



## Medina County Natural Gas Aggregation Program FAQ's

### 1. What is Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation?

Aggregation is a process through which an entire community or groups of communities join together to form one large buying group.

### 2. What are the benefits of Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation?

As a large buying group, Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation programs create buying power for their participants. This buying power allows the aggregator, on behalf of the aggregation program, to negotiate more favorable pricing and supply terms than what could ordinarily be achieved by any one individual resident or small business. This buying power may also allow aggregators to negotiate for additional benefits such as consolidated billing, energy management services and energy use analysis.

### 3. How was the Medina County Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation program formed?

In order for a County to create a Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation Program, a majority of its residents have to pass a ballot issue authorizing the County to negotiate natural gas supply rates on their behalf. The County must also be certified by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO"). Upon certification, and after the County has selected a Certified Retail Natural Gas Supplier ("CRNGS") to administer to program and supply the natural gas, the CRNGS begins the enrollment process that is described in this Q&A.

### 4. What are the types of Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation Programs?

In Ohio there are two types of aggregation programs. Medina County has chosen an "Opt-out" aggregation program. Opt-out aggregation is a program that will automatically enroll all eligible gas customers within the unincorporated areas of the County, unless they individually opt-out of the program (choose not to be included) by notifying the CRNGS. The other option is an "Opt-in" aggregation where each resident must notify the CRNGS that they would like to enroll in the program. "Opt-out" aggregation programs are more common.

### 5. Who is eligible to participate?

All residential and small business customers in the unincorporated areas of the County, who are within the service territory of either Columbia Gas of Ohio ("COH") or Dominion East Ohio ("DEO"), except those who are:

- Enrolled in the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP)
- Already under an individual contract with a CRNGS as part of a natural gas choice program
- In arrearage on payments to the utility company
- A mercantile customer (natural gas commercial accounts using over 500 Mcf/year for commercial purposes or with 3 or more locations within Ohio and other states)

It is important to note that if you recently contracted with a CRNGS, there is a possibility that your name was not removed from the eligible customer list provided by the utility for the program. You should return the opt-out notice if you do not wish to be switched to the aggregation supplier. Be sure to get all the facts on your current supply rate, contract term and potential early termination fees, so that you can make the best decision.

### 6. Will it cost me to join the program?

No. There is no fee to enroll in the program.

### 7. Who has the County chosen as the CRNGS for the program?

Medina County has chosen VolunteerEnergy. VolunteerEnergy is one of the largest natural gas suppliers in the Midwest. Based in Pickerington, Ohio, VolunteerEnergy supplies natural gas to both residential and business customers in seven states and currently serves 33 aggregated communities.

### 8. When does the new rate start?

Customer switching takes place when meters are read. Therefore, your start date for the new rate will depend on when COH or DEO reads your meter. Your service from VolunteerEnergy is expected to begin with gas flowing in November 2014 (December 2014 bill).

### 9. How long is the program?

The community's Governmental Natural Gas Aggregation Program can go on indefinitely. The offer from VolunteerEnergy is for twenty four months beginning in November 2014 and ending in October 2016.

### 10. Will I notice a difference in my service?

No, your local utility, COH or DEO, will continue to deliver gas to your home or business just as they do today.

**11. Will I receive two bills?**

No. For your convenience, you will continue to receive only one bill from COH or DEO. It will show COH or DEO delivery charges and the supply charge amount owed to VolunteerEnergy. COH or DEO will continue to read your meter, issue monthly bills and respond to all service calls.

**12. What will my price be for natural gas supply?**

Participants within the COH territory will receive a fixed price of \$5.26 per Mcf (\$0.526 per Ccf) and participants within the DEO territory will receive a fixed price of \$4.79 per Mcf (\$0.479 per Ccf). These rates are effective for the entire twenty four month term of the program.

**13. Can I remain on budget billing?**

Yes. If you are on budget billing you will remain on budget billing.

**14. What are the next steps for the program?**

An "Opt-Out" Notice will be sent to each eligible community participant prior to the start of the aggregation. Each participant then has 21 days from the postmarked date on the notice to contact VolunteerEnergy to withdraw or "Opt-Out" of the program. After the 21-day period, any participant not opting out will be submitted to COH or DEO for enrollment in the program. COH or DEO will send notice of the pending enrollment to each participant. Each participant will then have 7 days to rescind their enrollment in the program by contacting COH or DEO. After the 7-day rescission period, all participants are officially enrolled in the program. VolunteerEnergy will appear on your COH or DEO natural gas bill within one to two billing cycles after enrollment is verified.

**15. What do I do now?**

Nothing. You're automatically enrolled unless you choose to Opt-out, or are ineligible for the program.

**16. What if I don't want to participate?**

If you do not wish to participate there are several ways to opt-out:

- Return the opt-out reply card to VolunteerEnergy or call them toll free at 1-877-897-1988 during the initial 21 day opt-out period
- Contact your utility, COH or DEO, within 7 days of receiving the enrollment confirmation from them
- Contact VolunteerEnergy directly to be removed from the program at any time, free of charge

**17. Can I exit this program without penalty?**

Yes. You have the ability to leave free of charge at any time for any reason. If you would like to leave the program at any time, simply notify VolunteerEnergy at 1-800-977-8374.

**18. Can I enroll if I do not receive an Opt-Out Notice?**

Yes. During the initial enrollment, any eligible resident that does not receive an Opt-Out Notice may contact VolunteerEnergy directly at 1-800-977-8374 to enroll in the Program.

**19. Can I enroll after the initial enrollment period?**

Yes. Eligible residents can enroll in the program at any time, free of charge, by contacting VolunteerEnergy directly at 1-800-977-8374.

**20. Can I enroll even if I currently purchase my gas from another CRNGS?**

Yes, however your current CRNGS may charge an early termination fee. All residents should check the terms and conditions of their current contract for more information.

**21. What happens if I'm part of the program and I move?**

A resident moving within the same community can stay in the aggregation by providing VolunteerEnergy with their new address. If a resident moves out of the community or does not provide VolunteerEnergy their new address, their participation will end and no early termination fee will apply.

**22. Is this related to our community's Governmental Aggregation Electric program?**

The programs are similar but totally independent. The electric and gas programs have different suppliers and are on different time lines. You do not have to belong to one to participate in the other.

**23. Whom do I call if I have a problem with my natural gas service?**

COH or DEO will continue to deliver your natural gas and maintain the pipeline system that brings it to your home or business. You will continue to call COH (1-800-344-4077) or DEO (1-877-542-2630) for emergency repairs or gas leaks. For non-emergencies such as billing questions, service turn on or turn off, call COH (1-800-344-4077) or DEO (1-800-362-7557).

**24. This sounds complex. Is our community qualified to handle such a program?**

We have retained Community Energy Advisors, LLC., a PUCO certified broker of electricity and natural gas supply, to assist the County with the process.