



SOUTHBRIDGE COMMUNITY ELECTRICITY

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. What is Southbridge Community Electricity?** Southbridge Community Electricity is our Town's new electricity supply program. It is designed to provide residents with new electricity supply and options that feature competitive prices, longer-term price stability and more renewable energy (though savings cannot be guaranteed). This program was approved by the Southbridge Town Meeting in 2023 and by the Department of Public Utilities in September 2024. Nearly 170 other cities and towns in Massachusetts have similar programs.
- 2. When does it start?** The Town chose Direct Energy to provide the program's electricity starting January 2025. All program prices are fixed for 35 months until December 2027.
- 3. How do I participate?** The answer depends on your current electricity supplier:
 - **I am using National Grid Basic Service** (most residential customers) - Anyone currently using National Grid Basic Service supply is eligible for automatic enrollment and will receive a letter in November informing them of their options and how to opt-out (i.e. not participate) if desired. The deadline to opt-out before the program begins is **December 14, 2024**. Those that do not opt-out will begin receiving electricity from Southbridge Community Electricity in January 2025.
 - **I have chosen another electricity supplier** already - Anyone that has proactively chosen their own electricity supplier will not be automatically enrolled in the program; however, these customers may sign up for the program at any time (please check with your current supplier for any cancellation penalties). To join, use the form at SouthbridgeCommunityElectricity.com or call (866) 968-8065.
- 4. Do I have to participate?** Participation is voluntary. Customers may opt-out at any time, without penalty, before or after the program begins. To opt out, do any one of the following:

Return (by mail) the opt-out card mailed to your home or business or Call Southbridge's supplier, Direct Energy at (866) 968-8065 or Submit the opt-out form at SouthbridgeCommunityElectricity.com
- 5. Will this program cost more or less than what I have now?** The Town's primary offering, *Southbridge Standard*, will cost less than the National Grid Residential Basic Service rate at launch, while also providing 10% voluntary renewable energy from New England. However, it is important to note that the Town cannot guarantee savings compared to National Grid Basic Service. Southbridge Community Electricity prices are fixed for 35 months through December 2027, but Basic Service prices change every six months for residential and commercial customers, and every three months for industrial customers. See table on next page for pricing of all Southbridge options.

6. **Can I switch between options in Southbridge’s program?** Yes. You can switch between any of the Southbridge options at any time. To switch, use the form at SouthbridgeCommunityElectricity.com or call (866) 968-8065.
7. **Where does the voluntary renewable energy come from?** The voluntary renewable energy (i.e. the amount above and beyond the minimum required by the State) qualifies as Class I. Class I is the State’s term for new, regional renewable energy. The voluntary Class I in Southbridge’s program is all located within New England and comes primarily from wind and solar projects.
8. **Why is this an automatic enrollment program?** The State law that enables municipal aggregation programs like Southbridge Community Electricity, M.G.L. c.164 section 134(a), specifies that these programs are opt-out. This design was intended to give a Town or City enough buying power to attract qualified suppliers and negotiate favorable prices for the community (again, recognizing that savings cannot be guaranteed).
9. **What changes if someone participates in Southbridge Community Electricity?** There are two parts to a National Grid electricity bill – (1) Supply and (2) Delivery. Enrolling in Southbridge Community Electricity only changes the Supply part. National Grid will continue to provide all Delivery services, which includes responding to power outages.
10. **If I participate:**
 - a. **Will I get another bill?** No, there will still only be one electricity bill per month, sent by National Grid.
 - b. **What about Low-Income discounts or budget billing?** Customers in the Low-Income rate class will continue to receive their current percentage discount on the entire electricity bill. Budget billing customers also will continue to receive budget billing for their entire bill.
 - c. **What about solar and net metering?** Customers that receive solar electricity benefits from net metering credits, community shared solar or similar payments will continue to receive those benefits.

Southbridge Community Electricity Options

	Southbridge Basic	Southbridge Standard (automatic for eligible customers)	Southbridge Plus
Price	12.610 ¢/kWh	13.040 ¢/kWh	13.930 ¢/kWh
Voluntary Renewable Energy*	No additional renewable energy	Adds 10% voluntary renewable energy (MA Class I RECs)	Adds voluntary renewable energy (MA Class I RECs) to total 100%
Duration	January 2025 through December 2027	January 2025 through December 2027	January 2025 through December 2027

The program cannot guarantee savings beyond the current term of Basic Service, as stated in the table above, because future Basic Service rates are unknown.

*Voluntary Renewable Energy is in addition to the State’s required renewable energy content for all electricity supplies. The State’s required renewable energy content is 62% in 2024. For more detail, see resources on SouthbridgeCommunityElectricity.com.

