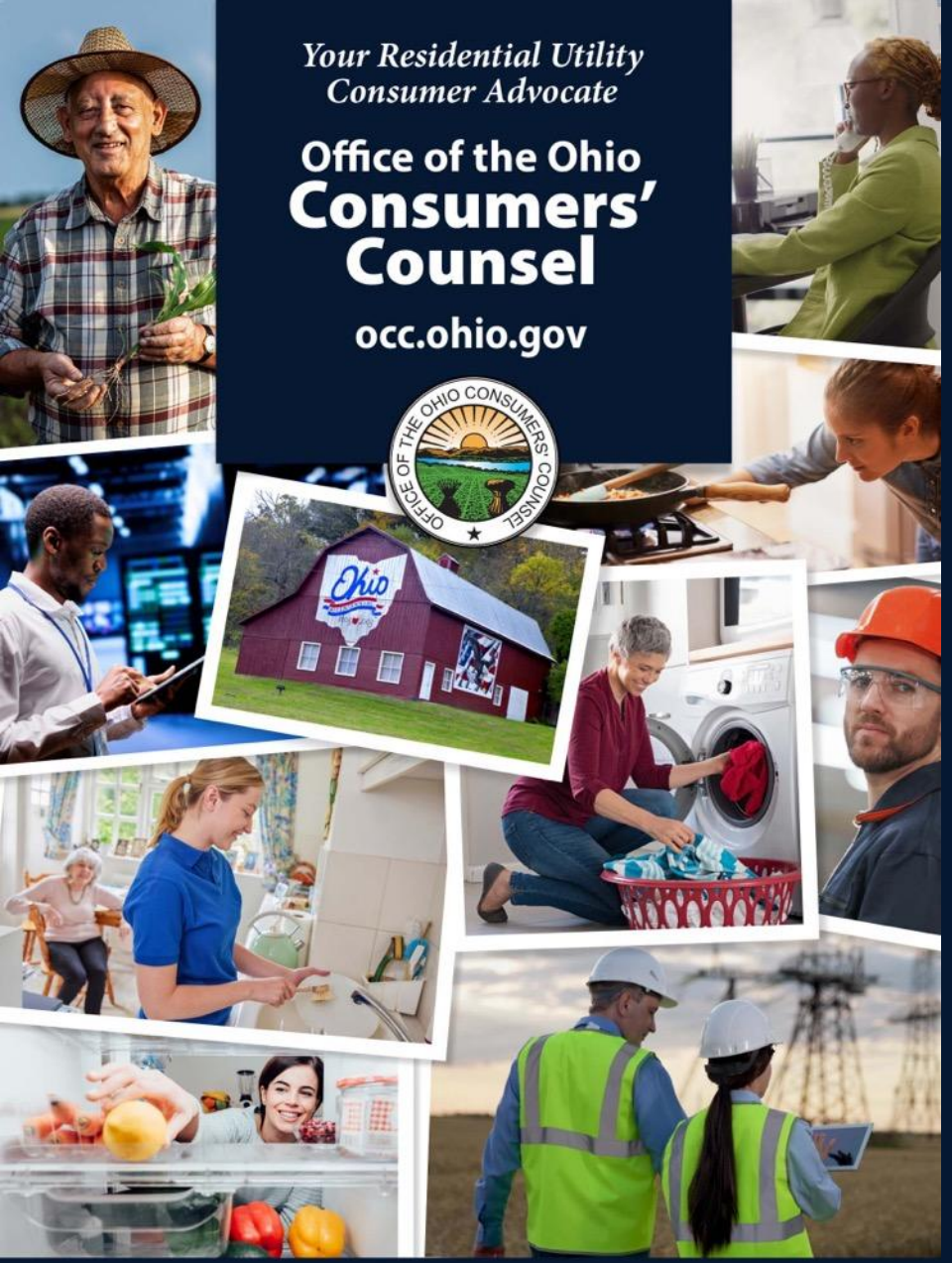
Use microwaves, slow cookers, and air fryers to bypass heavy oven power draw.

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Discussion

- Audience questions
- Consumer experiences
- What issues matter most?





Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

THANK YOU!

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Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

"Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate"

www.occ.ohio.gov