



# FAQs FOR NATURAL GAS OPT OUT MAILER

## **WHAT ARE THESE OPT OUT LETTERS THAT NOPEC IS SENDING OUT – A LOT OF PEOPLE ARE CONFUSED BY THEM.**

NOPEC is required – every 2 years – to give our members the chance to “opt out” of NOPEC – in other words, it’s your chance to leave NOPEC and/or choose another gas supplier, or return to the Standard Choice offering with Columbia Gas of Ohio (COH) or Dominion East Ohio (DOE), if you want. If you would like to continue to be served by NOPEC, there is no action required from you at the moment, you don’t have to fill out or return anything. But we are required to give NOPEC customers the chance – every two years – to opt out of our natural gas program.

## **WHY DO YOU NEED TO SEND THESE OUT EVERY TWO YEARS?**

We’re required to send these notices out every two years by the Public Utility Commission of Ohio (PUCO).

## **WHAT IS NOPEC?**

The Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC) is a non-profit natural gas and electric energy aggregation representing about 550,000 residential and small business customers in over 200 communities in 13 Northeast Ohio counties. NOPEC was founded in 2000. NOPEC operates as a governmental opt out aggregation. We use bulk-buying techniques to get the most reliable and competitively priced energy we can and then supply that power in the form of electricity and natural gas to our customers. We estimate that since we were founded, we have saved our customers in Northeast Ohio over a quarter billion dollars in cumulative electric savings. We are also increasingly involved in encouraging and implementing energy conservation that saves our customers additional money.

## **WHAT IS A GOVERNMENTAL AGGREGATION?**

Under governmental aggregation, local officials bring citizens and small businesses together to gain group buying power for the purchase of competitively priced electricity from a retail electric generation or natural gas supplier certified by the PUCO.

### **WHO IS IN CHARGE OF NOPEC?**

Ultimately, the consumers themselves, through the views they express to their local elected officials. NOPEC is governed by a General Assembly, made up of one representative from each community. From this group a 13 member Board of Directors is elected with one representative from each county in the NOPEC service area. In addition, the General Assembly elects a chair and vice chair.

### **WHO IS NEXTERA ENERGY SERVICES OHIO?**

NextEra Energy Services Ohio (NESO) is a dynamic retail natural gas supplier serving Ohio. As a subsidiary of NextEra Energy, Inc., a Fortune 200 company, NextEra Energy Services is part of a trusted group of companies with over 80 years of excellence, exceptional credit ratings, and financial stability.

### **HOW DOES GAS AGGREGATION/CUSTOMER CHOICE/DEREGULATION WORK?**

It simply means that YOU have a choice of who supplies your natural gas.

### **CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT OTHER COMMUNITIES ARE PARTICIPATING IN NOPEC'S NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM?**

NOPEC currently serves over 200 communities in 13 counties in Northeast Ohio. For a list of communities, you may visit NOPEC's website at [www.nopecinfo.org](http://www.nopecinfo.org).

### **WILL I BE SWITCHING UTILITIES?**

No, you will not. Your utility will still be DOE or COH but NextEra Energy Services, LLC Ohio through NOPEC will be your gas supplier if you decide not to opt out. The other functions such as delivery repair, billing and customer service will continue to be provided by your local utility.

### **DO I HAVE TO CHOOSE YOU AS MY NATURAL GAS SUPPLIER?**

No, but NOPEC went through a competitive process to choose NextEra Energy Services Ohio LLC as the supplier of natural gas for all NOPEC customers including you.

### **I AM CURRENTLY WITH ANOTHER SUPPLIER BUT WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE NOPEC PROGRAM. WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?**

You should check with your current supplier to determine any early termination fees that may be a part of your contract with them. If you decide to leave before the end date of your contract you may be subject to those fees. Prior to the end of your current agreement, you can notify your supplier that you will not be renewing. At that point, simply call NOPEC customer service to get enrollment information.

### **WHAT DOES NOPEC CHARGE FOR ITS SERVICES?**

NOPEC receives no public funds, and its member communities are not charged any dues or fees. The chair and members of the Board of Directors serve without compensation. NOPEC's administrative expenses, such as the cost of the opt-out mailings, staffing and expenses, are paid by fees from the energy suppliers. The NOPEC budget is approved annually by the General Assembly.

### **HOW DO I OPT-OUT?**

If you do not want to participate, you must do one of the following:

- Sign, date and return the opt-out reply card
- Fax us at 800-238-5676 and include your name, address, phone and utility account number

COH customers must opt-out by February 24, 2016.

DOE customers must opt-out by February 24, 2016.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I OPT-OUT?**

You have the right to opt-out of NOPEC's Natural Gas Aggregation Program every two years without penalty. Customers who choose to stay with their local utility are billed at the Standard Choice Offer (SCO) or "standard offer" rate.

Additional Details: The standard offer is a regulated price available to all customers. It is set by a competitive auction overseen by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio and is based on the market price of natural gas. The standard offer rate can adjust on monthly basis.

**WHAT IF I CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE AND ALLOW NOPEC/NEXTERA ENERGY SERVICES OHIO TO BECOME MY SUPPLIER AND LATER DECIDE TO SWITCH BACK TO MY UTILITY BEFORE THE TWO YEARS ARE OVER, IS THERE A PENALTY INVOLVED?**

No. You may terminate the agreement any time without penalty. You will have to pay the natural gas supplied by us until the date of the switch.

**WILL MY SERVICE BE INTERRUPTED WHEN I SWITCH SUPPLIERS?**

No, your gas service will not be interrupted.

**HOW WILL I BE BILLED?**

You will still receive one bill from your utility. On the bill there will be a line item for NextEra Energy Services Ohio. NOPEC gas supply charges incurred will display as a line item on your bill.

**WHAT ARE YOUR RATES?**

For Columbia customers: "Your price under the Option 1 plan will be \$0.54404 per CCF\* beginning with the billing cycle immediately following your April 2016 meter read date.

The price will stay in effect through your June 2018 meter read date, and then your price may be fixed or variable, as determined by NOPEC and NESO for one or more billing cycles."

For Dominion customers: "Your price under the Option 1 plan will be \$4.3426 per MCF\* beginning with the billing cycle immediately following your April 2016 meter read date.

The price will stay in effect through your July 2018 meter read date, and then your price may be fixed or variable, as determined by NOPEC and NESO for one or more billing cycles.”

(\*mcf is a measurement of natural gas where one mcf equals one thousand cubic feet of natural gas.)

### **DO YOU OFFER VARIABLE RATES? HOW MUCH ARE THE VARIABLE RATES? HOW CAN I SELECT THE MONTHLY VARIABLE PRICE OPTION?**

Under our monthly variable price option, you will receive a market variable price that will change each month based on the monthly settled gas price. This price will be \$0.02/Mcf less than the monthly Utility Standard Choice Offer price. Enrollment under this option is limited and subject to availability, and you must affirmatively enroll if you want this option.

### **ARE THERE ANY MONTHLY FEES I SHOULD BE AWARE OF?**

No, there are no additional fees from NOPEC/NextEra Energy Services, LLC Ohio aside from your gas supply charge. You will have separate charges for the delivery services performed by the utility.

### **IF I’M INTERESTED, DO I NEED TO ENROLL WITH NOPEC/NEXTERA ENERGY SERVICES OHIO?**

If you are an existing customer you will automatically be re-enrolled and receive nothing from the utility.

However if you are enrolling with NOPEC for the first time:

As a participant in the NOPEC Natural Gas Aggregation Program, you don’t need to take any action at all. In several weeks you’ll receive a letter from your utility confirming your enrollment.

- For Columbia customers: “Gas services are expected to begin with your April 2016 meter reading and will continue to your April 2018 meter reading.”
- For Dominion customers: “Gas services are expected to begin with your April 2016 meter reading and will continue to your April 2018 meter reading.”

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I MOVE?**

You may either stop service or transfer your service. Simply contact your local utility for additional information. There will be no penalty.

### **WHO IS COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO?**

Columbia Gas of Ohio (COH) is the company that owns the natural gas pipes and meters that serve your home. The natural gas industry in your area has deregulated, which allows customers to choose which company will supply your gas that's delivered through COH's pipes.

### **WHO IS DOMINION EAST OHIO?**

Dominion East Ohio (DEO) is the company that owns the natural gas pipes and meters that serve your home. The natural gas industry in your area has deregulated, which allows customers to choose which company will supply your gas that's delivered through DEO's pipes.

### **WHAT IS NOPEC'S RELATIONSHIP WITH NEXTERA ENERGY SERVICES OHIO, LLC?**

In September 2013, NOPEC entered into an agreement to buy Natural Gas for NOPEC customers from NextEra Energy Services, LLC Ohio. That agreement will begin with March meter reading for Columbia Gas of Ohio Customers (COH), and April meter reads with Dominion East Ohio Gas Customers (DOE).

### **WHY CAN'T THIS BE DONE ONLINE?**

Unfortunately, we need a signature of the person who is electing to opt out. That's why it has to be done on paper, and then mail or fax the opt out form.

### **IF SOMEONE OPTED OUT TWO YEARS AGO, DO THEY HAVE TO OPT OUT AGAIN?**

By law if the customer opted out 2 years ago and did not choose an alternative supplier (remains with standard service offer SCO) they have to opt out again.

### **WHY DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR THE STAMP ON THE OPT OUT CARD?**

NOPEC is a non-profit entity. We give all of our customers an opportunity to opt out of NOPEC, but we don't pay the postage to opt out of our program.

### **THE OPT OUT LETTER IS CONFUSING – WHAT IS THE POINT?**

We don't want our customers to be confused. The letter covers a lot of ground, a lot of topics, and some of those topics are a bit technical due to the rules we must follow. NOPEC understands the utility industry and has the knowledge and the determination to pursue lower rates for our region. It helps make Northeast Ohio more affordable. We hope that you will stay with NOPEC to enjoy the savings.

### **IF I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE REGARDING MY QUESTIONS, WHO CAN I CALL?**

You can call 1.855.NOPEC01. We also encourage you to visit our web site at [www.nopecinfo.org](http://www.nopecinfo.org).

### **CAN I REMAIN ON BUDGET BILLING?**

Yes, you can remain on budget billing for service charges and the charges for the NextEra/NOPEC natural gas supply.

### **HOW CAN I COMPARE NOPEC TO OFFERS FROM OTHER ENERGY SUPPLIERS?**

One of the hallmarks of energy deregulation is that each consumer is free to make his or her own decisions, and all the factors involved should be carefully weighted. The difference between NOPEC and private suppliers is certainly one of those factors. In terms of pricing, consumers should be wary of gimmicks and "loss leader: giveaways", in which short-term savings are promised, with no long-range guarantees of continued savings. Customers can view natural gas and electric pricing for NOPEC on our pricing pages and even compare offers to the current NOPEC rates and view our historical performance.

### **WHAT IF I DID NOT RECEIVE AN OPT OUT NOTICE?**

There are several reasons why some customers may not have received an opt-out notice:

- Customer may have previously signed a notice from the utility that prohibits them from releasing a customer's information to independent suppliers.
- Customer may be under contract with another supplier and are not eligible.
- Customer may have been inadvertently excluded from the database acquired from the utility.
- Customer also may be ineligible because they are on a Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) or are not current in a payment plan with the utility.
- Customer may have requested to be on the "Do Not Aggregate List".

### **IF I AM CURRENTLY IN THE VARIABLE PRICE OPTION WILL I AUTOMATICALLY BE RE-ENROLLED IN THE SAME PRODUCT?**

No you will be enrolled in the traditional opt out product which is the fixed product. You must re-enroll in the variable pricing option.

### **HOW DO I PERMANENTLY GET REMOVED FROM THE OPT OUT MAILING LIST?**

For natural gas, call customer service at NextEra Energy Service, LLC Ohio at 1.855.667.3201

For electricity, you can formally file with the PUCO to be on the "Do Not Aggregate" list.