

PA Office of Consumer Advocate's Natural Gas Shopping Guide



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A Residential Consumer's Natural Gas

Shopping Guide Includes:

- ✓ Introduction & How to Shop

- ✓ Price Comparison Charts:

 - Columbia Gas of PA., Inc.

 - Equitable Gas

 - National Fuel Gas

 - PECO Gas

 - People Natural Gas

 - (Formerly Dominion Peoples)

 - People TWP

 - (Formerly TW Phillips Gas and Oil Co.)

 - Philadelphia Gas Works

 - UGI Central Penn Gas

 - (Formerly PPL Gas)

 - UGI Penn Natural Gas

 - (Formerly PG Energy)

 - UGI Utilities - Gas Division

Residential Natural Gas Shopping Guide

by the
Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate

Introduction

The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate is a state office whose job is to represent Pennsylvania consumers in matters involving their utility services. We prepared this guide to help residential consumers understand and review their choices for a natural gas supplier.



The gas lines that run down your street and into your home are still owned and operated by your local natural gas distribution company. The rates for that distribution part of your service are regulated by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission. But many Pennsylvania consumers can choose the company that provides the gas supply portion of their natural gas service through their regulated company's distribution lines.

Only suppliers licensed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission can sell natural gas supply to consumers in Pennsylvania. Some suppliers may offer natural gas supply service that is cheaper than the gas supply you normally would buy from your local natural gas distribution company. Other suppliers may offer longer or shorter contracts for service at a fixed or variable price. The price of gas from your local natural gas distribution company must be approved by the Public Utility Commission and typically changes on a quarterly basis, depending on what the company pays for gas in the wholesale natural gas market.

How To Shop for Natural Gas

A “price to compare” is the amount that you will pay for your gas supply if you continue to buy from your local natural gas distribution company. Each regulated local gas utility has its “price to compare” in either cents per ccf (100 cubic feet) or dollars per Mcf (1,000 cubic feet). So, for example, a price of \$5.00 per Mcf is comparable to a price of 50 cents per ccf. If you have natural gas heat, you will use much more natural gas in the winter months than you do in the summer. The best place to find your monthly usage is on your monthly gas bills. Once you know your utility's price to compare and your typical monthly usage, you can begin to shop for your natural gas supplier. By comparing the supplier's price with your natural gas distribution company's price to compare, you can find out whether or not you will save money by switching.

Price to Compare	\$ 4.00/Mcf
New Supplier Price	- <u>3.00/Mcf</u>
Savings	\$ 1.00/Mcf
Savings	\$ 1.00/Mcf
Monthly Use	X <u>10 Mcf</u>
Savings per Month	\$10.00

As this table shows, if your natural gas distribution company's price to compare is \$4.00 per Mcf and the competing natural gas supplier is charging \$3.00, then you can save \$1.00 on every Mcf you use. If you use 10 Mcf in a month, then you will save \$10.00 that month.

How To Use This Guide

We collected information about Pennsylvania's natural gas distribution companies and the natural gas suppliers offering service to residential customers. Attached is a chart showing the utility company's price to compare, and the comparable price being charged by the natural gas suppliers offering service in that area. We also list the monthly bills for suppliers' service at a typical usage level.

If a supplier charges a monthly or annual fee, we spread that charge over the usage shown. For example, if a supplier charges a \$5.00 monthly fee, plus \$3.00 per Mcf, and if a consumer uses 10 Mcf, then the monthly bill in our example would be \$35.00.

It is also important to note that we have **only** included the supply portion of your natural gas bill in our comparison charts. All customers will **also** have to pay other charges to their natural gas distribution company to have the natural gas delivered to their home. Those charges are the same regardless of who supplies your natural gas and will not affect the amount of your monthly savings.

New Supplier Price per Mcf	\$3.00
Monthly Usage	<u>X 10 Mcf</u>
Monthly Usage Cost	\$30.00
Monthly Fee	<u>+ \$5.00</u>
Monthly Supply Bill for 10 Mcf per month	\$35.00

Now It's Your Turn

This is only a guide to **start** you in the shopping process. We have tried to gather accurate information from all the residential suppliers that we are aware of in each area, but there may be other offers available, so please ask the supplier when you contact them. Also, **prices change**. You should always contact the supplier directly to make sure that you understand the price you have to pay plus all other contract terms, such as the length of the contract, whether the price is fixed or variable, and any other fees for switching to or from a particular supplier. Your natural gas distribution company's price to compare may change quarterly, too.

There have been very big changes in natural gas prices in the last few years. Local gas companies and gas suppliers have had to make many adjustments in their rates for customers. Some adjustments happen more quickly than others. You should compare rates carefully to make sure you are getting a good deal.

Disclaimer of Liability and Endorsement

Neither the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate nor any of its employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of the attached charts.

Reference in the charts to any specific commercial products, process, or service by trade name, trademark, or otherwise does not constitute or imply its endorsement or recommendation by the Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate. The information contained in the charts shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes. The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate is not responsible for the contents of any off-site Internet web pages referenced.

We can help

If you have any questions, please contact our office by calling our **toll free number 800-684-6560** (Pennsylvania consumers only), or (717) 783-5048 or by email at consumer@paoca.org. The Office of Consumer Advocate also has a website at www.oca.state.pa.us that has other educational material available.

You can obtain a current list of suppliers that are licensed to serve in your area, by visiting the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission website at www.puc.state.pa.us or by calling toll-free at 1-800-692-7380. However, please keep in mind that a company may be licensed but not actively offering service.

Columbia Gas of PA., Inc. 1-888-460-4332 www.columbiapamd.com		Rate RSS Residential Sales Service	
	Prices in cents per therm*	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 therms</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through June 30, 2012</u>	41.1 ¢	\$41.10	
<i>Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:</i>			
Agway Energy Services 1-888-98-Agway www.agwayenergy.com			
Monthly variable price: 1 year term Includes home heating repair program	39.9 ¢	\$39.90	No
Amerigreen Energy 1-888-559-4567 www.amerigreenenergy.com			
Fixed price: 1 year term	45.4 ¢	\$45.40	No
Columbia Retail Energy 1-888-994-0995 www.columbiaretailenergy.com			
Fixed price through February 2013	47.5 ¢	\$47.50	No
Monthly variable price through December 2012. Will not exceed 71.9 ¢ per ccf. Contact Columbia Retail for current monthly rate.			No
Direct Energy 1-888-734-0741 www.directenergy.com			
Fixed price: 1 year term	79.9 ¢	\$79.90	No
Dominion Energy Solutions 1-800-779-0538 www.dom.com/products			
Monthly variable price: 1 year term	34.3 ¢	\$34.30	No
Fixed price through April 2013	45.9 ¢	\$45.90	Yes: \$50
Major Energy Services 1-888-625-6760 www.majorenergy.com			
Monthly variable price	43.9 ¢	\$43.90	No

	Prices in cents per therm*	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 therms</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
MxEnergy.com, Inc.			
1-800-785-4373 www.mxenergy.com			
Monthly variable price	49.9 ¢	\$49.90	No
Fixed price: 1 year term	54.8 ¢	\$54.80	Yes: \$150
Planet Energy			
1-855-360-3042 www.planetenergyhome.com			
Variable price: 1 year term	46.9 ¢	\$46.90	No
Hybrid plan: 1 year term *	49.9 ¢	\$49.90	Yes: 15 ¢ per ccf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract
* Hybrid plans are a combined rate of 50% variable and 50% fixed. Please contact Planet Energy for details.			
Fixed price: 1 year term	52.9 ¢	\$52.90	Yes: 15 ¢ per ccf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract
Shiple Energy			
1-800-839-1849 www.shipleenergy.com			
Monthly variable price	39.9 ¢	\$39.90	No
Fixed price: 1 year term	42.9 ¢	\$42.90	Yes: \$75

* For service rendered on or after January 31, 2012, Columbia Gas is billing in therms rather than hundred cubic feet (ccf).

Equitable Gas 1-800-654-6335 www.equitablegas.com		Rate RS Residential Service	
	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through June 30, 2012</u>	\$5.00 *	\$50.00	
<i>Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices :</i>			
Dominion Energy Solutions			
1-800-779-0538			
www.dom.com/products			
Monthly variable price:			
1 year term	\$5.10	\$51.00	No
Fixed price through April 2013	\$6.75	\$67.50	No
*Equitable Price to Compare includes commodity charges of \$3.30/Mcf and interstate pipeline demand charges of \$1.70/Mcf.			

National Fuel Gas 1-800-595-7510 www.natfuel.com		Rate RS Residential Service	
	Prices in cents per ccf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 ccf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through July 31, 2012</u>	49.2 ¢	\$49.20	
<i>Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:</i>			
IGS Energy			
1-877-444-7427 (new enrollments) 1-800-280-4474 (customer service) www.igsenergy.com			
Fixed price through June 2013	69.9 ¢	\$69.90	No
Major Energy Services			
1-888-625-6760 www.majorenergy.com			
Monthly variable price	52.9 ¢	\$52.90	No
National Fuel Resources, Inc.			
1-877-637-8999 www.nfrinc.com			
Fixed price: 1 year term	49.6 ¢	\$49.60	Yes: \$99

PECO Gas 1-800-494-4000 www.peco.com		Rate GR General Service-Residential	
	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through May 31, 2012</u>	\$5.34	\$53.40	
Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:			
Amerigreen Energy 1-888-559-4567 www.amerigreenenergy.com Fixed price: 1 year term	\$5.99	\$59.90	No
Commerce Energy, Inc. 1-877-226-5392 www.commerceenergy.com Monthly variable price (3 month introductory price)	\$5.20	\$52.00	No
Energetix, Inc. 1-800-544-0182 www.energetix.net Fixed price: 1 year term	\$5.47	\$54.70	Yes: \$35
Gateway Energy Services Corporation 1-888-601-3141 www.gesc.com/PA Fixed price through May 31, 2013	\$5.54	\$55.40	No
Major Energy Services 1-888-625-6760 www.majorenergy.com Monthly variable price	\$4.99	\$49.90	No
Planet Energy 1-855-360-3042 www.planetenergyhome.com Monthly variable price	\$4.89	\$48.90	No
Variable price: 1 year term** **Introductory rate good through July 31, 2012	\$4.29	\$42.90	Yes: 1.5 ¢ per Mcf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract term.

	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
Planet Energy continued...			
Hybrid plan: 1 year term* *Hybrid plans are a combined rate of 50% variable and 50% fixed. Contact Planet Energy for details.	\$5.29	\$52.90	Yes: 1.5 ¢ per Mcf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract term.
Hybrid plan: 3 year term* *Hybrid plans are a combined rate of 50% variable and 50% fixed. Contact Planet Energy for details.	\$5.94	\$59.40	Yes: 1.5 ¢ per Mcf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract term.
Fixed price: 1 year term	\$5.69	\$56.90	Yes: 1.5 ¢ per Mcf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract term.
Fixed price: 3 year term	\$6.99	\$69.90	Yes: 1.5 ¢ per Mcf multiplied by the estimated consumption for the remainder of the contract term.
Rhoads Energy 1-877-NATGAS1 www.rhoadesenergy.com			
Monthly variable price: 1 year term* *Plus \$1.00 per month administrative fee	\$4.25	\$43.50	No
Shipley Energy 1-800-839-1849 www.shipleyenergy.com			
Monthly variable price* *Plus \$1.00 per month customer charge	\$4.49	\$45.90	No
Fixed price: 1 year term* * Plus \$1.00 per month customer charge	\$4.95	\$50.50	Yes: \$75
Washington Gas Energy Services 1-888-884-9437 www.wges.com			
Monthly variable price* *Price for first month	\$3.90	\$39.00	No
Fixed price: 1 year term	\$5.30	\$53.00	Yes: \$150

Peoples Natural Gas (formerly Dominion Peoples) 1-800-764-0111 www.peoples-gas.com		Rate RS Residential Service	
	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through June 30, 2012</u>	\$3.08	\$30.80	
Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:			
Agway Energy Services 1-888-98AGWAY www.agwayenergy.com			
Monthly variable price: 1 year term	\$3.39	\$33.90	No
Fixed price: 1 year term	\$10.19	\$101.90	No
Dominion Energy Solutions (Formerly Dominion Peoples Plus) 1-800-779-0538 www.dom.com/products			
Monthly variable price: 1 year term	\$3.54	\$35.40	No
Fixed price through May 2013	\$4.98	\$49.80	No
Fixed price through April 2014	\$5.09	\$50.90	No
Fixed price through April 2013	\$4.93	\$49.30	No
(Senior Citizen and Military Plan)* *This plan is available for residential customers who are 65 or older or who are active or retired military personnel who have served or are currently serving in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces			

Peoples TWP
 (formerly TW Phillips Gas and Oil Co.)
 1-800-222-5101
 www.twphillips.com

Rate RS
Residential Sales

	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>
<u>Price to Compare</u> <u>through July 31, 2012</u>	\$2.76	\$27.60

Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:

There are no competitive natural gas suppliers currently offering service to residential customers in this service territory.

Philadelphia Gas Works 215-787-1277 www.pgworks.com		Rate GS Residential Service	
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	Prices in cents per ccf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 ccf</u>	
<u>Price to Compare through May 31, 2012</u>	52.0 ¢	\$52.00	

Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:

There are no competitive natural gas suppliers currently offering service to residential customers in this service territory.

UGI Utilities 1-800-276-2722 www.ugi.com		Rate R General Service-Residential	
	Prices in cents per ccf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 ccf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through May 31, 2012</u>	60.2 ¢	\$60.20	
Current Licensed			
Amerigreen Energy			
1-888-559-4567 www.amerigreenenergy.com			
Fixed price: 1 year term	62.0 ¢	\$62.00	No
Rhoads Energy			
1-877-NATGAS1 www.rhoadsenergy.com			
Fixed price: 1 year term*	56.5 ¢	\$57.50	Yes: \$70
*Plus \$1.00 per month customer charge			
Shiple Energy			
1-800-839-1849 www.shipleenergy.com			
Monthly variable price*	49.9 ¢	\$50.90	No
*Plus \$1.00 per month customer charge			
Fixed price: 1 year term*	57.5 ¢	\$58.50	Yes: \$75
*Plus \$1.00 per month customer charge			
Washington Gas Energy Services			
1-888-884-9437 www.wges.com			
Monthly variable price*	39.0 ¢	\$39.00	No
*Price for first month			
Fixed price: 1 year term	67.0 ¢	\$67.00	Yes: \$150

UGI Central Penn Gas (formerly PPL Gas Utilities) 1-800-652-0550 www.pplweb.com		Rate R Residential Service	
	Prices in dollars per ccf *	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>100 ccf</u>	
<u>Price to Compare</u> <u>through May 31, 2012</u>	52.8 ¢	\$52.80	
<i>Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:</i>			
There are no competitive natural gas suppliers currently offering service to residential customers in this service territory.			

*For service rendered on or after August 30, 2011, UGI Central Penn Gas is billing in hundred cubic feet (ccf) rather than dekatherms (Dth).

UGI Penn Natural Gas (formerly PG Energy) 1-800-276-2722 www.ugi.com		Rate RS Residential Service	
	Prices in dollars per Mcf	Monthly Supply Portion of your bill if you use: <u>10 Mcf</u>	Early Cancellation Fee?
<u>Price to Compare through May 31, 2012</u>	\$5.25	\$52.50	
<i>Current Licensed Competitive Supplier Prices:</i>			
Washington Gas Energy Services 1-888-884-9437 www.wges.com			
Monthly variable price* *Price for first month	\$3.90	\$39.00	No
Fixed price: 1 year term	\$6.70	\$67.00	Yes: \$150