



Gas Competition in Illinois

A guide for Nicor customers

FACT SHEET

April 2023

**Nicor gas price for April:
45¢ per therm**

(Note: On your bill it's 0.45)

Can I choose another gas supplier?

Yes. Nicor Gas customers are allowed to choose another company (also known as an “alternative retail gas supplier,” or “ARGS”) to supply them with natural gas. Alternative suppliers sell their offers door-to-door, over the phone and through the mail—but also at community events and churches.

CUB gets a lot of reports about misleading marketing and bad deals. Such problems led Illinois to pass the HEAT Act, one of the nation’s toughest consumer-protection laws.

How does competition work?

Traditionally, Nicor buys gas on the market and uses the pipelines to deliver that gas to your home. But you can choose another company to supply you with gas.

If you choose another supplier, you still get a bill from Nicor—because the utility delivers the gas to you—and you still call the utility if your heat goes out. But a different company and its price will be listed on the “supply” section of your bill. (See the other side of this guide.)

Remember, Nicor’s supply price is often the lowest option. It is illegal for Nicor to make a profit off of what it charges you for supply. Alternative suppliers, on the other hand, can charge whatever they want.

Will I save money with another supplier?

There’s no guarantee you’ll save money with an alternative supplier. Since CUB started monitoring alternative supplier offers in 2003, the consumer group found that about 9 out of 10 offers are more expensive than the utility. If you don’t sign up with an alternative supplier, you will continue to be served by Nicor with rates regulated or reviewed by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC).

What consumer protections do I have?

Because of numerous problems in the market, Illinois passed the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency (HEAT) Act of 2019. Among other things, the new law:

WARNING:

In the current market, the regulated utility (Nicor) is probably your best choice.

- Stops suppliers from automatically renewing a contract from a fixed rate to a variable rate (a rate that changes monthly) and then increasing the price.
- Ends termination fees.
- Requires supplier marketing materials and utility bills to clearly state the utility’s current price.
- Makes it harder for suppliers to overcharge customers who get assistance through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- Requires telemarketing and in-person marketing to be conducted in a language the customer understands.

There are many more protections in the HEAT Act. If you have questions, please call CUB, 1-800-669-5556.



How to avoid gas scams

- 1) People may knock on your door or call you to say they’re from the “gas company” and can lower your bill. Don’t give out your gas bill or account number unless you’re sure you want to sign up for an offer. A dishonest sales representative can use your account number to sign you up without permission.
- 2) Find out what the company is charging and how that compares with the utility’s price. Is it a fixed rate (and if so, for how long) or a variable rate that changes monthly?
- 3) Ask if the rate is an introductory rate, how long it will last, and what the new rate will be. Your low price may disappear after a few months, causing your bill to skyrocket.
- 4) Ask if the plan charges a monthly fee. A \$10 monthly fee means you pay more than \$100 a year—without using any gas.

How do I know if I'm with an alternative supplier?

BEWARE: Even if you're with an alternative supplier, you will continue to get a bill from your regulated utility. People on a bad deal often tell CUB they had no idea they were with another company until their bill went up. Check your bill each month to see if an alternative supplier is listed.

- Look for another company listed under "A Message for You." A per-therm rate for the alternative supplier should be listed under "Additional Products and Services."
- Call the alternative supplier to end an offer. The name and number of the company should be listed on your gas bill. If you think you were fraudulently signed up, tell the supplier you want a refund.
- If you don't like the supplier's response, file a complaint with CUB, at 1-800-669-5556.

Nicor Gas*
An AGL Resources Company

nicorgas.com/myaccount
1 888 Nicor4U 1 888 642-6748

Account Summary

Account Number: [REDACTED]	Meter Number: [REDACTED]
Service Address: [REDACTED] Roselle	Bill Period: 12/02/15 - 01/04/16 (33 days)
Bill Issue Date: 01/07/16	Total Previous Balance \$21.40
Payment Received 12/29/2015 - Thank you	- \$21.40
Remaining Balance	\$0.00
New Charges - Utility	\$55.52
New Charges - Additional Products & Services	\$263.75
Total Amount Due by 01/29/2016	\$289.27

A Message for You

Your Customer Select supplier is **ABC Supplier Inc.** For questions relating to your natural gas cost, contact your supplier at: **1-555-555-5555**. If you have any questions regarding natural gas safety, call Nicor Gas at 1 888 642-6748.

Your safety is important to us. Ask to see an employee ID when our field team is working in or around your premises. Also, verify your account information with customer service before making a transaction over the phone.

Taxes \$4.12

Municipal Utility Tax for Roselle \$21.40 @ 5.15%	\$1.10
Utility Fund Tax \$21.40 @ 0.1%	\$0.02
State Gas Use Tax 125.11 @ \$0.024 =	\$3.00

Total \$25.52

Please see the reverse side of this bill for more information.

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Energy Profile

Usage CCF 12/1	BTU Factor 1.054	Therms 125.11	Avg. Daily Therms 2015 3.77	Avg. Daily Therms 2016 3.79
CCF x BTU Factor = Therms				
Monthly Therms Use				
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
65	70	75	80	85
70	75	80	85	90
75	80	85	90	95
80	85	90	95	100
85	90	95	100	105
90	95	100	105	110
95	100	105	110	115
100	105	110	115	120
105	110	115	120	125
110	115	120	125	130
115	120	125	130	135
120	125	130	135	140
125	130	135	140	145
130	135	140	145	150
135	140	145	150	155
140	145	150	155	160
145	150	155	160	165
150	155	160	165	170
155	160	165	170	175
160	165	170	175	180
165	170	175	180	185
170	175	180	185	190
175	180	185	190	195
180	185	190	195	200
185	190	195	200	205
190	195	200	205	210
195	200	205	210	215
200	205	210	215	220
205	210	215	220	225
210	215	220	225	230
215	220	225	230	235
220	225	230	235	240
225	230	235	240	245
230	235	240	245	250
235	240	245	250	255
240	245	250	255	260
245	250	255	260	265
250	255	260	265	270
255	260	265	270	275
260	265	270	275	280
265	270	275	280	285
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420	425	430	435	440
425	430	435	440	445
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445	450	455	460	465
450	455	460	465	470
455	460	465	470	475
460	465	470	475	480
465	470	475	480	485
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475	480	485	490	495
480	485	490	495	500
485	490	495	500	505
490	495	500	505	510
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1185	1190	1195	1200	1205
1190</				