Who Do Retail Energy Suppliers Serve in Maryland?

Residential Customers (homes)

Small & Medium Business Customers (individual: restaurants, gas stations, apartment complexes)

Large Commercial & Industrial Customers (shopping complexes, manufacturing facilities, chambers of commerce affinity groups and government compounds)

Did you know you can shop for energy?

Just as you shop for food, clothes, airline tickets or a new car, you now have the ability to shop for energy. You have the power to control your energy bill and purchase the product of your choice, whether you are a homeowner or business owner.

Q. If I shop for electricity will my electric service still be reliable?
A. Yes, your local utility will continue to maintain the power lines and make sure that the electricity gets to your home or business safely and reliably. In the event of a power outage, your local utility will restore service just as they do now. Your local utility will not treat you differently after you choose a competitive retail supplier and will provide the same level of responsiveness and customer service as they did before you shopped.

Q. Is it difficult to switch to competitive supply?
A. No, it is easy to make the switch. Simply find a retail supplier of your choosing and contact that company. (Follow the simple steps on the following page)
Step-by-step instructions on how to shop for electric supply in Maryland

1. Go to “Suppliers Page” on the Maryland State Public Service Commission web site: http://webapp.psc.state.md.us/intranet/supplierinfo/electricsupplier_new.cfm

2. Enter your customer type (if you are not a business you are “residential”), and the utility that currently provides your electric service.

3. Select “List Suppliers Actively Seeking New Customers ONLY”

4. Click the “Search” button

5. Scroll through the list of active suppliers – take note of their web address and phone and email contact information

6. Contact suppliers to determine what products and offers are currently available and best fits your needs

7. Be sure to ask the supplier how long you will be under contract with them, how to terminate the contract, and if there are any associated fees with termination

In the past, utilities were exclusively responsible for supplying and delivering electricity supply. Now you can choose to purchase commodity supply from any energy supplier that is licensed in your state, or you can choose to continue receiving your energy supply from your local utility.

Q. How should I compare prices?

A. Check your current utility bill to view the price you pay per kWh, and compare this to the supplier/aggregator’s price per kWh.
Additional Questions & Answers:

Q. Will my power still be reliable?
A. Yes. Energy is a heavily regulated commodity and there are rules and regulations in place to ensure reliable energy supply and delivery.

Q. Are retail suppliers licensed and subject to state monitoring?
A. Yes, all retail suppliers/aggregators of gas and electric must be licensed to do business in Maryland and must comply with all state and federal laws related to the competitive energy supply.

Q. Would my utility discourage me from choosing an alternative gas or electric supplier?
A. No. In fact, many utility companies are encouraging their customers to choose an electric or gas supplier because consumers can get access to lower cost or alternative energy through competitive suppliers.

Q. Are the savings really worth making the switch to competitive supply?
A. Depending on the offer, you can currently (as of 1/10) lower your energy bill by 10% or more by using a competitive supplier versus a standard offer service rate through the utility.

Q. Is the rate per kWh the only cost I will be charged?
A. Yes, if your supplier fee is “all-inclusive.” This means the rate per kWh reflects the full cost of the commodity supply and there should be no additional charges added to the supply side of your electric bill.

If the rate is NOT all-inclusive, ask the supplier/aggregator to list and describe all additional generation/supply related charges that you may be responsible for, as well as the cost associated with each item.

Q. Should I lock into a fixed or variable rate contract?
A. Some suppliers offer month-to-month rate plans while others offer fixed rates over various time periods. This choice is really more about your own personal budget style. If you are risk adverse you will likely want to lock into a fixed price plan. If you want to go up and down with the market, you may want to choose a variable rate plan. If you choose this option your rate could vary monthly, by the amount of electricity you use, by time-of-day or in other ways. You should ask the supplier what makes the best sense for you given your unique energy use situation. Then choose the plan that best meets your needs.

Q. Do I have to sign a contract or other agreement with a supplier?
A. Yes, so be sure to fully read and understand the length and terms of the agreement. If you have questions, ask for clarification.

Q. If my electric supplier goes out of business will I lose service?
A. No, electric service will not be interrupted if a supplier goes out of business. You will be returned to utility supply or have the option to choose another commodity supplier.

Q. What happens if I have to move?
A. You can carry your contract to your new home if you are in the same service territory. If you are moving out of the service territory you must terminate your contract and choose another supplier or revert back to utility service.

Q. Can my new electric or gas supplier shut off my service?
A. No, only the utility can terminate electric or gas service to your home or business. Termination is an option of last resort and strictly regulated by government authorities.

For more information, visit www.resausa.org or www.competitionworksmd.org
Q.  Is there a credit check, late payment fee or are other similar fees assessed?
A.  This will vary by company. If yes, be sure to get a list of the charges and what each will cost.

Q.  If I have a complaint about my electric or gas supplier whom should I contact?
A.  First contact the company to see if an error has been made or if they are able to help you rectify your complaint. It may be a distribution matter, not a supply matter and you may need to deal with the utility. If it is a supply issue, the company should address your concerns. If you feel your concerns have not been properly addressed, please contact the state agency responsible for oversight of suppliers in your area.

Q.  Do retail suppliers offer any other services?
A.  Some retail suppliers may offer energy audits, conservation services, load management or other energy related services. They may also offer green and renewable energy products. Be sure to ask what types of services they offer and determine if they can be of benefit to you.

Q.  Where do I go if I have questions?
A.  Check the web for assistance. The Maryland Public Service Commission is a good place to start.

Q.  If I have questions about choosing a competitive electric or gas supplier where should I go to find additional answers?
A.  If you live in Maryland, you have the right to shop and choose your energy supplier. To find companies offering competitive energy supply in Maryland, simply visit webapp.psc.state.md.us/Intranet/home.cfm. All electric and gas energy suppliers and aggregators must abide by state and federal laws regulating their offerings and many state utility websites provide shopping tips. You can also visit www.reausa.org to learn more about the competitive market and click on your state for specific news and customer information in your area.

The Retail Energy Supply Association is a broad and diverse group of retail energy suppliers who share the common vision that competitive retail energy markets deliver a more efficient, customer-oriented outcome than regulated utility structure. We are devoted to working with all stakeholders to promote vibrant and sustainable competitive retail energy markets for residential, commercial and industrial consumers.