

Everything You Need to Know About **Choosing an Energy Plan**

+ A Checklist of 10 Energy Plan & Provider Must-Haves and Considerations



Introduction

Choosing an energy plan can be a tricky task full of complicated jargon and restrictions based on where you live and what you're looking for. But it doesn't have to be! This guide will provide a comprehensive overview of everything you need to consider when choosing an energy plan in your area. From understanding the different types of plans to understanding your energy needs as a homeowner, we have everything you need so you can choose the right plan for your energy goals.

The Importance of Choosing the **Right Energy Plan**

Choosing the right energy plan is an important decision that can affect your home. A good energy plan will ensure you are getting a competitive rate, as well as providing reliable service and access to the right energy options for your needs. By taking into account factors such as regulatory requirements, local availability, cost-effectiveness, and environmental impact, you can make an informed decision that works for you. But choosing the right energy plan doesn't have to be stressful.

What You'll Find in This eBook

- 1 Understanding the Difference Between Deregulated and Regulated Energy Markets
- 2 How to Assess Your Energy Needs
- 3 How to Compare Energy Providers
- 4 Understanding Different Types of Energy Plans
- 5 How to Navigate the Enrollment Process
- 6 Making the Transition to a New Energy Plan



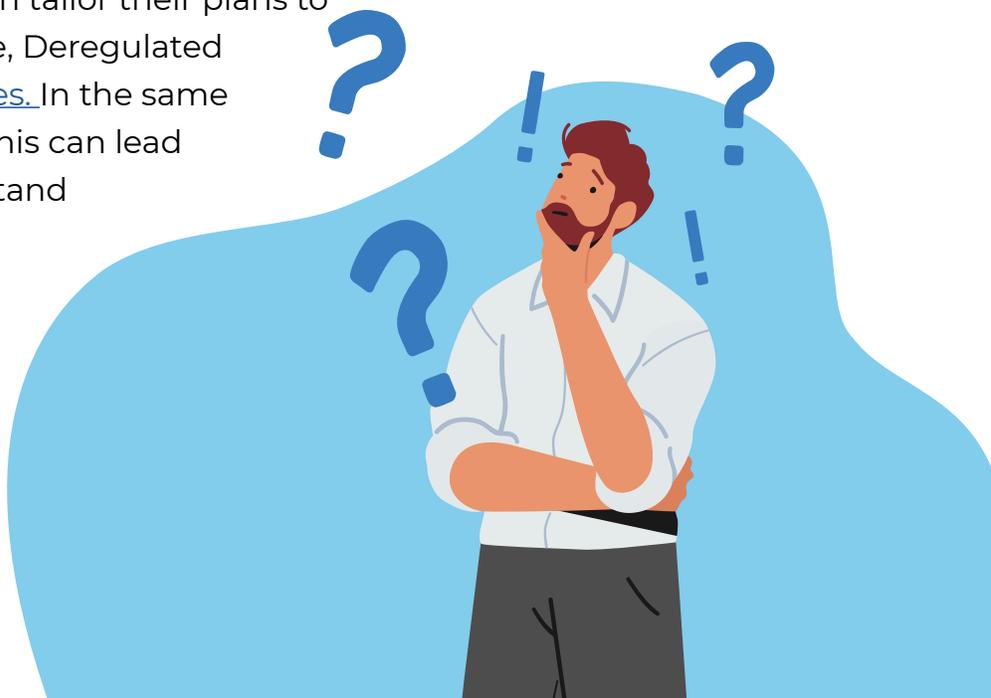
Section 1: Understanding Deregulated and Regulated Energy Markets

Before you can choose an energy plan, it is important to understand that each state within the U.S. is separated into [deregulated](#) and [regulated energy](#) markets. But what does this mean for those looking to choose an energy plan? In deregulated energy markets, consumers have access to multiple plans from different companies, giving them more control over their rate and plan options. In regulated energy markets, the prices of electricity and natural gas are set by either a state-level or regional authority. This means that consumers may have fewer options in terms of rate plans and suppliers, as well as limited control over their energy costs. If you want to learn more about the history of these markets, be sure to check out our article [here](#).

Regulated vs Deregulated Energy Markets: The Pros and Cons of Each Market Type

Regulated and deregulated energy markets each have their own set of advantages and disadvantages. It's important to understand these differences to make an informed choice for your energy needs. **Regulated energy markets** come with many pros like [stable energy prices](#), universal access, and simplified energy choices, even though those choices are limited. In the same way, [regulatory processes](#) in regulated markets can be slow; making it challenging for new energy technologies to be available.

On the other side of the coin, in **deregulated energy markets**, there is an [encouragement in competition](#) which can lead to potentially [lower energy prices](#). In the same way, deregulated markets offer consumers a wider [variety of energy plans](#) as well as customization so customers can tailor their plans to their energy goals. On the flip side, Deregulated markets can lead to [market failures](#). In the same way, with more choices in plans, this can lead to complexity and hard to understand price structures.



Section 2: Assessing Your Energy Needs

Assessing your energy needs and goals? Knowing how much electricity or natural gas you use on a regular basis will help you narrow down the right plan for your home. Most importantly, assessing your energy needs is the best way you can pick a plan that matches your lifestyle or values. For example, if you value doing good for the planet, consider choosing [Earth-Friendly options](#). Or maybe you've been using more energy than usual and need to find an [Unlimited Energy plan](#). All this and more can aid you in choosing an energy plan for you.

Analyzing your Household Energy Consumption

Gathering information on your energy usage can help you make an informed decision about which plan will work best in your home. You can start by looking at your utility bills over the past year to determine how much electricity or natural gas you use in a given month. Additionally, you should consider any changes that may have occurred in your energy needs since last year, such as the installation of new appliances or energy-efficient upgrades to your home.

In the same way, if you're planning on [moving to a new home](#) in a new region, do the work beforehand to find out the size of your house and [calculate how much your estimated energy usage will be](#). This will help you get a better understanding of which plan will suit your energy needs.

Identifying your Specific Energy Goals and Priorities

Once you have a better understanding of your energy needs, the next step is to identify your specific goals and priorities when it comes to choosing an energy plan. This could include factors such as cost-effectiveness, [environmental impact](#) or convenience. Once you have



identified what's important to you in an energy plan, you can narrow down your options to find the best plan for you and your family.

Considering the Seasonality of Energy Usage

The last thing you should be aware of when choosing an energy plan is to acknowledge that energy usage can be seasonal. In other words, depending on where you live, your energy needs may fluctuate throughout the year due to changes in temperature and weather patterns. Knowing this information can eliminate the element of surprise of higher energy bills during peak season in your area.



Average Monthly Electric and Natural Gas Bill by U.S. State (As of 2023)

State	Energy Bill	Natural Gas
Alabama	\$147.75	\$81
Alaska	\$133.89	\$164
Arizona	\$131.35	\$82
Arkansas	\$123.69	\$65
California	\$123.67	\$34
Colorado	\$91.96	\$47
Connecticut	\$156.21	\$107
Delaware	\$118.85	\$80

Florida	\$130.40	\$105
Georgia	\$134.11	\$118
Hawaii	\$177.78	\$122
Idaho	\$97.62	\$40
Illinois	\$95.86	\$97
Indiana	\$126.51	\$122
Iowa	\$109.63	\$73
Kansas	\$115.53	\$106
Kentucky	\$124.67	\$94
Louisiana	\$131.37	\$55
Maine	\$99.44	\$104
Maryland	\$127.62	\$80
Massachusetts	\$136.37	\$77
Michigan	\$117.57	\$74
Minnesota	\$104.76	\$55
Mississippi	\$135.31	\$63
Missouri	\$118.55	\$108
Montana	\$97.84	\$37

Nebraska	\$108.09	\$68
Nevada	\$110.17	\$56
New Hampshire	\$125.24	\$90
New Jersey	\$112.39	\$66
New Mexico	\$87.31	\$96
New York	\$116.70	\$96
North Carolina	\$120.68	\$63
North Dakota	\$112.93	\$62
Ohio	\$112.21	\$148
Oklahoma	\$119.69	\$71
Oregon	\$106.49	\$32
Pennsylvania	\$117.11	\$103
Rhode Island	\$130.40	\$95
South Carolina	\$138.65	\$96
South Dakota	\$124.50	\$50
Tennessee	\$130.98	\$66
Texas	\$132.40	\$61
Utah	\$80.87	\$35

Vermont	\$109.24	\$89
Virginia	\$130.92	\$80
Washington	\$99.45	\$33
West Virginia	\$129.61	\$80
Wisconsin	\$100.18	\$77
Wyoming	\$96.82	\$43

Section 3: Comparing Energy Providers

Comparing different suppliers will help you find the plan that best fits your needs and budget. It's important to consider factors such as rates, fees, customer service, green initiatives, and more when evaluating each provider.

Researching and Identifying Reputable Energy Companies

When researching and identifying reputable energy companies, it's important to identify different suppliers in your area. Make sure you read customer reviews and check for any complaints filed with your state's [Public Utility Commission](#) or even the [Better Business Bureau](#) to make an informed decision on which provider is right for you. Additionally, you should compare rates to ensure you are getting the most competitive rate available.

In some cases, energy providers show their [commitment to social responsibility](#) by actively engaging in causes that align with the values of their customers. In some ways, simply [choosing an energy plan can support these causes](#). If supporting such initiatives resonates with you, it's a significant factor to consider in your decision-making process.

Finally, consider calling your potential energy suppliers and be sure to ask questions about any fees or surcharges associated with the plan you're considering.

Evaluating Pricing Structures and Contract Terms

When evaluating pricing structures and contract terms, you should pay attention to any introductory rates. Additionally, consider whether the energy provider offers a rewards program, as this can provide you with added benefits like gift cards, giveaways, and discounts. You should also look for clauses regarding early termination fees or contract cancellation fees. Carefully reviewing all of the terms and conditions associated with a plan will help you avoid any unexpected charges or fees.

Section 4: Types of Energy Plans

When it comes to energy plans, there are a variety of options available for consumers. From fixed-rate plans and variable-rate plans to green energy plans and prepaid options, there are many different types of energy plans that can fit your needs. Knowing the differences between these types of plans can help you make an informed decision when selecting the best option for your home.

Fixed-Rate Plans

A [fixed-rate energy](#) plan is an energy plan that provides customers with a rate that does not change for a specified period of time. This type of plan offers customers the stability of knowing what their costs will be for the duration of the agreement. Fixed-rate plans are ideal for budgeting and long-term planning for energy expenses. Fixed-rate energy plans are also beneficial to those who are looking to lock in a low rate for a long period of time and avoid rising energy rates.

Variable-Rate Plans

A variable rate energy plan is an agreement between the energy provider and customer that allows for fluctuating rates based on market conditions. This type of plan can be beneficial to customers who are prepared to take advantage of lower rates when they become available, but they also come with some risk since there is no guarantee that prices won't increase over time. Variable rate plans are best suited for households with flexible energy needs and budgets.



Earth-Friendly Energy Options

Earth-friendly energy options are a great way to help protect the environment while also getting the sources you need to [heat](#) and [energize](#) your home. In some cases, earth-friendly options typically involve installing renewable energy sources such as solar panels. Luckily, most earth-friendly energy providers don't require special equipment you need to install to get your energy.

Unlimited Energy Plans

Perhaps most uniquely of all, some energy providers offer [unlimited energy](#) plans. Think of it like this, much like an unlimited cell phone plan, you simply pay the same supply cost every month no matter how much you use*. Cold winter? Turn up the heat. Hot Summer? Crank the air, and you still won't be surprised by your bill.

Section 5: Navigating the Enrollment Process

Once you've selected an energy plan, now it's time to enroll! Navigating the enrollment process for an energy plan can be daunting, but it doesn't have to be. To make it easier, you should start by gathering all relevant information about your energy needs and preferences before contacting a potential provider.

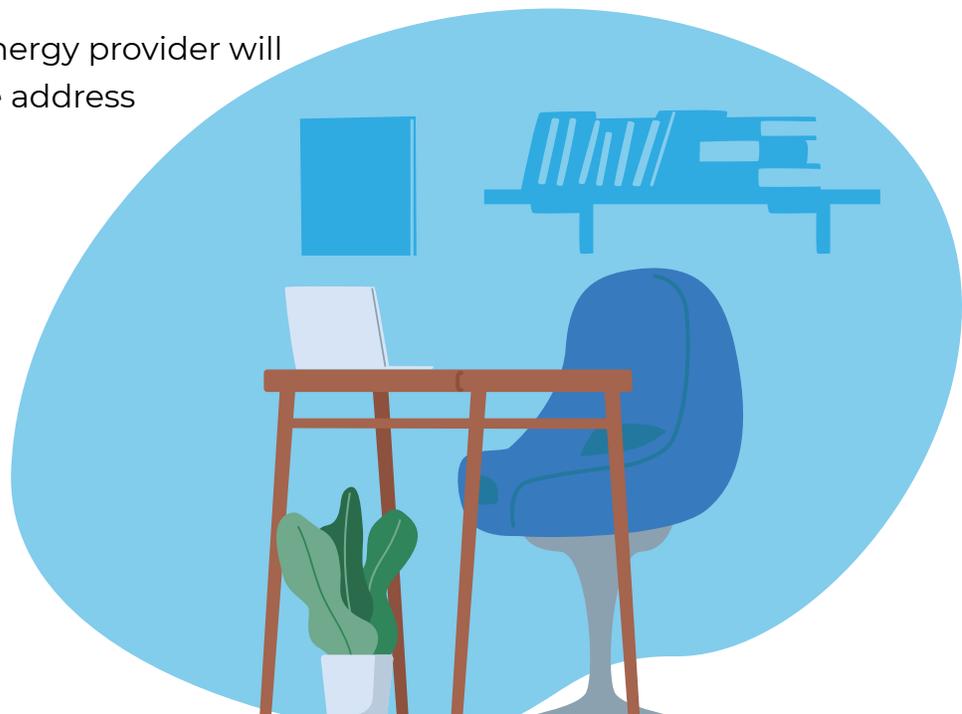
How to Enroll in an Energy Plan

Depending on your provider and what your energy needs are, your enrollment process will vary.

1 Enter your Address

In most instances, your potential energy provider will begin by requesting your complete address through their website.

* Restrictions apply. Enrollment based upon program eligibility. Customers using more than 125% of normal monthly usage as determined by Santanna may be required to switch plans.



You don't need to be concerned about sharing this information, as energy providers employ specialized algorithms that utilize your address to retrieve the most precise pricing and plans tailored to what you might need, with no other purpose.

If you still don't feel comfortable entering your whole address, most providers allow you to enter your zip code instead!

2 Choose your Energy Plan

Once you've entered your info, you'll be provided with an abundance of choices to choose from! No need to get overwhelmed, be sure to do your research beforehand so you can go in knowing exactly what you want.

Keep in mind, if you're looking for both an electricity and gas plan, some providers offer bundle options. This can help you minimize your enrollment process in the long run!

If you're still feeling overwhelmed by your options, most providers come equipped with call center associates who are happy to answer any questions you may have about your choices.

3 Enter your Contact Information

Once you've chosen the plan most relevant to your needs, you'll be asked to put in basic contact information like your name, phone number and email. Be sure to double check that the email you've entered is correct; this is where you'll get your enrollment confirmation.

4 Enter your Utility Information

Next, you'll be asked to enter your utility info. One of the most important pieces of information you'll need for this step is your [UAN](#) (Utility Account Number). If you're moving to a new house for the first time and don't have a UAN, contact the city you're moving to and [register for utility services](#).

If you're switching energy providers, you can find your UAN information by logging



into the account linked to your provider or printed on your most recent energy bill. Providing your UAN allows your provider to connect your information to your correct household so you can begin receiving your energy.

5 Confirmation!

Be sure to check your spam! After you've provided your information, the last thing you need to do is confirm your order. Once you've done so, you'll receive a confirmation email verifying your order and which plan you've selected. Most providers will take care of your service transfers and billing for you!

Section 6: Making the Transition to a New Energy Plan

Transitioning to a new energy plan can be a seamless process if you plan and do your research ahead of time. Embracing new energy plans often provides access to innovative technologies and services that can enhance energy efficiency and overall convenience.

Contract Cancellation Policies

If you're switching energy plans or providers, it's important to note the contract cancellation policies and any fees associated with early termination. Many providers allow customers to cancel their contracts without penalty if they switch to another provider within a certain amount of time. Before signing on with a particular provider, be sure to research their cancellation policies and associated fees so you are not surprised by any unexpected charges.

In most cases, you won't have to worry about canceling your provider on your own, your [utility company can help you switch your energy provider](#) and can do the cancellation for you at no extra cost.



Installation and Setup of Energy Equipment as Needed

It's important to note that if you're moving into a new home or transitioning to something like solar energy, you'll need time for equipment set up before you can reap the rewards of your energy provider. We recommend [transferring your utility services one month before you move](#) and allowing at least [30-42 days \(about 1 and a half months\)](#) to install solar panels from the initial meeting to the actual installation.

If you are switching to a conventional energy provider that uses the same energy sources and infrastructure as your previous one (e.g., both providers rely on fossil fuels), there may be no need for special equipment installation. But it's a good idea to check your heating and electrical equipment before you switch just to double-check if you need any necessary updates before you officially transition to a new provider.

Monitoring Your Energy Usage and Savings

Switching to a new energy provider shouldn't stop you from saving energy and money! If you really want to monitor your energy usage and identify gaps of where you can save more, many energy providers offer monthly usage email updates or online portals that allow you to track your consumption and costs in real-time, providing valuable insights into your usage patterns. Additionally, consider conducting periodic energy audits to identify areas where you can further improve efficiency and reduce consumption. Understanding how your energy needs change can help you determine if your energy provider is right for you or if there needs to be adjustments.



Conclusion

In the end, choosing an energy plan doesn't have to be stressful. With the right research and choosing to be well informed about your energy needs, you'll have the right tools to choose an energy plan that is right for you.

Key Takeaways

1. Choosing the right energy plan isn't just about saving money; it's about finding the right plan for your energy goals.
2. Be sure to know if you live in a deregulated or regulated energy market. This will determine which energy plans and providers you can qualify for.
3. Be sure to assess your energy needs before you select a plan that fits your lifestyle and energy needs. Knowing how much electricity or natural gas you use on a regular basis will help you narrow down the right plan for your home.
4. Do your research on the different types of energy plans out there and elevate which one is most important to you.
5. Be sure to monitor your energy usage to determine if you've picked the right plan and provider.

If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed by the information presented and are uncertain about what to prioritize when choosing an energy plan, we're here to assist you. Take a look at our handy checklist outlining the key factors to consider when selecting an energy plan and provider.

We want to thank you for taking the time to explore and absorb the insights within this eBook. We hope that the knowledge you've gained from this guide serves you well in making decisions that align with your energy goals and needs.

10 Energy Plan and Provider **Must-Haves** and Considerations

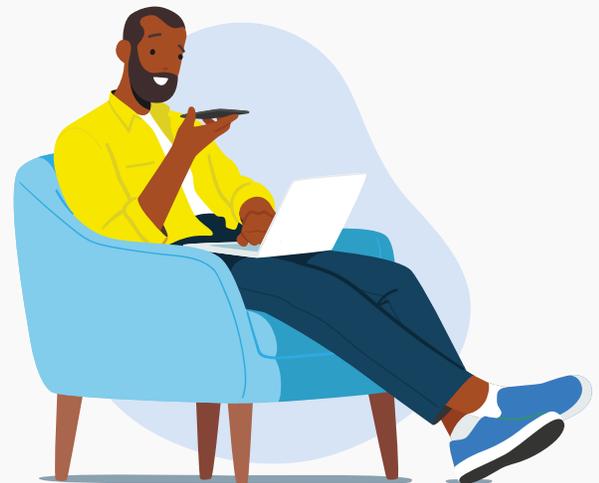
Your Energy Plan...

- is within your monthly budget.
- aligns with your lifestyle.
- is available in your area.
- doesn't require any additional equipment set up.



Your Energy Provider...

- has plans that can make an environmental impact.
- donates to causes that resonate with you.
- has more than a 4.5/5 star rating on Google and more than 1000+ reviews.
- has excellent customer service available to answer questions about your plan.
- has a rewards program that offers discounts, gift cards and more.
- has a variety of plan options such as fixed-rate & unlimited energy to fit your energy needs.



About Santanna

At Santanna Energy Services, we believe in creating life-long relationships by providing quality service to our customers, communities, and employees. With over 35 years of experience in the energy industry, we're committed to helping our customers make smart, sustainable energy choices.

Our mission is to provide reliable, affordable, and environmentally responsible energy solutions that help our customers save money and reduce their environmental impact. We offer a range of energy products and services, including natural gas, electricity, and earth-friendly options, designed to meet the unique needs of our customers in [Ohio](#), [Illinois](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Michigan](#), and [Indiana](#).

