

Community Power Aggregation in New Hampshire

Community power aggregation in New Hampshire permits municipalities to procure electricity on behalf of residents and small businesses, providing alternative energy supply options, including renewable sources.

Customers continue to get a single electric bill from their utility. The supplier line on your electric bill reflects the name of the community power program and selected supply rate. Otherwise, the electric utilities continue to deliver power, respond to service calls, and provide monthly billing to customers as usual.

Community power aggregation, also referred to as municipal aggregation or community choice aggregation, is a program enabled by **NH RSA 53-E** through which local governments can organize retail electric customers to access competitive electric energy supply and related services. This model allows communities to collectively negotiate rates and terms for electricity supply for residents and businesses.

Statement of Purpose:

The New Hampshire community power aggregation law RSA 53-E purpose is to bring the potential benefits of competitive markets available to large customers to small residential and commercial customers:

53-E:1 Statement of Purpose. – *The general court finds it to be in the public interest to allow municipalities and counties to aggregate retail electric customers, as necessary, to provide such customers access to competitive markets for supplies of electricity and related energy services. The general court finds that aggregation may provide small customers with similar opportunities to those available to larger customers in obtaining lower electric costs, reliable service, and secure energy supplies. The purpose of aggregation shall be to encourage voluntary, cost effective and innovative solutions to local needs with careful consideration of local conditions and opportunities. (Emphasis added)*

The law 53-E and Puc 2200 rules provide municipalities with flexibility on how they pursue this purpose for their own community. At its simplest, competitive markets, market timing and low overhead are used to provide stable, competitive rates with consumer protections for smaller customers. This process is well established for large commercial customers, and enhanced for community power programs with customer services specific to the needs of small customers. More complex options for creating a program include additional stakeholders, decision-makers, outside investors and engagement of third-party experts.

Goals:

The community sets the program goals and priorities:

- **Stable rates:** Communities can choose a program that maintains steady rates for long periods, up to 12-48 months, much longer than the six-month utility rate period to reduce volatility and price uncertainty.
- **Informed choice:** The program signs contracts for energy supply only once all rates and terms are known.¹
- **Support customers:** Informed customers can make smart decisions regarding energy efficiency and renewable energy investments.
- **Cost savings:** Pooling buying power helps secure competitive electricity rates and terms.
- **Renewable options:** Optional renewal default and more options to meet individual and community goals for renewable energy.
- **Local control:** Municipality tailors energy solutions to residents and small businesses.

Process:

The municipality starts the process. Selecting a services provider such as **ECM Power LLC** early helps prepare documents and handle the approval and regulatory process at no cost to the municipality.

- Form an electric aggregation committee. Notify the PUC.
- Develop a Plan with public input. Get local Plan approval from the legislative body (e.g., town meeting or city council).
- File Plan with the PUC for review and approval.
- Consultant runs a competitive pricing process. Municipality signs a contract only when all rates and terms are known.¹
- Outreach and customer support for participating or opting out.
- Launch and customer service.
- Ongoing monitoring, customer service and reporting.
- Program evolution

Contact info@ecmpower.com to request our MOU or a call to get started.

¹Not all services providers provide rates and terms before contracts. Some services providers may ask for binding contracts without known rates and terms, including the potential for changing rates monthly.