

Energy company offers lower electric rates

BY VERA OLINSKI

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[Photos](#)



PHOTOS BY VERA OLINSKI Concord Energy Services Government Relations Vice President Wendy Molner listens to comments about the program.

OGDENSBURG — Concord Energy Services Government Relations Vice President Wendy Molner presented to the Ogdensburg Council, Aug. 28, how residents could save about 10 percent on their electricity bills.

Board of Public Utilities Government Representative Mark Logrippo introduced Molner and explained, after the energy market was deregulated in 1999, Concord Energy Services began managing a guaranteed third-party supplier program, sanctioned by the state. Logrippo also said the Board of Public Utilities oversees the utility companies in the state and functions as the “go-between” rate payers and utility companies.

Molner added, Concord is the state's energy consultant and manages about 40 municipal programs. She continued, depending on municipality size, many smaller towns pool together with other towns. Also, depending on auction results, she said, typically, residents save around ten percent.

Since energy deregulation, Molner said, each February, the state of New Jersey sets the rate for all residents through an auction. Concord Energy Services then competes to get a better rate for residents. She added, many huge energy companies purchase the power for the state of N.J.

The process required by the state, Molner continued, is for the borough to pass an ordinance; Concord Energy prepares and submits the paperwork to the Board of Public Utilities, Division of the Rate Council; an energy auction and selection of a winning bidder is completed; and Concord completes a whole outreach process to the residents, including town hall style meetings, senior visits, and mailings – all with input from the council.

Residents who participate in the program, she said, will be billed one flat rate throughout the entire term and have the ability to move in and out of the program, without penalty or cost.

Molner continued saying nothing changes; customers continue all current services, including: delivery, meter readings, billings, payments, and emergency services and questions through JCP&L. Residents also continue to receive one bill, she said, with the addition of a “basic generation service line,” identifying the winning supplier.

She and her team, Molner said, complete all outreach to the borough residents — never the third party. In addition, she said, tracking software is available, reflecting the residents' and Co-op.'s combined savings.

The mailings include opting out of the program, she said, and they have an instate call center in Butler, N.J. and will customize the website.

Before the conclusion of the two year contracts, Molner said – Concord meets with the third party

supplier to negotiate either meeting or beating the current rate and continuing the program. After the supplier is awarded the contract, there is an additional 30 day window for residents to opt out. Plus, the residents can decide at anytime to go in or out of the program - without penalty or cost.

Molner said the aggregation process is not available to: individual residents, another third party arrangement, or solar customers; it is only available to whole towns.

Recent success stories are Molner said: Passaic County Energy Cooperative with 7 towns; Linden/Morris area Cooperative: 7 towns; Burlington County: 10 towns; and Sussex/Warren: 7, with 2 more coming.

If the council decides to move forward, Molner said, she recommends moving to the Sussex/Warren cooperative. She explained, with more residents needing electricity, it makes the contract more attractive to the third-party supplier.

Molner concluded, they have collectively saved all the towns they represent and manage around \$6.3 million.