

A Guide to the Choice Gas Program

Nebraska 2019

Deadline for selections:
Thursday, April 25, 2019

Para información en español sobre el programa
“Choice Gas” favor de llamar al número gratis

877-245-3506

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Questions and answers

What is the Choice Gas Program?

The Choice Gas Program is an annual program Black Hills Energy administers that gives you the chance to choose your natural gas supplier and pricing option that best suits your needs.

Para información en español sobre el programa “Choice Gas” favor de llamar al número gratis 877-245-3506.

What is the benefit of the Choice Gas Program?

Because the Choice Gas Program allows you to choose your natural gas supplier and pricing option, you have an opportunity to manage gas supply price risk and market volatility to meet your needs.

Where can I get more information about the 2019-20 Choice Gas Program?

You can use this guide or access websites and phone numbers for each supplier for information about the supplier and their pricing options. See page 7 of this guide for each supplier’s contact information.

How do I select my supplier?

This guide explains the steps necessary to submit a selection. You can automatically roll over to your current supplier and pricing option or submit a selection through the internet, directly through your chosen supplier or through the mail. (These choices are referred to as “accepted submission methods” throughout this guide). **The Nebraska Choice Gas Program selection period starts Friday, April 12, and ends Thursday, April 25, 2019.**

What’s a “valid” selection?

A selection is considered valid when you submit your choice through one of the accepted submission methods on or before Thursday, April 25, 2019. Confirmation codes are time-sensitive, so check with your supplier about its expiration date. **The first valid selection Black Hills Energy receives is considered your final choice.** Record your verification number if submitting your selection through the internet. **Mail in selection forms must be signed to be valid.”**

What if I don't make a selection?

If a valid selection is not submitted on or before Thursday, April 25, 2019, your account automatically rolls over to the same supplier and price option at a price determined by the supplier that is made publicly available within 15 days after the selection period ends. Customers using the rollover method will not retain the same commodity price from the previous year unless agreed to by the supplier. Participation in the selection process is encouraged for up-to-date price awareness.

What happens if I move during the Choice Gas Program year?

If you move from one service address to another, you will continue with the supplier previously selected at that address. New construction customers will receive a selection form in the mail with two weeks to make the selection. For questions about service address issues, call **888-890-5554**.

Does the Choice Gas Program affect the quality of distribution service?

No. Regardless of your selection, Black Hills Energy will continue to provide meter reading and billing services, respond to gas leaks, and ensure the safety and reliability of the gas supply to Choice Gas Program communities.

Are the suppliers reliable?

Yes. Participating suppliers must meet requirements in Black Hills Energy's tariff and approved by the Nebraska Public Service Commission.

Is Budget Billing available to all customers?

No. The Budget Billing plan is not available to customers choosing a fixed monthly bill price option with a Choice Gas supplier. **Please note: Budget Billing is not the same as a fixed monthly bill. If you're a Budget Billing customer and select a fixed monthly bill price option a supplier offers, your outstanding Budget Billing balance will be due in full. You can find the current balance on your Budget Billing plan on page two of your most recent bill.** This monthly rolling adjustment will help protect against larger fluctuations you may have experienced in the past. Your "New Balance Due" will adjust from month to month as a result of the calculation process. The monthly adjustment eliminates the need for an annual true-up of your account. If at any time you decide to end your Budget Billing plan, your balance will be updated to reflect your "settle-up" amount.

What is the difference between Black Hills Energy and Black Hills Energy Services?

Black Hills Energy Services ("BHES") (formerly SourceGas Energy Services) is a non-regulated competitive gas supplier. Although BHES is affiliated with Black Hills Energy, with the names of the two affiliated businesses being similar, the non-regulated competitive supply services provided by BHES are legally separate and distinct from the regulated Choice Gas program administered by Black Hills Energy.

**For issues or questions not addressed in this guide, please call
888-890-5554.**

Additional features of the Choice Gas Program

Multi-year selection option:

With our Choice Gas Program, you can now choose a supplier and pricing option for up to three years.* If you select this option through your supplier, you'll know your pricing option and rate not only for the new program year (June-May) but for future program years as well.

If you select a multi-year term, you won't, during the term of your selection:

- Receive an annual selection packet
- Receive supplier marketing contact
- Be eligible to make another selection

All Choice Gas selections are specific to your current service address and are nontransferable. Multi-year selection options are customer and service address specific, so if you move during the term of a multi-year selection, or service is interrupted for any reason, the multi-year term will end.

Moving to a different premise would mean you will be eligible to make a selection at the new service address during the next annual Choice Gas selection period.

*** A residential customer may select a term up to two years, and a commercial or industrial customer may select a term up to three years. For more information about multi-year price options, check with the participating suppliers from page 7 of this guide as well as any applicable terms and conditions of early termination charges or fees that may apply.**

Supplier marketing and customer contact information:

Please note that fixed monthly bill is not the same as Budget Billing. To give you timely information to help you make the Choice Gas selection that best suits your needs, the participating suppliers may call or email you to share their individual offerings. We provide all suppliers the phone number and email address you provided for your Black Hills Energy account.

Although we want you to have the opportunity to receive this additional information, we also understand you may not welcome these calls and emails. Each supplier is limited to how often they can contact you. If you don't want to receive these communications, ask to be removed from their call list or opt out of email communications. After you've completed a successful selection for your service address, you shouldn't receive any more contact from suppliers.

Suggested questions to ask a supplier

New for 2019:

- ✓ Please explain each of your available pricing options and tell me if the pricing option is a fixed rate or a market rate that changes.
- ✓ How does a confirmation code relate to pricing options, and how long is it valid?
- ✓ Are there any built in increases, decreases or caps in the pricing options?
- ✓ What is the price per therm for the fixed rate option?
- ✓ If the price changes with the market, how often does it change? How does it change?
- ✓ Does the price on any of the pricing options depend upon how much, or when, I use natural gas?
- ✓ Are there additional cost components to this price that I should be aware of?
- ✓ If I am satisfied with what I had last year, do I need to make a selection again this year? If I don't make a selection, how will my natural gas price be determined?
- ✓ Are there termination fees associated with any of your price options?

Supplier gas pricing options

The natural gas suppliers participating in the Choice Gas Program offer you a variety of pricing options which may or may not include the ones below. Suppliers may offer additional pricing options with caps and/or floors to make sure your rate will not go above or below a certain price. Check each suppliers' websites listed on page 7 for details about these and other pricing options.

Fixed rate per therm

A 12-month gas price per therm that is fixed or "locked-in." So, even if market prices change, your gas price per therm is locked in for the entire Choice Gas Program year. Your gas bill will vary based upon gas usage only.

Market index rate

A month-to-month market gas price per therm that changes each month based on market price fluctuations. This price includes two components you should consider when comparing market index prices: the market index value used and the adder. The index value of your price follows market changes each month, while the adder remains constant throughout the Choice Gas Program year.

Blended rate

A combination of monthly market index and/or fixed prices per therm. If a fixed price component is included, a portion of your gas usage is locked in at a fixed price. The gas price for the remaining portion of your gas usage will follow market changes during the Choice Gas Program year.

Fixed monthly bill

Please note this is not the same as Budget Billing. A fixed monthly bill that includes your commodity costs, customer charges, distribution fees and the associated taxes and fees. The fixed monthly amount will not change during the Choice Gas Program year, regardless of changes to gas prices or weather-related gas usage, subject to terms and conditions. Unlike Budget Billing, there is no monthly or periodic adjustment.

Participating suppliers



**ACE (Public Alliance for
Community Energy)**
800-454-4759
(Se habla español)
www.ACEenergy.org



Vista Energy Marketing
888-508-4782
(Se habla español)
VistaEnergyMarketing.com



Constellation Energy
877-274-5710
www.NebraskaGas.com



Black Hills Energy Services
800-215-3035
(Se habla español)
www.TrustBHES.com



CenterPoint Energy Services, Inc.
888-200-3788 (Se habla español)
www.BetterNEGas.com



WoodRiver Energy, LLC
888-510-9315
www.woodriverenergy.com

Understanding the selection process

Customers are given the opportunity to select a Choice Gas Program supplier and pricing option for the commodity rate of their natural gas bill.

If you would like to choose a new supplier and/or pricing option:

1. Use the worksheet on page 12 of this guide to make sure you have all required information before submitting your selection.
2. Contact each supplier by calling them or through their websites. Contact information is on page 7 of this guide.
3. Choose a supplier and pricing option, and obtain the applicable confirmation code from your supplier. Verify with your supplier how long the confirmation code is valid. **Confirmation codes are time sensitive, so please check with your supplier on its expiration date.**
4. Choose a submission method. Instructions for each method are provided on the following pages.
5. Submit your selection.
6. Keep the worksheet for your records. DO NOT MAIL TO YOUR SUPPLIER.

Automatic rollover

If you are satisfied with your current supplier and pricing option, you don't have to make a selection. Simply do nothing, and you will automatically roll over to your current supplier and pricing option. If you roll over any pricing option, your final rate will be determined no later than 15 days after the selection period has ended. Your final rollover price doesn't carry over from the previous year unless the supplier agrees to do so, and it may be different from prices quoted during the selection period.

If you experience any problems, or have questions, please call 877-245-3506.

Submitting your selection online

To submit a valid selection online, you'll need a current web browser — e.g. Chrome, Safari or Internet Explorer, etc.

You'll also need the following information before submitting your selection. For your convenience, we suggest you complete the following fields before logging on.

- Account number (can be found on your selection form in your packet or call 877-245-3506 to obtain it).

(Example account number: 100000023456)

My account number is: _____

Control number found on the selection form in your packet. You can also call 877-245-3506 to obtain it through the control number retrieval prompt. You'll be asked to provide the account number and the last four digits of the account holder's Social Security number or tax identification number. **If a social security number was not provided to Black Hills Energy for the account, the control number retrieval prompt will not be successful and you will need to obtain your control number either from your selection form or from a call center representative at 877-245-3506.**

(Example control number: 123456789)

My control number is: _____

- Five-digit confirmation code provided to you by your supplier

_____ Expiration date _____

for your information only.

(Example confirmation code: 50110)

My supplier selected: _____

- Go to **www.ChoiceGas.com**
- Click on Nebraska selection, then "Submit your Selection" button and follow the step-by-step instructions between Friday, April 12, and midnight CDT on Thursday, April 25, 2019.

You will be provided with a verification number. Please record it here:

Or print the verification page and retain for your records.

Submitting your selection by mail

Use the mail-in form included in this packet or call **877-245-3506** to have a form mailed to you. Selection forms are also available at **www.ChoiceGas.com**.

Follow all instructions on the form and mail in the postage-paid return envelope provided.

**YOUR SUBMISSION MUST BE POSTMARKED
ON OR BEFORE THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2019.**

You must sign your mailed selection form for it to be considered valid.

Submitting your selection through your supplier

You can request that your supplier submit your annual Choice Gas Program selection for you.

- If you want to have your chosen supplier submit your selection, you'll be asked to provide them your account number and control number, which are shown on the enclosed selection form. If you have your account number but need your control number, call 877-245-3506, choosing the control number retrieval prompt.

You will be asked to provide the account number and the last four digits of the account holder's Social Security number or tax identification number.

My account number is: _____

My control number is: _____

My confirmation code is: _____

Your control number is specific to your service address and is used to make sure that no other party can submit your selection for you. By providing your control number to a supplier, you authorize that supplier to submit your Choice Gas Program selection for you.

Worksheet

This worksheet is meant to help you select the supplier and pricing option that best suits your needs. Please keep this sheet for your records and don't send it to your supplier.

ACE (Public Alliance for Community Energy)

www.ACEEnergy.org

Energy Pricing Options:

- ACE WeatherShield™ (Fixed Monthly Bill) (1 or 2 year)
- Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Market Index Rate (1 or 2 year)

Vista Energy Marketing

www.VistaEnergyMarketing.com

Energy Pricing Options:

- 1 & Done Fixed Bill Unlimited Usage (1 or 2 year)
- Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Market Index Rate (1 or 2 year)

Constellation Energy

www.NebraskaGas.com

Energy Pricing Options:

- Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Budget Assist (Fixed Monthly Bill) (1 or 2 year)
- Market Index Rate (1 or 2 year)

Black Hills Energy Services

www.TrustBHES.com

Energy pricing options:

- WinterGuard® (Fixed Monthly Bill) (1 or 2 year)
- Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Market Index Rate (1 or 2 year)
- Blended Smart Rate (1 or 2 year)

CenterPoint Energy Services, Inc.

www.BetterNEGas.com

Energy Pricing Options:

- Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Market Index Rate (1 or 2 year)
- Managed (1 or 2 year)

WoodRiver Energy, LLC

www.woodriverenergy.com

Energy Pricing Options:

- Secure Fixed Rate (Fixed Monthly Bill) (1 or 2 year)
- Guaranteed Fixed Rate Per Therm (1 or 2 year)
- Guaranteed Index (1 or 2 year)

800-454-4759

(Se habla español)

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

888-508-4782

(Se habla español)

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

877-274-5710

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

800-215-3035

(Se habla español)

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
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_____	_____

888-200-3788

(Se habla español)

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

888-510-9315

Confirmation Code: Quote:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Choice Gas Program
www.ChoiceGas.com
877-245-3506
2019 hours:

Friday, April 12.....8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. CDT

Monday, April 15 - Friday, April 19.....8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. CDT

Monday, April 22 - Thursday, April 258 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. CDT

*Para información en español sobre el programa
"Choice Gas" favor de llamar al número gratis
877-245-3506*