



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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City to Idle Natural Gas Aggregation Program, Participants to Return to Columbia SCO Rates

<Urbana, Ohio, September 20, 2020> The City of Urbana will idle the natural gas aggregation program at the conclusion of the current term set to expire at the end of this November. Participants in the City's natural gas aggregation program will be returned to Columbia Gas of Ohio's Standard Choice Offer (SCO). The City is sighting lack of savings as the primary reason behind not extending the current natural gas aggregation program.

"The primary benefit of any aggregation program is the bulk purchasing power leading to maximum savings for participants in the program," Urbana Mayor Bill Bean stated. "Our aggregation consultant has advised us that at this time savings are not present on natural gas, and recommended we idle the program and return residents back to lower rates available from Columbia's SCO program."

Voters in Urbana approved both electric and natural gas aggregation referendums in May of 2018. The City has used Affordable Gas & Electric (AGE) as their aggregation consultant. AGE helped the City negotiate a fixed natural gas rate through Volunteer Energy of \$0.405/Ccf for a 24 month term that began in December of 2018.

"At the start of the natural gas aggregation contract participants in the program saw savings over that first winter," said Jordan Haarmann, VP of Procurement for AGE. "As the program progressed and the market began to see an abundance of natural gas supply, the SCO rates began falling below our natural gas aggregation and eliminating those savings. During our recent round of negotiations for new rates to extend the program we did not find an offer that we felt confident would return savings to residents at this time."

Residents will not have to take any action on their own. At the end of the current contract, Volunteer Energy will drop the participants of the natural gas aggregation program automatically. Participants will then receive letters sometime in November from Columbia Gas of Ohio confirming their assignment back to the SCO supply rate.

The City's electric aggregation program is currently under contract with Dynegy Energy Services through December of 2021 with a fixed rate of \$0.0488/kWh.

For questions regarding the City's natural gas or electric aggregation residents may call the AGE's offices at 618-203-8328.