

RETAIL ELECTRIC PROVIDER (REP) COMPARISON SHEET

	Current REP	Product A	Product B	Product C
1. Name of Retail Electric Provider (REP)				
2. Your typical monthly usage (kWh)				
3. Rate per kWh (current or proposed)				
4. Bill amount (kWh usage x rate)				
5. Rate type (fixed, variable, indexed)				
6. Contract term, if applicable? (i.e. 3 month, 6 month, 12 month)				
7. If rate is fixed or indexed, is there an early termination fee? Amount?				
8. Deposit required? Amount?				
9. Minimum usage fee? Amount?				
a. If yes, what kWh threshold triggers it? (i.e. 500, 650, 800, 1000)				
10. Score on REP Complaint Scorecard? REP Complaints statistics?				
11. Other important information?				

Questions to ask before Switching Retail Electric Providers (REPs)

1. Do I have a contract with my current REP? When does it expire? Will I have to pay an early termination fee (ETF) or cancellation fee?
2. What will I pay per kilowatt hour (kWh) of electricity based on 1,000 kWh of average household monthly usage?
3. Does this kWh rate include everything, or will I pay a monthly charge if I use more/less electricity during a billing period (ex. minimum usage fee), transmission & distribution utility (TDU) charges, fuel charges or other monthly recurring fees?
4. Will I have to pay a deposit with the new REP, and if so, how much?
5. Will I have a contract with the new REP, and if so, for how long? Will I pay a penalty, or ETF, if I cancel the contract early?

How to Shop for a REP

1. Go to www.powertochoose.org or call toll-free at 1-866-797-4839.
2. On the website, enter your zip code then choose whether you want to narrow your search or view all offers in your zip code.
3. When you choose “Narrow Your Search”, you will be asked to enter your typical usage range, whether you want a fixed rate, a variable rate or an indexed rate; and how many months you want your contract to last.
4. You will then see information about minimum usage charges, also called base charges, which can increase your bill and will be important to consider. Other tips for shopping will also be provided. After reviewing this information, click on “View Plans.”
5. When you choose “View Results” after entering your zip code on the home page, you will be shown all plans in your area with fixed rates. If “no plans found” is your result, this means you live in an area not open to competition and do not have a choice of electric providers.
6. Plans are shown with the lowest rate at the top and in groups of 10. You will have the option to change the number of results you view per page to compare plans by checking a box to the left of the plans. In the left hand column, you can narrow your search to specify variable plans and indexed plans, define the contract term range, to include or exclude pre-paid products, to specify estimated usage, to narrow results by company ratings, consider only certain REPs, or to look at a certain per kWh cost range. Click the “Refresh Results” button at the top of the column when you have finalized your search.
7. All plans will show 5 columns. The first will include the name of the REP, their complaint score card and complaint history. The second column will show plan details that includes the name of the plan, the contract term if it is a fixed rate, whether it is a fixed rate, variable rate or indexed rate, and whether it includes renewable energy. The third column will show the price per kWh based on three different usage levels per month (500 kWh, 1000 kWh and 2000 kWh). The fourth column will provide pricing details and the last column will show ordering info that includes special terms, a toll-free number and a link to sign up for the plan.
8. The “Pricing Detail” column will provide important information you should review. “Minimum Usage Fees/Credits” will let you know if the plan will charge you a base fee if you use below a certain amount of electricity during the month. These fees will affect your total monthly bill. This column will also tell you if there is a cancellation fee or early termination fee for cancelling service prior to the end of your contract. The “Fact Sheet” is also called an “Electricity Facts Label” and provides information on fees and charges that may be included in this plan. The “Terms of Service” will contain the details of the contract between you and the REP if you select this plan and will include information about fees for late payments, connecting and disconnecting service, bill payment plans and other items that can impact your service and bill.
9. Review Customer Complaint Statistics through the “**REP Complaint Scorecard**” and “**REP Complaint Summary.**”
10. When you have decided upon a new REP, click on “**Sign Up**” to be taken to the REP’s website to sign-up for their product.

Definitions

Contract Term – the length of the contract you choose to sign up for with your REP. Contract term lengths include month-to-month or monthly ranges from three months to five years. Contracts with three month terms, or longer, might include an early termination fee if you cancel before the contract end date.

Cramming – the illegal adding of charges to a customer’s electric bill without the customer’s approval.

Early Termination/Cancellation Fee (ETF) – a charge by some REPs to customers ending their electric contract early.

Electricity Facts Label (EFL) – sheet providing the customer with standardized information on the REP’s company, contract terms, pricing, fees, and renewable energy percentage

Fixed Rate: Per kWh charge stays the same throughout the contract terms

Indexed Rate: Per kWh charge is tied to a specific pricing formula disclosed by the REP

Kilowatt Hour (kWh) – unit of measurement, expressed on customers’ bills, showing how much power is expended during one hour of time.

Minimum Usage Fee – a charge to consumers using less than 500, 800 or 1,000 kWh per month.

Renewable Energy Content – electricity purchased by the REP from renewable sources including wind, water, biomass or solar.

Terms of Service – the contract between the REP and the customer outlining fees, length of contract service, and other information.

Slamming – the illegal switching of electric service by a REP without a customer’s approval.

Variable Rate: Per kWh charge may go up/down each month according to the pricing method chosen by the REP

Your Rights as a Customer (YRAC) – a document REPs must give to customers informing them of rights, including service cancellation, billing issues, disconnection/termination and disputes.