SIERRA CLUB – ATLANTIC CHAPTER “ENERGY SHEETS”

The Power of Purchasing Renewable Energy for your Home or Small Business (2 of 2)

HOW TO - Three Avenues:

If you’re not utilizing any renewable power at this time, try one of the following options to check on purchasing renewable electricity for your home:

1. Go to your local electric utility website. Let’s use a New York State Electric and Gas (NYSEG) customer as an example. The official website lists its clean energy program through Community Energy Inc. NYSEG estimates that an average residence in New York uses 600 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month. You can purchase 100% New Wind Power from NYSEG at 2.5¢ per kilowatt-hour. For an average residence, using 600 kilowatt-hours per month, this would add approximately $15 per month to the electric bill, or $180 per year. NYSEG permits energy to be purchased in 100 kilowatt-hour blocks, with a minimum purchase commitment of 200 kilowatt-hours costing $5 per month. NYSEG estimates that purchasing even 200 kilowatt-hours of wind produced electricity per month is the equivalent of planting one acre of trees or reducing your automobile travel by 2,194 miles per year.

2. The same customer may go shopping for renewable electricity packages through Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) at www.chooseenergy.com/new-york. Type in your zip code and several ESCOs will pop-up, with prices, supplier name and length of contract period. Click on Details, and you will see the percentage of the electricity that comes from “green” sources, which excludes fossil fuels and nuclear. For example, in August 2017, Clearview Energy provided its 12-month Clear Green Guarantee 12 program for 5.79¢ per kilowatt-hour. You can compare your present payment per kilowatt-hour on the site. Depending on your zip code, the result may be a saving or a slight premium. The consumer can review the package at its expiration to check future rates.

3. The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) also provides a list of ESCOs with certified green power options at www.newyorkpowertochoose.com. Type in your zip code, choose “electric” for service type, choose “Fixed/Variable” for offer type, then click “Find offers”. Companies with a green feather by their name have certified green power options. For a Con Edison customer, examples of certified green power options might be: CleanChoice Energy (formerly Ethical Electric), Clearview Energy, Global Energy, etc.

What should I ask about an ESCO? Does it provide 100% renewable energy? Many ESCOs with green power options only obtain a percentage of their energy from renewables. What are its renewable sources for electricity? What are the prices for a variable plan? (rates will change to reflect the demand for electricity) What are the prices for a fixed plan? (price guaranteed for six or twelve months) Keep track of your contract’s expiration date if you choose a fixed plan, to review for possible price increases.

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