

THE CURRENT



Energy news from around Philadelphia and beyond



Use Less, Pay Less

Regardless of what energy source you use to heat your home, the less you use, the less you pay. And as winter rolls in and temperatures drop, The Energy Co-op—because we are a nonprofit cooperative that works for its members—wants you to use less energy, not more. So, take a minute to read through our tips on saving energy dollars and conserving energy during the winter from our blog posts earlier [this year](#) and [in 2018](#).

And for those Energy Co-op members who participate in our RNG program, your commitment to a more sustainable energy future is never more dear than during the cold weather months. Not surprisingly, those who use gas to heat their homes incur the vast majority of their annual expense over the winter months. So, in addition to energy conservation, you might want to consider another way to reduce your winter gas bills further by signing up for budget billing with your gas utility, either [PECO](#) or [PGW](#). Utility budget billing programs let you spread the additional cost of higher-use months over the entire year, so you get more stability in your monthly energy bill costs.

These programs may or may not suit every member's needs. PECO, for example, requires those signing up for budget billing to do so for both RNG and electricity. Still, for some Energy Co-op members, these programs might be an effective way to better manage their household budgets while investing in our sustainable energy future.

Member Ambassadors - Class of December 2020

One of our newest Member Ambassadors, Richard Tchen, told us, “I’m no fan of PowerPoint-y Zooms, but Meryl’s prep, attentiveness, humor, and candor make these sessions truly wonderful.” Richard, together with Paul Eisenberg, Kaitlyn Kutschera, and Cathy Leonard, are the most recent graduates of our Member Ambassador training sessions conducted by Member Recruitment Lead, Meryl Sands.

The next Member Ambassador training, which covers the *what*, the *why*, and the *how* of sustainable, renewable energy in three one-hour Zoom meetings, will take place in March 2021. If you are an Energy Co-op member and interested in participating in that session, send Meryl an email at meryl@theenergy.coop or, better yet, register to attend our new Member Ambassadors’ Zoom graduation happy hour at 5:00 pm today, December 10th. Just [register here](#) and join us for a fun hour when you will meet other members and have the chance to learn more about your Energy Co-op.

Member-to-Member Webinar Series in 2021

Thanks to those of you who answered the call last month to volunteer or send us suggestions for The Energy Co-op’s new member-to-member Zoom webinar series next year. As noted in the item below, we love to talk and answer questions about sustainable energy. But we also like to listen and ask questions about sustainable energy too! So, if you or someone you know would like to present a webinar that relates to our mission to build a better, more sustainable Pennsylvania, please send an email to ron@theenergy.coop with a brief description of the topic you have in mind and your related credentials or experience. We’ll handle all the details from there.

Events in 2020

Despite the pandemic, The Energy Co-op has sponsored and presented a record number of events this year, mostly on Zoom, of course. We started the year—back when we could—meeting a few dozen members in-person at lunches and dinners. We presented at lifelong learning programs hosted in Wynnewood and at Temple University. Then, we celebrated Earth Month in April with Zoom webinars co-hosted by Clean Air Council, Weavers Way, and Philadelphia Energy Authority. We started hosting RNG webinars every month last spring and, later in the year, participated in panels hosted by the University of Pennsylvania and, again, Clean Air Council, before conducting two Member Ambassador training sessions in October and November.

December is no different. Our Meryl Sands will join others in presenting on renewable natural gas, or RNG, at the Association of Energy Engineers’ Philadelphia chapter meeting at noon today, December 10th. [Register here](#) to attend.

What's New in Sustainable Energy

Some think that U.S. federal government policy is the only way to advance the expansion of sustainable, renewable energy in our country. But check out this [Utility Dive article](#) about local mandates and initiatives around the nation. Cities and states have become the policy leaders in recent years, including right here in [Philadelphia](#). What's your city, township, or borough doing to accelerate our transition from finite energy sources to infinite, sustainable ones? We'd like to hear about it. Please send us news about your local government's latest actions to info@theenergy.coop.

And speaking of local, Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA) is partnering with a financial institution on the Affordable Multifamily Housing Program to provide several lending products as well as tailored guidance and resources for prospective partners. PEA and its partner offer assistance and financing solutions to help streamline the process of executing energy upgrades on affordable multifamily housing units. You can find more information about PEA's multi-family program as well as other PEA assistance for residential properties [here](#).

Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf's executive order, issued in October 2019, will lead to the Commonwealth joining the [Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative](#), or RGGI (sounds like "Reggie"). The public comment period on the proposed regulations implementing the order is now open. RGGI is a CO₂ budget trading program in which ten northeastern states participate. As we noted in [our blog post](#) earlier this year, RGGI is designed to slow the effects of climate change by cutting carbon emissions and driving investment in clean energy. Those interested can learn more about [how to participate in the public hearings scheduled this month and how to submit comments here](#).



THE ENERGY CO-OP

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