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Commission Urges Consumers to Shop for Natural Gas Supply

Pennsylvania – Natural Gas

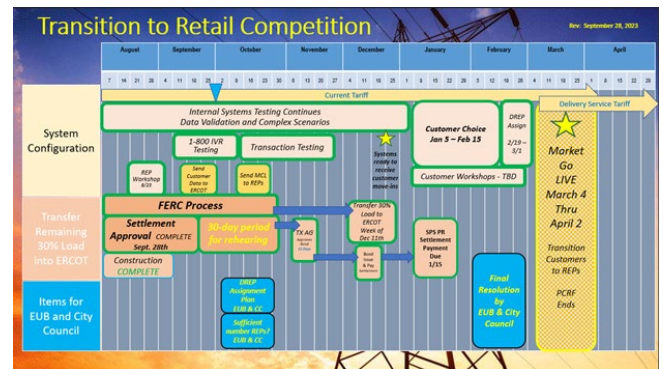
The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission is urging consumers across the Commonwealth to pursue opportunities for the fall and winter heating seasons by shopping now for their natural gas supply ([PUC Urges Consumers to ‘Jumpstart’ Fall and Winter #SaveInPA Opportunities by Shopping for Natural Gas Supply | PA PUC](#)) as it could result in savings on the energy portion of their monthly natural gas bills.

“Warmer weather in late summer and early fall typically means less demands for natural gas, especially for residential gas customers, and that can translate into lower prices. Locking in a lower energy price now can help insulate consumers against potential energy price spikes this winter when gas usage and energy prices traditionally go up.”

Retail Choice Date Set for Lubbock Power & Light

Texas – Electric

The Retail Integration Task Force for Lubbock Power & Light (LP&L) presented a revised timeline that anticipates a market go-live period for retail electric choice from March 4, 2024, through April 2, 2024. This comes after the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approval of a settlement among various parties and will provide for LP&L's exit from the Southwestern Power Pool and integration into the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. The initial customer choice selection period would run from January 5, 2024, to February 15, 2024. Customers that do not make a selection during this period would be assigned to a default service provider during the period February 19, 2024, through March 1, 2024.



The actual migration to retail choice for LP&L customers would occur with on-cycle meter readings from March 4, 2024, through April 2, 2024.

Weymouth Gas Compressor Station

Massachusetts – Natural Gas

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit issued a decision ([22-1146-2008958.pdf \(uscourts.gov\)](#)) ending long running litigation over the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approval of the Weymouth Compressor Station in Norfolk, Massachusetts. The Weymouth Compressor

Station is part of the Algonquin Gas Transmission and Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline Atlantic Bridge Project that received FERC approval in 2017. In its decision, the U.S. District Court found procedural flaws and also determined that the petitioner’s challenge did not meet a necessary requirement.

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Status of Electric Competition

Illinois – Electric

The Illinois Commerce Commission Office of Retail Market Development issued its annual report to the General Assembly on the status of competition in the retail electric industry in the state of Illinois (<https://www.icc.illinois.gov/downloads/public/icc-reports/2023%20ORMD%20Section%2020-110%20Report.pdf>). For 2023: (1) the number of

retail energy suppliers was 101 in comparison to 100 for 2022; (2) the number of certified agents /brokers/consultants decreased between 2022 and 2023 to 358 in the state – down from 402; and (3) there were 195,016 non-residential customers on alternative retail electric supply – a decrease of approximately 7.5 percent over 2022.

Renewable Natural Gas Innovation

California – Natural Gas

Two California natural gas utilities are exploring innovative renewable natural gas pilot projects. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) filed a proposal with the California Public Utilities Commission to implement a proposed biomass gasification to renewable natural gas (RNG) pilot project. Using an innovative biomass-to-RNG conversion technology, the project has the potential to reduce wood waste and climate pollutants in California. The RNG procured by PG&E through this project will contribute toward PG&E's Renewable Gas

Standard 2030 procurement target. In addition, Southern California Gas Company (SCG) filed a proposal with the commission to implement a proposed bio-synthetic natural gas (Bio-SNG) from agricultural wood waste, pistachio shells, and almond shells. SCG notes that woody biomass pilot projects involve emerging technology that has potential operational risks; however, SCG will collaborate to support the project's operation with the goal of providing expected environmental benefits in California.

New York City Electric Reliability Concerns

New York – Electric

The New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) completed its quarterly assessment of reliability of the bulk electric system ([PRESS RELEASE | NYISO Study Finds "Reliability Need" in 2025 for New York City Region - NYISO](#)). A key finding includes a deficit of 446 megawatts in reliability margins for the New York City area beginning in summer 2025. This is driven primarily by the expected increase in peak electric demand and the lack of availability of certain electric generation units. New York City's electric reliability needs in 2025 include the increased electrification of the transportation and building

sectors, continued economic growth following the pandemic, and the unavailability or retirement of select generators under the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's emissions limits that went into effect in May 2023. Hydro-Quebec received approval to begin building a cross-border transmission line that will supply hydroelectric power from Quebec to New York City. The Quebec government and the Canada Energy Regulator approved construction of the *Hertel-New York* interconnection line – a 58-kilometer line that will connect to the *Champlain Hudson Power Express*

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line currently under construction in the U.S. This will provide for the delivery of 1,250 megawatts of power generated by Hydro-Quebec to New York City. The NYISO STAR (Short-Term Assessment of Reliability) report finds that beyond 2025, New York City's reliability margin would improve when the *Champlain*

Hudson Power Express transmission line from Quebec to New York City is completed and is expected to enter service in the spring of 2026. However, delays in the schedule could result in additional transmission security concerns.

Changes to Electric Default Service Procurement

Massachusetts – Electric

State regulators have issued a decision directing the Massachusetts electric utilities to transition to a uniform default service procurement cycle for utility-provided electric commodity service. The intention of this is to lessen the difference in the default service prices between fixed rate periods (winter and summer) across the electric distribution companies. The new basic service fixed price periods for smaller

customers will be February through July, and August through January. For larger customers, January and February will be separated as well; however, the fixed price periods will be three-month intervals consistent with the current length of fixed pricing for larger customers starting with February through April and proceed so forth in three-month intervals.

Strengthening Safety of Natural Gas Pipeline Distribution

National – Natural Gas

The U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration commenced a proposed rulemaking ([USDOT Proposes Updates to Gas Distribution Pipeline Regulations, Bolstering Safety Requirements and Strengthening Community Protections | PHMSA](#)) to strengthen safety requirements for millions of miles of gas distribution pipelines. The proposed changes aim to improve safety and mitigate risk through the improvement of emergency response plans, integrity management plans, operation manuals and more. The major components of the proposal include: (1) improving construction procedures designed to

minimize the risk of incidents caused by system over-pressurization; (2) updating distribution integrity management programs to cover and prepare for over-pressurization incidents; (3) requiring new regulator stations to be designed with secondary pressure relief valves and remote gas monitoring, to better prepare gas distribution systems to avoid over-pressurizations, and limit damage during incidents; and (4) strengthening emergency response plans for gas pipeline emergencies, including requirements for operators to contact local emergency responders and keep the affected public informed of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Clean Energy Connect

New England – Electric

Central Maine Power Company and NECEC Transmission, LLC resumed construction of the New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) project in the

wake of legal challenges. The NECEC is a transmission project ([About the NECEC — New England Clean Energy Connect \(necleanenergyconnect.org\)](#)) that will

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provide for the importation of 1,200 megawatts of hydroelectric power from Quebec into New England

via an interconnection in Lewiston Maine.

Regional Gas Transmission Projects

Northeast – Natural Gas

Equitrans Midstream Corp. maintains that the Mountain Valley natural gas pipeline ([Mountain Valley Pipeline Project |](#)) will be in service by the end of 2023. The developer of the 303-mile, 2 billion cubic feet per day gas transportation project has a few months of construction remaining and will add an additional outlet for Appalachian Basin natural gas production. Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line asked federal regulators for permission to begin providing 450,000 dekatherms per day of firm natural gas transportation service on its Regional Energy Access expansion project ([Regional Energy Access | Williams Companies](#)) on an interim basis while the company completes the remaining parts of the northeast

pipeline project. The expansion project will connect northern Pennsylvania production areas to Northeast demand centers and is expected to augment supply options in Transco's Zone 6 market area that encompasses New York City and surrounding areas. Tennessee Gas Pipeline's proposed East 300 Upgrade Project ([East 300 Upgrade Project \(kindermorgan.com\)](#)) will increase the natural gas capacity on its existing pipeline system by 115,000 dekatherms per day. This includes the installation of two new natural gas compressor units along with modifications to existing compressor stations and is expected to be in service late 2023.

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