



CUBFacts^{Natural Gas}

“Customer Select” – Making the Right Choice

What is “Customer Select”?

The “Customer Select” program allows Nicor Gas customers to choose an alternative company to supply their natural gas.

How does it work?

Traditionally, a utility buys gas on the market and uses its pipelines to deliver fuel to your home. The utility is supposed to sell the gas at the same price it pays, with no markup. Opting for Customer Select means you will still pay Nicor to deliver gas to your home, but you will pay a different company to buy and supply the actual gas. Unlike your utility, the rates and services of your new supplier will not be regulated or reviewed by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC).

Additional Products & Services	\$121.34
Supplier previous balance	198.20
Amount of 11/16/11 payment applied	-198.20
Gas Commodity Charge (0.684/Therm) 12/07/11	124.84
Admin Fee 12/07/11	1.50
Other supplier adjustments	-5.00
Total due ABC Supplier Inc.	121.34
ABC Supplier Inc. Billing Questions? Please call 1 800 555-5555.	

An alternative gas supplier's charges would appear on page 1 of your bill, under “Additional Products and Services”

Are there other charges?

Yes, and these charges will inflate the advertised price. Some suppliers charge a monthly fee. Also, Nicor Gas charges all program participants a per therm Balancing and Storage Adjustment fee. The charge helps cover “balancing” costs for maintaining appropriate pressure in Nicor’s pipes. (**Note:** The impact of this charge is lessened by a 2 cents per therm “Transportation Service Credit.”) Also, beware of an “exit” fee if you want to get out of your plan before the term of service ends. Companies may have an “opt-out period” during which a customer can exit without being penalized. Find out when that period begins and ends.

What gas consumer protections does Illinois have?

State law mandates that any customer signing up with an unregulated supplier on or after April 10, 2009...

- Has up to 10 days to cancel a contract once the supplier’s charges first appear on the gas bill without paying a cancellation penalty.
- Can’t pay a cancellation penalty higher than \$50.
- Must give consent, through a signature and a third-party verification process, before being signed up for a door-to-door offer.

Should I participate in Customer Select?

There’s no guarantee you’ll save money. In fact, CUB’s Gas Market Monitor, at www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org, shows that consumers are much more likely to lose money with unregulated gas companies. Remember, Customer Select is optional. If you don’t sign up, you will continue to be served by Nicor Gas, with rates regulated by the ICC. If you find Customer Select too confusing or too risky, you’re not alone.

Avoiding Natural Gas Scams:

- 1) Don’t sign up for any offer on the spot. You may be charged a hefty termination fee if you later want out.
- 2) Don’t give out your utility account number to any sales representative at your door or over the phone.
- 3) Don’t sign up for a new supplier until you compare the prices and terms of service with other companies, including your utility.
- 4) If you’re not interested in switching suppliers, ask your gas utility to put a block on your account, which will prohibit any unauthorized changes to your service.
- 5) If you don’t want unregulated gas companies to bother you with a sales pitch, get on your utility’s do-not-market list. Nicor customers should call **1-888-642-6748**.

Customer Select Prices as of February 15, 2017*

Compare the prices below with Nicor Gas' current 41¢ per therm variable rate.

*This is a snapshot of plans being offered. The rates and details of these offers can change often, even daily. Beware that plans may change drastically after the initial term. Customer Select participants pay an additional 2.07¢ per therm "Balancing and Storage Adjustment," which varies monthly, and receive a 2.11¢ per therm "Transportation Service Credit." Call a company to verify a rate, to get a plan in writing, and to find out what happens to that plan after the initial term. The rates only reflect the price of natural gas. Nicor Gas will continue to bill you for the cost of delivering gas to your home.

Company	Offer	Term	Fees
Ambit Energy 1-877-282-6248 www.ambitenergy.com	40.467¢ per therm variable rate (New customers get 5% off utility rate for first 2 months, then a 1% discount the rest of the term. Those who don't renew this plan after a year are put on a "roll-off" variable rate, which is 71.75¢ per therm this month.)	Monthly	No
Constellation 1-800-785-4373 www.home.constellation.com	43.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$50 Cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Constellation	44.9¢ per therm fixed rate	18 months	\$50 Cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Corn Belt Energy Corp. 1-866-806-3411 www.cornbeltenergy.com	35¢ per therm "Winter Protection Plan" variable rate	Monthly	No
Corn Belt Energy Corp.	42¢ per therm "Market-Advantage Plan" variable rate	Monthly	No
Direct Energy 1-866-910-3401 directenergy.com	45.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	No
Direct Energy	45.9¢ per therm fixed rate (44.9¢ per therm for military personnel only [Web Only])	18 months	No
Direct Energy	54.9¢ per therm fixed rate w/ Nest Thermostat	27 months	\$200 cancellation fee
IGS Energy 1-888-995-0992 www.igsenergy.com	45.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	No
IGS Energy	40.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$50 cancellation fee
IGS Energy	40.9¢ per therm fixed rate	18 months	\$50 cancellation fee
Just Energy 1-866-587-8674 www.justenergy.com	53.9¢ per therm fixed rate with 20% "green energy" option	36 or 60 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)

Company	Offer	Term	Fees
Just Energy	3.9¢ per therm fixed rate with 20% “green energy” option	12 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Nicor Advanced Energy 1-866-369-0911 nicoradvancedenergy.com	Lock 12, Flex, TruBalance plans (These plans are based on formulas known only to the company, so it is impossible to make an apples-to-apples comparison with Nicor Gas’ rates.)	Varies	Lock 12 and TruBalance charge a \$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill). Flex Plan has no fees.
Nicor Advanced Energy	50.1¢ per therm variable rate	Monthly	No
Nicor Advanced Energy	49.9¢ per therm “PriceGuard” fixed rate	12 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Nicor Advanced Energy	46.9¢ per therm “PriceGuard for Renters” fixed rate	11 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Nordic Energy Services 1-877-808-1022 nordicenergy-us.com	39.1¢ per therm variable rate	Monthly	No
NRG 1-855-674-7697 www.nrghomepower.com	33¢ per therm variable rate (3-month introductory rate.	Monthly	No
NRG	37¢ per therm variable rate (3-month introductory rate.	Monthly	No
NRG	43¢ per therm variable rate (3-month introductory rate.	Monthly	No
Realgy Energy Services 1-877-300-6747 www.realgyenergyservices.com	41¢ per therm variable rate	24 months	\$2.50 monthly fee, \$50 exit fee
Santanna Energy Services 1-800-827-0067 santannaenergyservices.com	40.9¢ per therm fixed rate	6 months	\$7.99 monthly fee, \$50 exit fee
Santanna Energy Services	39.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$7.99 monthly fee, \$50 exit fee
Spark Energy 1-877-228-9427 sparkenergy.com	44.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$4.95 monthly fee, \$50 exit fee
Spark Energy	52.5¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	No
Spark Energy	47.5¢ per therm fixed rate	24 months	No
Vista Energy Marketing, LP 1-888-508-4782 vistaenergymarketing.com	40.0¢ per therm variable rate	Monthly	No
Viridian 1-866-663-2508 www.viridian.com	45.33¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months 25% renewable	\$50 exit fee
Viridian	48.85¢ per therm fixed rate	36 months 25% renewable	\$50 exit fee

Company	Offer	Term	Fees
Viridian	45.08¢ per therm fixed rate	21 months 25% renewable	\$50 exit fee
Viridian	55.24¢ per therm fixed rate	1 month 25% renewable	\$50 exit fee
Xoom Energy 1-888-997-8979 xoomenergy.com	46.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Xoom Energy	49.9¢ per therm fixed rate	12 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Xoom Energy	47.9¢ per therm fixed rate	24 months	\$50 cancellation fee (10-day opt-out period after receiving first bill)
Xoom Energy	39.9¢ per therm fixed rate (3-month intro rate)	Variable	No