

COLUMBIA GAS OF KENTUCKY, INC.
RESPONSE TO STAFF'S FIRST REQUEST FOR INFORMATION
DATED NOVEMBER 3, 2021

1. Explain why Columbia Kentucky's Small Volume Aggregation Service and Small Volume Gas Transportation Service (CHOICE program) tariffs should be extended.

Response:

Columbia Gas of Kentucky respectfully requests an extension of the CHOICE program because of its customer desires that the program continue. As more completely outlined in Columbia's response to Commission Staff's Request for Information, No. 2 in this case, Columbia conducted a survey of customers, a summary of which was filed with the Commission on July 9, 2021 in Case No. 2020-00402. The results of this survey indicated that customers continue to desire the ability to choose a supplier of natural gas.

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2. Refer to the CHOICE program survey responses. Provide an evaluation of the CHOICE program survey responses. The evaluation should include, but not be limited to, whether Columbia Kentucky believes there is any improvement in customer awareness of the CHOICE program and of their own status regarding the program since the 2012 survey.

Response:

The required survey was conducted between March 30, 2021 and April 19, 2021. It targeted both CHOICE and non-CHOICE customers with a representative sample of residential and commercial customers within each group. The majority of residential respondents to the survey, 58.7%, indicated that it was either "very important" or "somewhat important" to have the ability to choose from whom they buy their gas supply, whether they save money or not. Similarly 63% of commercial respondents indicated that the ability to choose a gas supplier was either "very important" or "somewhat important" whether they saved money or not. Many of the surveyed participating residential customers pointed to "getting a fixed rate that is the same each month," "saving money," and "having a choice of energy suppliers" as the greatest

benefits from their participation. In this same demographic of survey participants, 57.8% of customers were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their participation in the CHOICE program.

Assuming that the responses to this survey are indicative of Columbia’s customers as a whole, these statistics lead to the conclusion that customers have a desire that the CHOICE program continue. Customers have expressed a desire for a choice of supplier for multiple reasons. As indicated in Columbia’s Response to Commission Staff’s Request for Information, No. 1 in this case, Columbia has pursued this application to extend the CHOICE pilot as a voluntary option available to its customers.

Of those surveyed in 2021, 48.5% of residential customers and 28.3% of commercial customers were aware of the CHOICE program. The 2012 survey results indicated that 33.2% of residential customers and 38.9% of commercial customers were aware of the Customer CHOICE program. While these numbers might at first glance indicate a decline in awareness by commercial customers, the 2012 and 2021 survey methodologies differed in the way customers were initially categorized and how the data was collected. In 2012, only non-participants in the CHOICE program were asked whether they were aware of the CHOICE program.

Pursuant to the Commission's Order of March 24, 2021 in Case No. 2020-00402, Columbia is available for an informal conference to discuss the survey prepared by The Matrix Group.

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3. Provide an overview of Columbia Kentucky's CHOICE program education efforts since Case No. 2017-00115.

Response:

Columbia has added the following features to provide education about the Customer CHOICE program since the 2017 case.

1.) Information about the CHOICE program and gas cost comparison information is available on Columbia's website, accessible here: <https://www.columbiagasky.com/bills-and-payments/billing-programs/choice>. A CHOICE Calculator, located on Columbia's website, was developed to educate and assist customers in determining potential gas cost savings. The below screenshots were taken from this website:



CUSTOMER CHOICE

Make your Choice

The Customer Choice program offers you the option to purchase the natural gas you use from a supplier other than Columbia Gas. If you choose to purchase your gas from a different supplier, we will continue to deliver the same reliable service, read your meter, perform safety checks and respond to emergencies.

The prices charged by suppliers are set by a competitive market, meaning there is no guarantee that you'll save money, but they may offer special pricing and incentives. If you'd like to enroll, shop around and make your Choice.

How to enroll

1. Review our list of current suppliers below.
2. Evaluate the offer and compare prices. The [Kentucky Public Service Commission's](#) website lists full current approved suppliers and eligibility.
3. Suppliers offer different risks and rewards. Our Choice calculator can help you perform a price comparison for gas supply costs.
4. Consider the contract terms. Since many suppliers require you to agree to contract terms, you'll want to know contract length and if you can cancel.
5. Make your Choice by contacting the supplier. If you choose not to participate, your supplier will not change and there is no change in your bill.

BILLS AND PAYMENTS

- Payment Options
- Billing Programs
 - Customer Choice
 - Delivery Service
 - Paperless Billing
- Financial Support
- Understanding Your Bill

Are you a supplier?
 Find more information for natural gas suppliers or those interested in becoming suppliers within our service territory. [>](#)



Find your current charges

The Detail Charges section of your bill shows your Delivery and Supply Charges. The example on the right shows the Detail Charges section of a bill for a customer who participates in Choice. The Supply is provided by Marketer A and the Delivery is provided by Columbia Gas of Kentucky. Use our calculator below to compare offers from suppliers and make an educated decision.

Detail Charges	
Customer Charge	\$16.00
Gas Delivery Charge	\$16.42
Delivery - Columbia Gas of Kentucky	+\$32.42
Customer CHOICE Program	
Gas Supply Cost 5 Mcf at \$6.59000 per Mcf	\$32.95
Supply - Marketer A	+\$32.95
Safety Modification and Replacement Program Rider	\$5.46
Energy Assistance Program Surcharge	\$0.30
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Rider	\$0.46
Research & Development Factor	\$0.06
Lex-Fay, Urban Govt. Franchise Fee	\$2.98
School Tax	\$2.15
Taxes & Fees	+\$11.41
Total Current Utility Charges	+\$76.78

Customer CHOICE Program
 You have chosen Marketer A as your supplier in Columbia's CHOICE Program. For questions about your gas supply charges, please contact Marketer A at 1-800-123-4567.

Calculate your potential savings

This calculator helps you compare your current bill and a potential bill from Choice suppliers. Our calculation is based on our current gas rates. Note: If you see a negative amount in the estimated savings box, you will not see a savings in gas supply costs based on current rates.

Choice Calculator

Cost per Mcf

CURRENT PRICE	SUPPLIER PRICE
\$ 5.4029	\$ 0.0000

You save \$5.4029 per Mcf

ESTIMATED SAVINGS

\$0

per month

How many Mcf you use

Mcfs

Current suppliers

Constellation NewEnergy Gas Division, LLC 1-800-785-4373	IGS Energy 877-4IGSGAS (1-877-444-7427)	Kentucky United Energy 1-877-735-7304
Novac Energy Solutions Inc. 1-888-627-SAVE (7283)	Stand Energy Corporation 1-800-598-2046	US Gas & Electric, Inc. DBA Kentucky Gas & Electric 1-888-919-5943
Vista Energy 1-888-508-4782	Volunteer Energy Services, Inc. 1-800-977-8374	XOOM Energy Kentucky, LLC 1-888-997-8979

Choice is a registered service mark of Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Inc.

2.) Columbia customer bills include a link to the Commission’s website where Columbia and participating CHOICE Marketers gas costs can be found for comparative pricing. In addition, Columbia’s website contains information related to its gas cost and information regarding participating CHOICE Marketers. This portion of the customer bill is shown here:

Message Board

- Enjoy the convenience of managing your account online by enrolling in Paperless Billing. Monthly email alerts, 24/7 account access and up to two years of past bills and payment history! Enroll today at **ColumbiaGasKY.com/PaperlessBilling**.
- Never worry about missing a payment or writing a check again by enrolling in Automatic Payment today at **ColumbiaGasKY.com**.
- Take the seasonal highs and lows out by dividing your yearly energy use into 12 equal monthly payments - for budgeting that's a whole lot easier. Enroll today at **ColumbiaGasKY.com/Budget**.
- Natural gas prices for participating Customer CHOICE Program suppliers can be found at **<http://psc.ky.gov/Home/ColumbiaChoice>**

Customer Statement Date: 08/27/2020

3.) CHOICE Program information is included with Columbia's in-bill newsletter. The newsletter is also distributed via email to those customers who have elected to provide Columbia their email information. Please see the sample below.

YourService

Summer | 2020



Meter program resumes

Columbia Gas has resumed maintenance and testing of natural gas meters after a brief suspension this spring as a COVID-19 precaution.

Meter testing is required by state regulations to ensure meters are operating properly and accurately recording natural gas usage. The work is performed at no cost to the customer and usually takes about 45 minutes.

This work will require access to customers' homes, and Columbia Gas is following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and the Kentucky Healthy at Work reopening guidelines outlined on our website at ColumbiaGasKy.com/COVID-19.

Customers will be contacted by mail and email if their meter is due for maintenance or testing. It is important to schedule an appointment as soon as possible to avoid service interruptions.

To learn more about our meter change program, visit ColumbiaGasKy.com/meter.



AVAILABLE NOW
BILLING
PAYMENT
INFORMATION
TEXTED TO YOUR PHONE

Sign into Your Account & complete the Billing and Payment Alerts information

Register now for the Virtual VASK

Kentucky veterans sacrificed everything to serve our country, and Columbia Gas is committed to honor and support our heroes come high water – or pandemic.

That's why we're proud to support the Veterans VASK, which will go virtual – but no less patriotic – this year. The race has raised more than \$121,000 since 2010. Columbia Gas partners with the Lexington Department of Community Corrections to organize the event. Proceeds go to the Lexington Veterans Health Care System and the Lexington Fisher House. To register or volunteer, visit VeteransVASK.com.

Customer Choice Program™

Take control of your gas bill by choosing your natural gas supplier. It's your Choice.

Go to ColumbiaGasKY.com/Choice for more information.

Natural gas prices for participating Customer CHOICE Program suppliers can be found at Psc.KY.Gov/Home/ColumbiaChoice.

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