

*Did you know that in many states you have a choice about who supplies the energy that powers, heats, and cools your home or business?*

**The American Coalition of Competitive Energy Suppliers** (ACCES) is a group of natural gas and electricity suppliers committed to helping consumers like you better understand energy choice.

### What is energy choice?

You probably are familiar with the local utility companies that *deliver* your electricity and natural gas – but there are also other companies that compete to *supply* you with this energy.

Just like you might choose to purchase the latest Smartphone from among a variety of different providers, but have it shipped to you by the U.S. Postal Service, in many places you can choose the company that procures electricity and natural gas on your behalf, and have the utility deliver it to your home or business.

Energy choice programs in many states allow eligible customers to shop around and chose an electricity or natural gas supplier that best suits their needs.

### What is the difference between a supplier and a utility?

The utility is primarily a “poles, wires, and pipes” company.

They are responsible for maintaining and repairing the infrastructure, delivering electricity and natural gas to consumers, and ensuring reliability.

A supplier sells the energy that the utility delivers.

Suppliers compete by offering a variety of services and incentives, and consumers chose those that most appeal to them and best meet their energy needs.

### What are the benefits of energy choice?

Many different products and services to meet individual energy needs:

- Fixed or variable prices
- Renewable energy options
- Time-of-use rates
- Sometimes, lower rates
- Energy efficiency audits
- Consumer rewards (like airline miles)
- And other value-added benefits

For some of these products, the rates may be higher, but what’s important is the *value* you get for your money.



### How do I choose a supplier?

First, learn if choice is available in your state and utility territory. Visit the “Restructuring by State” page on our website to get started:

[www.CompetitiveEnergy.org](http://www.CompetitiveEnergy.org)



### To Learn More:

To learn more about the power of choice, and how to choose, spend some time looking at the other resources on our website at:

[www.CompetitiveEnergy.org](http://www.CompetitiveEnergy.org)

## Energy Choice

### Myths v. Facts

**MYTH:** *If I choose to purchase energy supply from a competitive energy supplier, my local utility won't respond to my energy emergencies, like power outages or natural gas leaks.*

**FACT:** If you choose a competitive energy supplier, it is important to remember that the local utility will continue to be responsible for the reliable delivery of electricity and natural gas to your home or business, and that the local utility will continue to respond to all service interruptions and emergencies.

**MYTH:** *I've always liked my utility, and if I switch to a competitive energy supplier I will hurt them by taking business away.*

**FACT:** Utilities are regulated by state government (typically through public utility commissions), and their rates are controlled. Typically, utilities' profits come from the *delivery* of your energy (known as "transmission and distribution"), not from the *supply* of energy. Switching to a competitive supplier will not harm your utility.



**MYTH:** *If I switch to a competitive energy supplier, I will have to pay two bills a month, instead of just one – it will be a major headache.*

**FACT:** In many states that have energy choice, customers can choose "consolidated billing," in which their supply charges and delivery charges appear on a single bill. Depending on the state, this bill may come from either the supplier or the utility, but either way, you get one piece of paper and have to make just one payment. If you prefer two separate bills, in many states this is an option available to you as well

**MYTH:** *I have to choose a competitive energy supplier or I won't get electricity or natural gas delivered to my home or business.*

**FACT:** If you choose to not switch to a competitive supplier, the utility will continue to deliver AND supply your energy. Remember, whatever you decide, you are making a choice – so it is worth your time to investigate all your options before making a decision.

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