

# EnergyCentral



## **Bills issued for customers impacted by Columbia Utilities, Icon Energy**

Central Hudson has begun the process of issuing bills to customers who were previously enrolled with Columbia Utilities Power, LLC or with Icon Energy LLC for their energy supply. The process of issuing bills to impacted customers is underway and will be completed by Mid-November.

A Community Choice Aggregation program served by Columbia Utilities allowed several municipalities in Central Hudson's service area to purchase energy supply in bulk on behalf of residents within those communities. In July, the New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) ended Columbia's ability to participate in the New York Energy Market. Icon Energy, another supplier serving customers in Central Hudson's service area, was suspended from NYISO's energy market in June.

Because of these actions, customers who were enrolled in these programs were returned to full-service electricity supply from Central Hudson. These customers

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## **ENERGY PRICES**

# **HIGH ENERGY SUPPLY PRICES EXPECTED THROUGHOUT WINTER**



As the temperatures cool, and residents of the Hudson Valley begin to prepare for winter, Central Hudson is advising homes and businesses in the area to prepare for elevated energy supply costs that will have an impact on utility bills.

Based on current market conditions, Central Hudson is forecasting approximately a 13 percent increase in total electric bills and approximately a 33 percent increase in total gas bills for residential customers compared to last winter.

"We understand rising supply prices can create confusion and stress surrounding utility bills for our customers and we are working closely with our regulators to find ways to keep them as low as possible," said Anthony Campagiorni, Senior Vice President of Customer Services and Gas Operations. "We also urge our customers to take advantage of the resources available on our website. We offer a host of assistance programs and billing options that can help customers manage their accounts."

Leaders and energy experts, including Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York Independent System Operator

and the New York State Department of Public Service are warning residents to prepare for elevated energy supply costs throughout the winter months and are also advising residents to take steps to prepare.

Central Hudson does not own power generation and has not since New York deregulated the utilities in 2000. Since that time, Central Hudson and New York's other major utilities have purchased energy from third-party suppliers. These costs are not marked up and Central Hudson does not profit from them, meaning customers pay the same rates as Central Hudson for the energy they use.

Several international, national and regional factors are contributing to this market volatility:

- Unrest in eastern Europe continues to have a significant impact on energy markets world-wide.
- Locally, the closure of Indian Point last year increased the region's reliance on natural gas for power generation.

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## **EnergyCentral**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION OR TOPICS APPEARING IN THIS EDITION, CONTACT ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF MEDIA RELATIONS **JOE JENKINS**

PHONE ..... (845) 486-5840  
 EMAIL ..... JENKINS@CENHUD.COM

# Supply: Customers advised to prepare for elevated prices

- Central Hudson's storage inventory remains slightly ahead of plan, however, physical storage inventory levels in the U.S. and Northeast remain lower than last year and below the five-year average ahead of an anticipated cold winter;
- Supply and transportation pipeline constraints in the northeast continue to drive up prices during times of high demand;

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND BILLING PROGRAMS

Customers can help manage energy costs in various ways, such as implementing energy efficiency measures and manage bill impacts by exploring their billing options.

Low-cost and no-cost efficiency measures homeowners can take to help manage energy costs include:

- Insulating ducts and hot water pipes where they run through uninsulated areas, such as crawl spaces, and repairing leaks in the duct system;
- Adding insulation, particularly in the attic;
- Turning down thermostats (each degree saves up to three percent on energy use);
- Keeping radiators and heating ducts clear of furniture to allow heat to circulate freely; and/or
- Sealing air leaks with weather stripping and caulk, which can

save up to 10 percent on the use of heating fuels;

- Beware of using electric space heaters in lieu of a traditional home heating system. Space heaters can present safety hazards, and often require significant amounts of electricity to operate, drastically increasing usage and resulting in higher bills.

To avoid seasonal variations in energy bills, Central Hudson customers may enroll in the Budget Billing program. Budget Billing divides a household's average annual energy bill into 11 even monthly payments, with the 12th month's payment adjusted up or down to reflect actual usage and market prices. This program makes energy bills more predictable and can help in managing household budgets.

Customers may also wish to investigate fixed rate options for electric and natural gas supply offered by Energy Service Companies. Fixed rate options do not necessarily provide the lowest average annual cost but do serve as protection against market volatility and price spikes.

Payment assistance options are also available to qualifying customers. The federally funded Home Energy Assistant Program (HEAP) grants for the 2022-2023 season will be open for income-qualified residents on November 1. HEAP grant recipients also qualify for Central Hudson's monthly Bill Discount Program.

Central Hudson's Clean Energy Marketplace provides a resource for customers

## CENTRAL HUDSON FORECAST:

Approximately

# 13%

increase in total electric bills

# 33%

increase in total gas bills for residential customers

to learn about renewable energy options. Customers can save up to 10 percent on their utility bill while also investing in local clean energy projects. Residents and businesses may subscribe by visiting <http://CleanEnergyMarket.cenhud.com> to purchase a portion of the electricity produced by the project of their choice.

Other programs include Deferred Payment Agreements that help customers catch up by paying a past-due account balance in monthly installments, the Extra Security Plan which offers an extended billing due-date for qualified customers on a fixed income and the Good Neighbor Fund which provides last resort grants for families who have exhausted all other means of assistance. Learn more about Central Hudson's assistance programs by visiting [www.CentralHudson.com/Assistance](http://www.CentralHudson.com/Assistance). ✨

# Bills: Billing for Columbia, Icon Energy customers resumes

experienced delays in their billing due to unforeseen technical challenges that are now being resolved.

"We want to thank our customers for their patience and understanding as we worked to resolve technical issues that resulted in billing delays," said Anthony Campagiorni, Senior Vice President of Customer Services and Gas Operations. "We understand that these delays were a

source of stress for some of our customers and we will continue to devote significant resources to ensuring our customers receive accurate and on-time bills moving forward."

Former Columbia Customers will receive a bill through July 18, the last day of service with Columbia as the electric provider. Icon customers will receive a bill through June 14, the last day of service

with Icon as the electric supplier. These accounts will then be billed to-date with electric supply from Central Hudson. Customers will be charged for the supply rates at the time of usage, not the current supply rates.

For the latest information on Central Hudson's billing system transition, visit [www.CentralHudson.com/customer-service/customer-information-changes](http://www.CentralHudson.com/customer-service/customer-information-changes). ✨