

Northwest Ohio Aggregation Coalition



UPDATED - Natural Gas Aggregation Program Information

Cities

Maumee

Northwood

Oregon

Perrysburg

Rossford

Sylvania

Toledo

Waterville

Villages

Delta

Holland

Ottawa Hills

Walbridge

Townships

Lake

Perrysburg

Counties

Lucas

Q. When does the current aggregation program end?

Ans. The current aggregation program has been **paused** starting with the Columbia Gas May 2024 billing period. The program will restart with a new supplier, Archer Energy, for the October 2024 billing period.

Q. When is the May 2024 billing period for my home?

Ans. Columbia reads meters every business day so it will vary based on your billing cycle but according to Columbia meter reading schedule the earliest it could be is April 30th. The latest is May 29th.

Q. Why was the program paused?

Ans. Your community's natural gas aggregation program collaborates with surrounding communities to provide savings on your natural gas supply costs. It was not able to secure a pricing offer from a supplier that was lower than what Columbia Gas would charge you. The communities have consistently held that if they can get a price offer below Columbia then it would move forward with a program. If it could not it would wait until it could.

Q. During the pause what price will Columbia be charging?

Ans. Columbia's Standard Choice Offer (SCO) pricing is the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) settlement price on the last day of trading for the applicable billing month plus an "Adder" of \$0.166 per Ccf (hundred cubic feet). If you remain with Columbia's SCO that pricing would start for your June 2024 billing period.

Q. What is the price after the program restarts?

Ans. Archer Energy's pricing starting with the October 2024 billing period will be the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) settlement price on the last day of trading for the applicable billing month plus an "Adder" of \$0.1599 per Ccf (hundred cubic feet).

Q. Should I shop for a different natural gas supplier?

Ans. As a NOAC community aggregation participant your natural gas prices have varied monthly. That would continue with Columbia's SCO pricing and, if you choose to participate in the restarted program, with Archer Energy as well. These variable prices have historically been lower than offers you would receive from marketers.

Q. How can I avoid my costs fluctuating?

Ans. One way to avoid most fluctuations is to join Columbia's budget program. The budget program sets a specific monthly payment based on your gas use and pricing levels. There are periodic true ups if Columbia over or under collects, but you generally pay the same monthly amount.

If you are uncomfortable with a variable price right now there are many fixed price offers available that you can evaluate. The place to go is

<https://www.energychoice.ohio.gov/ApplestoApples.aspx>

Select natural gas as your utility. You will be able to select the type of customer (e.g. residential) and your utility distribution supplier. Columbia Gas of Ohio is your gas utility distribution provider. From there you can review lots of different offers.

Q. I get offers in the mail all the time. Should I sign up?

Ans. We cannot comment on the competitiveness of any offer. However, our experience shows that mailed offers are rarely the best price available in the market. Again, if you want to shop for a fixed natural gas price, we recommend looking at offers from the following website: <https://www.energychoice.ohio.gov/ApplestoApples.aspx>

Q. Is there anything that I should avoid when reviewing the offers on Apples to Apples?

Ans. You need to carefully evaluate your specific needs to determine the best decision for your home. However, there are a few items to consider before choosing to enroll.

First, many offers charge a termination fee if you leave contract early. Some do not.

Second, make sure you know how long the fixed price lasts. Some supplier offers have a low 3- or 6-month introductory price. After that introductory period, the price varies. Frequently, the agreement does not specify how the supplier determines their variable price and can be dramatically higher than what you would pay under Columbia's SCO.

Third, some supplier offers are a combination of a fixed price plus a flat monthly fee. If you are considering such an offer, we strongly recommend you do the math on what impact the monthly fee has on your price. For example, if you use 1,000 ccf per year and the offer is a fixed price of \$0.50 per ccf plus a monthly fee of \$10 per month, you are going to pay \$0.620 per ccf (e.g. \$0.50 per ccf + \$120 divided by 1,000 ccf).

Q. What is a ccf?

Ans. A ccf equals 100 cubic feet of natural gas. That is how Columbia measures your usage.

Q. Who do I call if I have a problem with my natural gas service?

Ans. To report service problems, a gas leak and for billing questions, contact your local utility company.

Q. Will I see future pauses in my community's natural gas aggregation program?

Ans. Possibly. The NOAC communities, in which your community participates, consistently held that it would offer a natural gas aggregation program only if they can get a price offer below Columbia. The pause this summer maintains a consistent approach which has collectively saved aggregation participants over \$21 million compared to Columbia Gas supply prices.