

Aggregation for those currently under contract

By Mike Barhorst

Residents often stop me to ask questions about various facets of government. One that I continue to be asked frequently involves aggregation, and how those currently under contract with another supplier can become part of the local purchasing group once their current contract has ended.

Sidney residents (as well as the residents of the villages that are part of the local purchasing group) will soon start to see, if they have not already, the new electric and natural gas aggregation rates on their monthly bills. I, for one, am excited about the program and its real potential to save consumers money.

Many residents pursued lower rates on their own some years ago. Those who are currently under contract will have the opportunity to join the City's aggregate when their contract expires. Those joining the City's plan late would enjoy the new rate through the expiration of the City's contract.

For many under contract, there is a severance clause that would make it financially difficult for them to leave their current supplier. However, I have had residents tell me they were able to get out of their existing contracts 30 to 60 days early with no early termination fee being assessed.

This may be something worth exploring with your current supplier if you are considering making the switch. Simply be aware that early termination fees are common in contracts, and can be substantial, more than offsetting the savings enjoyed through aggregation.

In addition, consumers can also continue to explore options on their own, or allow their service to default to the standard service provider. The beauty of the program is that the choice is clearly your own.

For those residents interested in making the switch once their contract ends, the process is relatively simple. Simply place a telephone call to the City's selected aggregation provider.

For natural gas, Constellation Energy Services was selected. They can be contacted toll free by phone (844.275.0797).

The City's negotiated natural gas rate is established at \$0.3898 per hundred cubic feet (CCF) of natural gas. The rate is fixed for 24 months. Those electing this option would need to provide Constellation with their Vectren account number.

For those residents interested in switching to the City's electric aggregation program, AEP Energy was selected as the energy provider of choice. AEP Energy call also be reached toll free by phone (877.726.0214).

The City's negotiated electric rate is fixed at 5.441 cents per kilowatt hour. Our contract with AEP Energy fixes the rate for 36 months. Those electing this option will also need to provide AEP Energy with their Dayton Power & Light account number.

One of the benefits of the local aggregation program is that consumers can cancel their contracts at any time without penalty, then switch to another program or revert back to the default utility provider.

Your elected officials involved in the process felt this freedom was important to consumers. As a result, we had the language included in both aggregation plans.

If you have questions about aggregation or any other matter, do not hesitate to contact your local councilmember. Of course, you are also welcome to contact me.