APPLES TO APPLES FOR OHIO

How to Shop Your Electric Rate — and Know If an Offer Really Saves You Money

Who's Got the Power? · A CAMHP Foundation Youth Service Project led by Kylie · Ohio only · Power@camhpfoundation.org

Apples to Apples is the State of Ohio's official rate comparison chart, run by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO). It compares **suppliers** — the companies that sell the electricity — for the supply part of your bill. Your local utility still delivers the power, reads the meter, and fixes outages. You never shop for your wires company.

1 FIRST — CAN YOU SHOP? CHECK THE NAME ON YOUR BILL

You CAN shop	Your bill says **The Illuminating Company** (FirstEnergy), AEP Ohio, AES Ohio, or Duke Energy Ohio — a PUCO-regulated utility. Use the steps below.
You CANNOT shop on Apples to Apples	Your bill says **Cleveland Public Power (CPP)**, another city-owned utility, or an electric co-op — OR you are on **PIPP Plus**. There is no supplier choice to compare. Skip to the box at the bottom of page 2 for what to do instead.

2 FIND YOUR PRICE TO COMPARE — THE NUMBER EVERY OFFER HAS TO BEAT

On a regulated utility bill, look for **"Price to Compare."** That is what you pay now for supply, per kilowatt-hour (kWh).
Example — The Illuminating Company, residential: $0.1124 per kWh, October 1 – December 31, 2026. An offer above that number costs you more than staying where you are, no matter what gift card or bonus is attached. Prices to Compare change — always use the number on *your* current bill.

3 SHOP IN FOUR STEPS — PUCO'S STEPS TO SWITCHING

1. Compare on the official chart. Go to **energychoice.ohio.gov** → Apples to Apples. Pick Electric, then your utility. Compare offers side by side against your Price to Compare.
2. Read the whole offer before you contact anyone. Check every line in the checklist on page 2 — rate, fixed or variable, contract length, monthly fee, and early-termination fee.
3. Contact the supplier to sign up. You contact the supplier; the supplier contacts your utility for you. Keep the contract and the supplier's phone number.
4. Watch for your confirmation letter. Your utility will mail one. You have **7 days from the postmark** to change your mind and stop the switch at no cost.

4 DO THE MATH BEFORE YOU SIGN — A WORKED EXAMPLE

Use your own usage from a recent bill. This example uses **750 kWh in a month**:

Choice	Rate	Math	Supply cost for the month
Stay — Price to Compare	$0.1124 / kWh	750 × $0.1124	**$84.30**
Offer A	$0.0890 / kWh, no monthly fee	750 × $0.0890	**$66.75 — saves $17.55 that month**
Offer B	$0.0990 / kWh + $9.99 monthly fee	$74.25 + $9.99	**$84.24 — saves only $0.06**

Lesson: a lower rate with a monthly fee can save almost nothing. Always add the fee before you decide.

5 COMPARE EVERY OFFER ON THE SAME LINES — CHECKLIST

Ask this	What to look for
Rate per kWh	Is it below my Price to Compare? By how much?
Fixed or variable?	Fixed stays the same for the contract. Variable can go up after the first month.
Introductory rate?	What is the rate *after* the intro period ends, and when does it end?
Contract length	How many months? What date does it renew, and what happens then?
Monthly fee	$ ____ per month — add it to the math above.
Early-termination fee	$ ____ if you leave early. Is there a fee-free window?
Renewable / other claims	If that matters to you, what percentage, and is it in the contract?

Supplier contact	Company name, phone, and PUCO certification — write them down.

6 YOUR WORKSHEET — FILL THIS IN FOR ANY OFFER

My utility: _____ My Price to Compare: $ _____ / kWh My usage last month: _____ kWh
Offer company: _____ Offer rate: $ _____ / kWh Monthly fee: $ _____ Contract: _____ months
My math: My usage _____ × offer rate $ _____ = $ _____ + monthly fee $ _____ = **$** _____ **total**
Compare: My usage _____ × my Price to Compare $ _____ = **$** _____ Difference per month: **$** _____
Fixed or variable? _____ Rate after intro: $ _____ Early-termination fee: $ _____ I will decide by (date): _____

7 WATCH OUT FOR THESE

- An offer **above** your Price to Compare, sold on a gift card, a prize, or “act today.”
- A low first-month rate that becomes **variable** after that — ask for the post-intro rate in writing.
- Door-to-door, phone, or store-table sign-ups where you are pressed to show your bill. Your bill shows your account and meter numbers — **do not hand it over or sign until you have done the math at home**.
- Anyone who says they *are* your utility or PUCO. Suppliers are separate companies. PUCO does not sell electricity.
- Auto-renewal into a higher rate. Put the contract end date on your calendar and shop again before it renews.

IF YOU CANNOT SHOP — CLEVELAND PUBLIC POWER AND OTHER CITY / CO-OP CUSTOMERS

You cannot change your supplier, so shopping cannot lower your rate. What can help: (1) check your usage — the supply charge is a large share of a CPP bill; (2) ask CPP Customer Care, **216-664-4600**, about payment plans if a bill is hard to pay; (3) apply for **HEAP / Winter Crisis** through Step Forward in Cuyahoga County, **216-480-4327**, or at **energyhelp.ohio.gov** — HEAP covers regulated, city, and co-op customers, owners and renters.

Official places to check — use these, not a salesperson's flyer: Apples to Apples / Energy Choice Ohio: **energychoice.ohio.gov** · PUCO: **1-800-686-7826** · Ohio Consumers' Counsel: **occ.ohio.gov**

Sources checked November 16, 2026: PUCO Energy Choice Ohio (Price to Compare and Steps to Switching, Illuminating Company chart, Oct–Dec 2026); Ohio Consumers' Counsel Energy Choice factsheet (who can shop); FirstEnergy / Illuminating Company tariff. This sheet is education only — it does not take applications, decide eligibility, or provide funds, and it is not a recommendation of any supplier. Check your current bill for your current Price to Compare before you sign anything.