



# NOPEC FAQs

## What is Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (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 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 Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO).

## Why is NOPEC able to choose a certified electric generation or natural gas supplier on my behalf?

Residents in your community have voted to allow your locally elected officials to contract for an electric generation and/or natural gas supplier on your behalf. Your local officials chose NOPEC in order to gain additional group buying power.



## What is the value in NOPEC for me?

The theory behind public aggregation is simple: By using bulk purchasing power, greater savings can be passed on to individual consumers. By joining together, consumers in NOPEC communities gain the ability to utilize a team of experienced professionals to negotiate for better prices and protections. NOPEC ensures that communities have a voice in determining that future market changes benefit consumers. Large groups of communities such as NOPEC enjoy substantial leverage in making these determinations. Without an organization like NOPEC, consumers would be left to decide on their own which supplier to choose, and would be at the mercy of the supplier.

## Who is in charge of this group?

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 of the 13 counties in the NOPEC service area. In addition, the General Assembly elects a chairman and vice chairman.

## How do I join NOPEC?

If you live in a NOPEC community, you are automatically included, unless you choose not to be. Ohio has what is called an “opt-out” procedure. This means that all eligible customers of an aggregated community become part of the buying group unless they take specific action to opt out of the aggregation. Opt-out notices are sent to every eligible natural gas consumer every two years. Under Ohio law (SB221) electricity customers may receive an opt-out notice every three years.

## What is the difference between NOPEC and other energy suppliers?

Unlike the many private, for-profit companies now marketing in Ohio, NOPEC is a public aggregation of local governments, with no goal other than delivering both savings and stability to the consumers it represents. To that end, we are concerned with a long-term approach to the energy market as well as short-term savings. NOPEC recognizes that long-term savings for consumers will result from regulatory changes and new laws that must be passed, and is dedicated to representing the interests of its consumers in seeking those changes. Private, for Profit energy suppliers are focused on short-term offers. Their positions on regulatory changes and laws likely will be aimed at their own bottom lines rather than the interests of consumers.

## 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 weighed. The difference in purpose 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 gas and electric pricing for NOPEC on the pricing pages. To compare with other competitor's offerings go to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) “apples to apples” chart available at [www.puco.ohio.gov](http://www.puco.ohio.gov) or go to NOPEC's Energy Solutions page to compare pricing at [nopecinfo.org](http://nopecinfo.org).

## So how does NOPEC get paid? Isn't your fee just baked into what we pay?

NOPEC uses the power of aggregation to get you the very best pricing, terms and conditions, and programming possible. To do so, we employ mass purchasing and negotiation techniques to leverage the very best for our members. For example, we have a very simple approach to retail energy companies. When a company responds to our national level bidding process and we sit down to negotiate a potential supply contract with them, we use our knowledge of the costs associated with acquiring customers to provide even more savings to you. We know that energy retailers MUST pay a certain amount of money per customer to attract the attention of that customer. We also know that they MUST pay a certain amount of money to sign that customer up initially and even more to keep that customer over time. So when NOPEC sits down with a bidder we start with an awesome bargaining position. We are able to offer that potential supplier 100% of the hundreds of thousands of NOPEC customer accounts without them having to spend a single penny on any of the attracting, signing, or retaining activities that they would ordinarily need to spend lots of money to accomplish. So we make a deal with them. We allow them to keep a significant portion of the money that they would have otherwise spent in exchange for better terms and conditions than other market participants for NOPEC's customers, a wider array of products than they would otherwise offer the rest of the people they do business with, and, of course, a small operational stream for the NOPEC aggregation. Because the company is still dollars ahead, you get savings

“baked in” right from the start. And you get access to industry leading terms and conditions, protections, best in class educational programming, and you lend your voice to millions of others so that legislators and regulators alike have a reason to remember how the decisions they make impact all the people they represent.

## Explain NOPEC's procedure for selecting a supplier for an aggregation program.

NOPEC routinely completes RFPs for our natural gas supply so we have already qualified the best in class supplier. Our RFP process is a stringent process that requires potential suppliers to comply with our financial, legal and insurance standards: the highest standards in the business.

## What would be the tasks that the community would have to perform during the term of the agreement?

None. NOPEC's energy provider is responsible for Opt-out mailers and provides 24/7 call center support. NOPEC will provide all the legal documents and file all the necessary paperwork with the PUCO as part of your membership. No need of additional licenses.

## What are the rates and terms for new customers entering the program?

New customers entering the program after the opt-out will receive current program pricing.

## Will refresh mailings be conducted? If so, what will be the frequency?

NOPEC and our energy suppliers currently do refresher supplemental mailers every six-eight weeks.

Does NOPEC have a website that lists the gas price for the community each month and compares the price to other offers?

NOPEC launched new pricing pages in March 2016. Our best in class pricing pages give consumers a one year history, options to review all our product offerings and compare competitive price offerings.

Has NOPEC required gas suppliers it has selected to have a “buy Ohio gas” procurement commitment in a particular percentage to encourage Ohio economic development?

Our current natural gas contract with NextEra specifies using 70% Ohio shale natural gas resources. We believe in using our buying power to strengthen the Ohio economy.



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