

# **City of New Bedford encourages residents to explore options to reduce rising heating costs**

“The City of New Bedford is taking seriously the impact of rising energy costs on residents and businesses going into the winter months, particularly the anticipated sizable increases in the price of electricity.

To help mitigate the impact of an anticipated January 1 change in the Eversource electric supply rate, the City is encouraging public participation in its Community Energy Aggregation Program. To establish this initiative, the City built a collaborative of 25 municipalities drawn from across Southeastern Massachusetts. This allowed customers in all the participating communities to negotiate and secure more favorable electricity rates by aggregating their purchasing power.

As a result, today New Bedford customers enrolled in the Community Energy Aggregation Program are paying 10.47 cents per kilowatt hour and are guaranteed this fixed rate until December 2023. In comparison, residents and businesses that have opted out of community aggregation and are buying power directly from Eversource may see rates between 17 and 20 cents/Kwh.

Importantly, if a resident or business has opted out of community aggregation, they can opt back in at the link above. And if a resident or business has never been part of the Program, they can likewise opt in at the link above. As of today, there are approximately 30,000 New Bedford electricity customers participating in the Program. The total cumulative

cost savings for New Bedford customers since the Program's inception stands at \$16.5 million. With electricity costs on the rise, the opportunity to lock in rates at more favorable prices, is only going to grow in importance—so again, we encourage New Bedford customers to take advantage of the Community Energy Aggregation Program if they have not already done so.

The City also strongly recommends that residents contact MassSave to complete a free Home Energy Assessment. Assessments can be an effective tool to identify opportunities to reduce energy consumption and save on costs.

Another resource for those struggling to meet energy costs, is PACE (People Acting in Community Endeavors). PACE continues to provide heating assistance for low-income residents through a federal program and can be reached at 508-254-4271.

“With energy prices rising, our residents need to be aware of the lower cost options out there. Our Community Aggregation Program is a straightforward way to reduce bills,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

Beginning January 1, pending approval by the DPU, the average residential Eversource electric customer in Eastern MA using 600 kWh will see a 23% or \$47 increase to their total bill. Eversource serves Basic Service to 29% of Eversource customers in Eastern MA. This increase does not apply to customers that receive energy from another supplier or through municipal aggregation. A customer's total bill amount depends on their energy use, the type of rate they are on, and weather conditions. The increase is a result of record-high natural gas prices, primarily driven by the Russian and Ukraine conflict. This is especially impactful here in New England, where natural gas is used to generate much of the region's electricity.

Eversource customers may also wish to review ways to manage or

get help with their bills.” City of New Bedford.

For PACE Fuel Assistance, the phone number is 508-525-4271.