

# Allenstown Community Power FAQ

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## What is Community Power?

Community Power is a program in New Hampshire where a municipality purchases electricity to supply residents and small businesses with the goal of cost savings and increased use of renewable energy, as enabled by NH RSA 53-E.

The purpose of community power is to enable cities and towns to deliver the benefits of the competitive electric market to their residents and businesses. The law empowers the municipality to create a large buying group of the electricity customers within its boundaries that are eligible (not yet using competitive supply). Using that buying power, the municipality then sets the terms and conditions for an electricity supply and solicits competitive bids.

## What are the program benefits?

Programs across the region and country have demonstrated positive results over years of operation. Savings can't be guaranteed, but demonstrated savings create a foundation for increasing our renewable supply dramatically while offering individual customers exactly the choices they need and want for maximum cost savings and renewable energy up to 100%.

More program benefits include:

- Stable rates
- Reduction of energy costs
- No cost to town budget
- Consumer protections
- Energy efficiency programs
- Local energy planning
- Increasing flexibility of energy choices

## How does this affect my electric bill and service?

This program only affects the supply cost line on electric bills. The utility companies of New Hampshire will continue to own and manage their distribution poles and wires, emergency services and billing. Charges for these remain the same. The utilities will continue to respond to outages and provide customer services.

## What is the effect on the Town budget?

There is no cost to the Town budget or residents for a Community Power program.

## How will Community Power get better electricity rates than the utility default?

The utility default rate changes twice per year, but the municipality is not bound by this rigid schedule. Market timing, buying power, and strategies like group net metering are used to lower rates.

## Does Community Power offer choices?

Yes. Different plans offer a product option for every resident and business. The plan will include any, or all, of the following:

- **Standard Offer:** As the new municipality default rate, eligible customers will automatically be enrolled in this product. This will include 5-10% more renewable energy purchased through NH Class I Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). The program default is cost competitive with the utility default.
- **Basic Offer:** Meets the state standard for New Hampshire renewable energy content (as of 2023, 23.4% RECs). This will be the lowest cost option of the program.
- **50% Renewable:** Matches 50% of energy use with Class I RECs
- **100% Renewable:** Matches 100% of energy use with Class I RECs
- You may opt-out at any time, and you will return to the default supplier rate.

## Where does the renewable energy come from?

The program can choose to purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) from certified renewable energy providers, mostly solar and small hydro projects. RECs are the accepted and verified currency for renewability across the country. Your Community Power program will purchase only RECs attached to the New England electricity grid and as close to town as possible, including projects in town. Prioritizing local projects has additional benefits including local jobs and resilience.

## Does the program affect my electric discounts or net metering program benefits?

No. Utility programs for electric assistance and net metering customers will be unchanged. The rules regarding Community Power may allow for enhanced benefits for qualifying customers by the time the program is launched.

## If I vote YES on Community Power at town meeting, do I have to participate?

No. The program will provide new default service for eligible customers, but all customers can opt out, change products, join, or leave the program at any time with no program penalty or fees. Customers currently on competitive supply are not eligible for automatic enrollment and will have to opt in to participate.

## How can I learn more about the program?

More information can be found at: [Allenstownnh.gov](http://Allenstownnh.gov) and [standardpower.com](http://standardpower.com)