

COMMUNITY POWER FAQs

How do I sign up for Community Power?

If your town has a community power plan, and you are enrolled in your utility's default plan, you don't need to do anything. You will automatically be enrolled in your town's Community Power (CP) plan and you will be sent a notice 30 days in advance letting you know that community power is now your supplier. Your plan will have a default option: the automatic choice for residents and businesses that do not take action for a different choice. You will have the opportunity to *opt-up* to a plan with more renewable energy than the default option, *opt-down* to a plan with less renewable energy than the default plan (unless the default is already at minimum renewables), or *opt out* altogether. Those who opt out remain on the utility's default plan.

There are groups who will not be automatically enrolled but can choose to opt in. These are those who are net metering from their own solar array (more on that below), ratepayers who buy electricity from a different company than the utility (i.e. they are not on default supply), and those who have opted-out. To participate in community power, members of these groups need to opt-in. Check your town's website community power page for instructions, if you did not receive a mailing about how to do this.



Will Community Power provide various electricity options?

Yes. Towns will provide several options with different electricity mixes. The default option, that you will automatically be enrolled into if you take no action, is likely to be less expensive than the utility default plan and may have modestly higher levels of renewable electricity. Monadnock Region towns with community power launches in spring 2023 all had plans with 4 renewables tiers to choose from: 23.4% (the same as the utilities); 33%; 50%;100%.

What are the key components of a Community Power (CP) Plan?

The features of a plan will vary by city or town, but most will include the following:

- CP will serve as the default electricity supplier for all customers on a default "opt out" basis.
- CP will be self-funded and will not require any taxes to cover program expenses.
- CP will offer electricity options at competitive rates.
- CP will offer a variety of power mixes on an opt in or opt up basis.
- Ratepayers enrolled in CP can change tiers

within the plan or opt-out of the plan from one billing cycle to another, without penalty. Net metering customers' individual circumstances (especially whether they are net producers or buyers) can determine whether or not it is financially attractive for them to participate.

Will Community Power raise my property taxes?

No, CP is self-funding and therefore will not impact property taxes.

Will all residents be required to participate in CP?

If you do not want to participate, you just need to indicate that you want to "opt out" on the initial mailing from your town's Community Power program.

If I decide I no longer want to participate in CP, can I revert back to another energy provider such as Eversource?

Yes. You will be provided a method for opting out of community power, as well as changing your choice of rate options (tiers), at any time. There will be no fee or penalty for doing so.

Does a Community Power Plan for my town automatically enroll all residents and businesses in town?

Almost everyone. There are groups who will not be automatically enrolled but can choose to opt in. These are those who are net metering from their own solar array (more on that below),

ratepayers who buy electricity from a different company than the utility (i.e they are not on default supply), and those who have opted-out. To participate in community power, members of these groups need to opt-in. Check your town's website community power page for instructions, if you did not receive a mailing about how to do this.

What happens when people change addresses?

When people move, their electricity account number changes. There can be a delay of several months before the town's community power service provider becomes aware of this new account, and mails out the notice about automatic enrollment in CP. A resident can choose to speed up enrollment in the area's plan by contacting the service provider. The town's website may have a community power page with this information, or town officials can assist you to identify who to contact.

Will I get a bill from the utility as the distributor and another bill from the energy supplier? Or will I get just one bill that shows both?

You will get just one bill from Eversource or Liberty, the same as you do now, showing the charge for the electricity supply and the charge for electricity delivery from the utility.

What is the role of the service provider in Community Power?

Service providers are businesses or nonprofits that have expertise in electricity markets and energy brokering. Their primary role is to procure electricity from wholesalers and negotiate rates on behalf of the communities they work with. Service providers can also offer a range of support throughout a town's community power process: from learning about community power, to developing a community power plan, to conducting community education and outreach, and to setting aside some revenue for locally-determined energy projects.

What are a town's choices for service providers?

There are three CP service providers in the state of New Hampshire: Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH); Standard Power/Good Energy; Freedom Energy Logistics/Colonial Power. All three providers are working with firms that have experience in community power in other states.

What is the Cheshire Community Power Plan?

Cheshire Community Power is an additional choice for towns, individual households and small business owners in the county. It is the first *county* member of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire (CPCNH), and it has already been approved at the state level. Cheshire Community

Power is expected to launch in November 2023, and will include several county towns whose select boards had opted-in by August 2023. Its leaders or CPCNH will make an announcement when residents in other towns are eligible to sign up.

The Cheshire plan can serve a town with a simple majority vote of the town's select board, and does not require town meeting approval. Even before the select board has decided to join the plan, residents of the county can individually join, once the plan is live and accepting new customers.

At what point in the process does the town have to commit to a service provider?

Although service providers often offer support early on in a community's pursuit of a community power program, towns do not need to commit to a service provider until after a community power plan has been passed by voters. However, a town must sign a contract with their service provider before sending an announcement to residents that they will be enrolled in the new CP program and providing them an opportunity to opt-out of the program.

How much does it cost for a town to sign up with a Community Power service provider?

There is no cost to the town when signing a contract with a community power service provider. As with the utility default service, the fee is accounted for in the price of electricity.

Does Community Power support the addition of local renewable sources of electricity?

It can, according to the preferences and goals of client towns and the ability and interest of their service provider. Community power programs allow locally-generated electricity to contribute to the electrical needs of the community. The mechanisms may vary depending on which service provider the municipality has selected. The town may choose for its program to fund a local energy project, such as improvement in building energy efficiency, or financial support or incentives for the construction of new renewable energy sources in the community.

Will Community Power allow net metering for households and businesses that have their own solar panels?

This should be possible, but as of Fall 2023 obstruction by the utilities has delayed full roll-out of this option. Net-metering customers can contact their plan's service provider for the latest on this situation.

Can you be enrolled in the electricity assistance program if you use Community Power?

Yes. Electricity assistance will work the same way with community power.

What percent of the town's population needs to sign up for Community Power for the plan to work?

Community power programs generally see about 3-5% of customers electing to opt out of the program. The remainder is more than

enough to make a town's program viable.

Can a town join with other communities in CP? What are the benefits of doing this?

Yes. The community power law allows towns and/or cities to join together and create a shared community power program. Just as shopping for your groceries in bulk can help you save money, combining the electricity load of multiple towns into a larger bulk load may result in better electricity rates. A service provider with multiple client towns can manage a consolidation of these towns' demand, with the same bulk-purchase benefits.

What's the difference between Community Power and Community Solar?

Community power sets up a system of bulk-purchasing of electricity for all residents of a town that are on the utility company's default supply (usually 95-97% of ratepayers). Community solar refers to local solar arrays shared by multiple community subscribers who receive credit on their electricity bills for their share of the power produced. Community solar allows residents who don't have good solar sites or the upfront money for rooftop solar to power their home with solar electricity.

Community power programs can offer similar access to renewable energy for ratepayers who rent, whose properties are not solar-suitable or for any reason do not have home solar. This is because CP makes it easy for residents to opt-up to more renewable sourcing for their electricity, all the way to 100% renewable, depending on the plan's tier options. That is a social justice aspect of community power.