



Joint Press release

Keene, Swanzy, Marlborough, and Wilton announce Community Power Programs to launch in June.

KEENE, NH – Residents and other electric customers in Keene, Swanzy, Marlborough and Wilton will have the opportunity to save 25% on their electric bills beginning in June.

“We are thrilled to announce that this program will save people money and help our community meet its renewable energy goals” says Elizabeth Dragon, Keene City Manager. “The Keene community has been looking forward to this day for a long time, and, thanks to the hard work of the Energy and Climate Committee, Community Development staff, and the Mayor and City Council, it is now becoming a reality.”

Keene was joined by the towns of Swanzy, Marlborough and Wilton in the first Community Power buying group in New Hampshire. They were assisted by the consulting team of Standard Power and Good Energy. “Keene was the first community in New Hampshire to approve their Community Power Plan in 2021, which forged a path for other communities to pursue Community Power,” says Bob Hayden, President and Chief Technical Officer of Standard Power. “Now they are setting the bar high for all programs in the state, with excellent savings, stable rates, and meaningful renewable energy in their default and optional products.”

“The goals of pursuing Community Power were to save money and increase renewable energy, and we did it” says Kermit Williams, Select Board Chair in Wilton. “Next steps are to get the word out. No resident or business should be surprised by Community Power, even if it is a good surprise of 25% savings on your electric bill.”

Each Plan includes a standard rate for eligible customers that is about 8 cents cheaper than Eversource’s default rate and contains 10% additional local renewable energy above the state minimum, or 33.4% total renewable energy content. In addition, each program will offer multiple electricity options with different balances of renewable energy and cost, including a basic product for customers seeking the best rate and two products with higher levels of renewable energy up to 100%.

“Seeing the rates for the first time really made me glad we pursued Community Power for Marlborough,” says former NH Representative and Marlborough Energy Committee Chair Marge Shepardson. “The savings in the default rate are exciting, 40% savings over the current

Eversource supply rate of 20.22 cents/kWh, and with substantially more renewable energy. There are also deep savings for customers that choose higher levels of renewables. Getting to 100% renewable energy seems very possible with Community Power.”

“The rates are a great start for our program,” says Julius Peel, Swanzey Land Use and Zoning Coordinator, “and we will track how the program performs over time. This program provides genuine savings and stable rates for residents and small businesses that don’t want to watch or worry about energy markets and costs. They just want bills they can afford.”

Community Power, called “municipal aggregation” in other states, is enabled in New Hampshire by RSA 53-E. The law was updated in 2019 to allow for the bundling of default service customers together for greater savings, a process that has proven very successful in communities across the country and in New England. The new rules for Community Power were finalized in October 2022, allowing the first programs in the state to go forward this spring.

Customers currently on Eversource default rate will be eligible for automatic enrollment in the program. Customers who are currently on competitive supply are not eligible for automatic enrollment but can opt into the program. Customers in the program will see no change in customer billing or services, just savings on the supply line of their Eversource electric bill.

"Good Energy and Standard Power are very excited to have helped Keene, Swanzey, Marlborough and Wilton launch the first community electricity aggregation programs in New Hampshire” says Patrick Roche, Director of Innovation at Good Energy. “These programs will protect residents and businesses from highly volatile electricity rates while combating climate change through the inclusion of additional renewable energy."

Residents can look on the front of their electric bill to see if they will be eligible for automatic enrollment. “If your supplier is Eversource, then you are eligible for automatic enrollment in the program standard option,” says Emily Manns, consultant with Standard Power. “Eligible customers don’t have to do anything to be enrolled, but they can opt out of the program or choose an optional product before or after the program launches. The program is completely flexible for customers, and no cost to the municipality. It really has something for everyone.”

To learn more, visit www.keenecommunitypower.com (Keene), www.swanzeynh.gov/government/boards_committees_commissions/community_power_committee.php (Swanzey), www.marlbroughnh.org/community-power-committee (Marlborough), and www.wiltonnh.gov (Wilton).

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