



Public Utility Commission of Texas

1701 N. Congress, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78711-3326 Fax 512-936-7003

News Release
May 21, 2020

Contact: Andrew Barlow
Andrew.Barlow@PUC.Texas.Gov

PUC REMINDS CUSTOMERS OF RETAIL ELECTRIC PROVIDERS “YOU STILL HAVE THE POWER TO CHOOSE”

Provides tips for using the agency’s Power to Choose website

Austin, TX – With the summer months right around the corner, the Public Utility Commission of Texas today reminded electricity customers in the areas of the state open to retail competition that they still have the power to choose their retail electric provider.

“After nearly two decades of competitive electric service, customers are still benefiting from an expanding array of pricing and service options,” said the PUC’s executive director, John Paul Urban, III. “If customers are approaching the end of their existing contract or moving, now is a great time to review their choices.”

The agency hosts a website created to empower electricity consumers to weigh their options when it comes to their next contract. Located at PowerToChoose.org (and, in Spanish, at PoderDeEscoger.org), the site allows customers to compare plans offered in their area, weighing factors ranging from cost per kilowatt hour to the percentage of renewable energy sources utilized to generate their power.

To get the most value from the site, the PUC offered the following helpful tips:

- Utilize the USER’S GUIDE located at the top of the home page
- Find your average usage by checking past electricity bills or visiting SmartMeterTexas.org
- Leverage as many selection criteria as possible, ranging from preferred length of contract to the Company Rating offered on a scale of one to five stars on the site.
- Read the fine print in the Electric Facts Labels and the Terms of Service
- Read the terms and conditions of competitors offering to pay off early termination fees.

Customers are also encouraged to weigh the degree of pricing risk they’re willing to take on with a plan. In general, fixed rate plans offer a lower risk factor and fewer aspects to track from day to day. Offerings known as “indexed” plans that are tied to factors like the wholesale cost of electricity can be exciting but may expose customers to a mixture of price spikes and personal use restrictions during times of high demand (typically the summer months or the dead of winter.)

“There are plenty of customers who are perfectly happy with their electricity service and have no intention of switching, but there are also many that could benefit from a review of their options,” concluded Urban. “The power to choose is at its most impactful in the hands of an informed consumer.”

Customers are also reminded that they may be subject to early termination fees unless they are within two weeks of their contract’s end date or are changing service addresses. For assistance navigating the site, contact the PUC’s Customer Protection Division at customer@PUC.Texas.Gov or 888-782-8477.

###



About the Public Utility Commission

Our mission is to serve Texans by regulating the state's electric, telecommunication, and water and sewer utilities, implementing respective legislation, and offering customer assistance in resolving consumer complaints. Since its founding in 1975, the Commission has a long and proud history of service to Texas, protecting customers, fostering competition, and promoting high quality infrastructure. To learn more, please visit <http://www.puc.texas.gov>.