

HAMPSHIRE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Q&A: Municipal Aggregation of Electricity

Q1: How does our electricity service work now?

The big utilities have two major roles in electricity: **Delivery** and **Supply**. They are listed and priced separately on your National Grid bill. They maintain the poles and big power lines (**Delivery**), and they also arrange the purchase of the actual power (**Supply**).

Q2: What is being discussed at tonight's meeting?

North Brookfield would join twenty-two other towns in Western Massachusetts in changing how **Supply** is purchased. The Electricity program of the Hampshire Council of Governments would seek to obtain lower prices for all North Brookfield customers who have not signed up with another supplier. Because the Hampshire Council is a full voting member of the New England Power Pool, it can buy electricity at wholesale prices without a broker. This requires approvals by **Town Meeting**, the **Board of Selectmen**, and the state **Department of Public Utilities**.

Q3: What if my power goes out? What if a tree falls on a power line?

National Grid will continue to provide all **Delivery services**. All emergencies will continue to be the responsibility of National Grid, from high power lines to local service.

Q4: How much will this cost the Town?

Nothing: All costs will be paid by the Hampshire Council of Governments.

Q5: Have other towns done this successfully?

The twenty-one towns on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard organized the Cape Light Compact in 2000. The City of Marlborough adopted Municipal Aggregation in 2006. The Hampshire Council and 22 municipalities in Western Massachusetts have filed a plan with the state to begin service in the coming months.

Q6: Does the Hampshire Council Electricity program save its customers money?

The Hampshire Council has saved its customers over \$1.4 million since it began in 2006.

Q7: What other customers are served by the Hampshire Council?

The lights in town buildings are "supplied" by the Hampshire Council. The Town of North Brookfield has saved over \$660 as a Hampshire Council customer. The Hampshire Council has over 100 customers, including a majority of towns and school districts in Hampshire and Franklin counties, plus 20 towns and schools in Berkshire, Hampden, and Worcester counties. It also serves the state's Department of Fish and Wildlife and several non-profits and small businesses.

Q8: What other services are provided by the Hampshire Council of Governments?

The Hampshire Council was established by the legislature in 1999 as successor of the Hampshire County government. Employees and their families of over 60 municipal employers are in the Council's health insurance program. Towns buy everything from school supplies to asphalt to fuel oil to ice cream. The Council's Wellness, Tobacco Free, and RSVP programs serve people of every age.

Q9: What if I do not want to participate?

The law allows anyone to opt-out and choose another Supplier or remain with their utility. There will be no charge to opt-out.

