



City of Somerville, Massachusetts

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MAYOR

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOMERVILLE ANNOUNCES NEW COMMUNITY CHOICE ELECTRICITY PROGRAM

Program aims to reduce electricity costs while introducing renewable energy sources

SOMERVILLE — The City of Somerville will start a new electricity bulk buying program for households and businesses citywide this July. Called Somerville Community Choice Electricity (Somerville CCE), the goal of the program is to reduce and stabilize the cost of electricity for residents and businesses in Somerville, as well as increase the share of renewable “green” energy in Somerville’s electricity supply. Somerville will be joining more than 60 Massachusetts cities and towns that take advantage of state law that allows them to offer this type of “municipal aggregation” program.

Over the duration of the 30-month program, Somerville ratepayers are expected to save on monthly electricity costs relative to the default rate from Eversource (formerly NSTAR). As with all municipal aggregation programs in the country, there is no guarantee of cost savings because Eversource adjusts rates twice annually while the Somerville CCE program locks in rates for 30 months. However, ratepayers will be insulated from market fluctuations, which occurred in recent winters, and program participants may leave the program at any time with no termination fee. When the program begins in July 2017, Somerville ratepayers will be saving money. The Somerville CCE rate will be \$0.10538/kWh, versus the filed Eversource rate of \$0.10759/kWh.

Increasing Our Use of Green Energy

In addition to stabilizing and reducing costs, Somerville CCE will bring more renewable energy to Somerville’s supply. The default supply will contain 5% more renewable energy than what is currently required by the State of Massachusetts. In addition, ratepayers have the option to either increase their renewable energy percentage to 100%, or drop down to the minimum state requirement. Transitioning the community’s electricity supply to renewable sources is critical to the City’s goal to become carbon neutral by 2050, as 22% of Somerville’s greenhouse gas emissions are estimated to come from grid-supplied electricity.



How Does Electricity Aggregation Work?

Municipal aggregation harnesses the bulk buying power of ratepayers to secure a low, fixed rate for electricity. Communities have been aggregating electricity since 1997, and more than 60 cities and towns in Massachusetts—including Lowell, Melrose, New Bedford, and Salem—already have active electricity aggregation programs. These communities, and Somerville, developed their aggregation plans in accordance with Mass. General Law c.164, sec. 134, which authorizes any municipality to aggregate the electrical load of interested consumers within its boundaries.

How the Somerville CCE Program Works

- All Somerville ratepayers will receive a notification letter on June 1. Letters include a mail-in opt-out card, with pre-paid postage.
- Ratepayers will be automatically enrolled 30 days after notification, unless they choose to opt out of the program in advance.
- Once enrolled, at any time during the program, customers may leave the program with no penalty. They will be returned automatically to Eversource supply.
- Bills and service are still issued and provided by Eversource. Program participants are still Eversource customers, and Eversource is still responsible for emergency response and maintenance.
- Rates are fixed from July 1, 2017 to December 31, 2019. When the program ends, Somerville has the option to go out to bid again for a second round of the program.
- Ratepayers have the option to increase their supply to 100% renewable energy (\$0.13198/kWh), or drop down to the state minimum requirement for renewable energy (\$0.10398/kWh).

Outreach for the Somerville CCE Program

- The program website, www.SomervilleCCE.com, has program information, current rates, and answers to an extensive list of frequently asked questions.
- All Somerville ratepayers will receive a letter in the mail on June 1, 2017.
- Brochures in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole will be available in City buildings and public places.
- Informational videos in English and Spanish are available on the [City Cable TV](#) and [City Youtube](#) (www.youtube.com/SomervilleCityTV).
- A public information and Q&A session will be held on Thursday, June 8, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Somerville High School Library, 81 Highland Ave.

Background on the municipal aggregation initiative

The launch of this program represents the culmination of a multi-year process:

- Spring 2015: The Somerville Commission on Energy Use and Climate Change and local community members advocate for Somerville to adopt municipal aggregation.



- Summer 2015: Mayor Curtatone creates Community Choice Aggregation Taskforce. The taskforce met regularly throughout 2015-16.
- October 2015: The Somerville Board of Aldermen approves the creation of a municipal aggregation plan.
- Winter 2016: Somerville conducts a competitive procurement, in partnership with the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, to select an aggregation consultant. The contract is awarded to Good Energy.
- April 2016: Somerville and Good Energy complete aggregation plan.
- April 2016: The City solicits public comments and holds public informational events.
- May 2016: The Board of Aldermen approves Somerville's municipal aggregation plan.
- June 2016: Somerville submits aggregation plan for review and approval by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU).
- April 2017: DPU Approves Somerville's aggregation plan.

Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville or to attend meetings, should contact Nancy Bacci at NBacci@somervillema.gov, or 617-625-6600 ext. 2250.

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