

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Mayor's Newton Update



Newton Power Choice

With the help of our Co-Directors of Sustainability, I just signed a new two-year Newton Power Choice contract for Newton electricity customers. The new contract will provide electricity that is 95% from renewable sources such as solar and wind, continuing to reduce significantly the City's carbon footprint.

This new contract increases the amount of renewable electricity (known as "Class 1 Recs") as the standard or default amount of "green" power for our Newton Power Choice electricity supply by another 11% from the 84% in our current contract up to 95%. This level is significantly higher than the State minimum required amount of Class 1 green power which is 22% this year, 24% in 2024, and 27% in 2025.

Newton Power Choice is our "municipal aggregation" program which allows communities to choose the electricity supplier for electricity customers, rather than having the local utility — Eversource, in the case of Newton — buy the electricity.

With Newton Power Choice, Eversource continues to deliver the electricity; customers continue to contact Eversource if their power goes out; and Eversource continues to bill them. The difference is that Newton now selects the *supplier* of the electricity for customers rather than leaving it up to the utility.

We went out to bid for this contract yesterday even though our current contract doesn't expire until January 2024. We concluded that an earlier power procurement would be advantageous for customers in terms of price. (Our current contract will remain in place until it expires.)

As always, we bid the contract competitively. We considered a variety of factors in making the decision about the contract length and the percentage of renewable power. Climate change is a dire threat to the planet, as we are learning increasingly every day. Equally true we know people are experiencing financial pressure.

Ninety-five percent green power, the standard or default level in our new contract, is the amount of green electricity customers will purchase automatically. Newton Power Choice will continue to offer our customers other choices:

- To opt up to 100% renewables (more expensive)
- To opt down to the amount of renewables mandated by the State (less expensive)
- To choose Eversource Basic Service rather than Newton Power Choice (currently more expensive)

There is never a fee associated with exercising any of these choices. You can exercise these options by calling 833-272-9592 or by going to newtonpowerchoice.com.

Please note: no action will be required of current Newton Power Choice customers. They will be enrolled in the parallel option under the new contract.

Additional Information

Here are the electricity prices under the new contract which starts January 2, 2024:

Standard: 17.18 cents/kWh

100% Green: 17.36 cents/kWh

Basic (only State-required amount of renewable power): 14.36 cents/kWh

For comparison, here are the prices under the existing contract (expires on January 1, 2024):

Standard: 13.5 cents/kWh
100% Green: 14.5 cents/kWh
Basic (only State-required amount of renewable power): 10.6 cents/kWh

Prices are going up. But, I want to emphasize that the price increase in the new contract (as compared to the existing contract) is almost entirely due to a 35% price increase in the non-green electricity power supply, and very little attributable to cost of the green power. (The voluntary Class 1 green RECs are only increasing in price by 0.014 cents, way less than a penny.) The cost of non-green electricity has increased in part because of the war in Ukraine.

Eversource's Basic Service prices change every six months for residential and small business customers and every three months for larger business customers. Typically, the Eversource prices are higher for the January-June period than the July-December period. Eversource's current January-June price is 25.8 cents/kWh for residential customers.

The median Newton customer uses 550 kWh of electricity per month (with most of Newton's residential customers' electricity usage amounts clustered around the median). This means that under the new contract the median Newton customer will pay these amounts for electricity:

Standard: \$94.49/month
100% Green: \$95.48/month
Basic (only State-required amount of renewable power): \$78.98/month

At the standard price, this is approximately \$20 more per month than the median customer is paying under the existing contract.

Do you want to be 100% green? Customers can opt up to 100% green for only \$1 per month more than they would pay at the standard price.

Newton at 95% "green" will continue to lead the Commonwealth with the Newton Power Choice program. Of the more than 50 cities and towns with municipal aggregation programs that provide electricity from renewable energy sources above the amount mandated by State law, none provides an amount of Class I renewable electricity comparable to the 95% in this new Newton Power Choice contract. The closest cities and towns are Acton, Brookline, and Lowell, at 66%,

69%, and 69%, respectively, all of which (like Newton) include next year's 24% State mandate.

For energy experts out there, please know that Newton's purchase of renewable power is entirely "Class I" Renewable Energy Credits, which is mostly wind and solar power. Also, Newton has specifically excluded biomass from its green power purchase.

Financial Assistance

If you are on a tight budget, there are opportunities for financial assistance with electricity bills. Customers with low incomes may qualify for Eversource's low-income rate, which provides a discount of approximately one-third. These customers may also qualify for a reduction in their electricity bills from Newton's low-income solar program. You can contact Eversource about payment plans and financial assistance programs at [eversource.com/residential/my-account/billing-payments](https://www.eversource.com/residential/my-account/billing-payments)

The best way to save money on your total energy expenditure is to reduce your use of energy. Learn more about how to save money and energy with a Mass Save Home Energy Assessment from Newton's partner Home Performance Contractor, [Endless Energy](#).



With Newton High School's 1953 Class Ambassador Pat Bibbo at their 70th Class Reunion. Pat is the identical twin brother of the late Tony Bibbo.

Shining a Spotlight on Gun Violence

This is a difficult week marking the one-year anniversary of a gunman murdering 19 children and two teachers at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas. In the last twelve months, 650 mass shootings have occurred in the United States, and more than 40,000 people have been killed by gun violence. Guns are the number one killer of children in our country.

(Photo: The City Hall Fountain tinted orange last year during Gun Violence Awareness Month.)

On Thursday, June 1, and for the entire month of June, the water in the fountain in front of City Hall will be tinted orange to spotlight gun violence and the need for sensible gun legislation.

Next Thursday evening, join the Newton Police, Newton Health and Human Services, and the Newton Gun Violence Prevention Collaborative for a Community Forum on Gun Violence Prevention, kicking off Gun Violence Awareness Month. Register [here](#) for the webinar which runs from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 1.



Congratulations to the Newton South & Newton North Class of 2023

As you graduate next week, I am moved by your resilience, compassion, and talent.

You grew up in a world filled with challenges ... You lived through a worldwide pandemic and all its ripples of disruption and disappointment. Gun violence has made active shooter drills a part of your lexicon. Hate crimes are escalating. Our climate is hurtling toward a dangerous tipping point. The economy is shaky.

Yet, what I see in this Class is remarkable. Students getting involved and speaking up. Students with the courage to stand out and be different. Students laughing and singing. Students caring.

You have shown Newton, time and time again, that you have resilience baked into your DNA.

Please celebrate your hard work, growth and accomplishments. You earned this moment. Celebrate with and take a moment to thank friends and family and the teachers who helped you along the way. Grasp tightly optimism and camaraderie, excitement and love of learning as you leave Newton North and Newton South.

The hard-earned resilience you carry with you as the Class of 2023 will serve you well. Know that no matter the obstacles you will inevitably face, you have the grit to move forward.

Know, too, that your community here in Newton, your foundation, your soft landing, will be rooting for you.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Join me and the Newton Human Rights Commission at City Hall on Thursday, June 1 at 5:30 p.m. to **raise the Pride flag** and support our LGBTQ+ community. Our Pride flag flies through the month of June as a symbol of the spirit of inclusivity, pride, unity and celebration for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer people in our community.

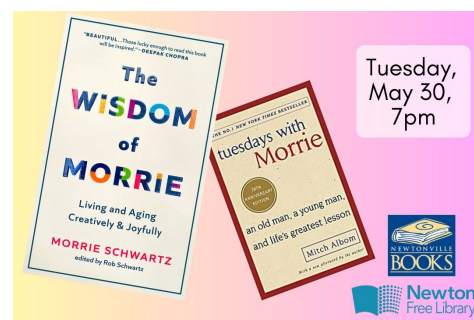




P.P.S. Newton has many hundreds of gas leaks that NGrid has not yet repaired. Gas is explosive, pollutes our air, can kill our trees, and drives climate change. We all can help reduce the risk, the pollution, the waste, and the cost of gas leaks. Follow the motto: **Smell Gas? Act Fast!** The "rotten egg" smell is a warning to leave the area or the building and call National

Grid's Gas Leak Emergency Line at 1-800-233-5325 or 911. More information on gas leaks is available from National Grid [here](#).

P.P.P.S. Join Rob Schwartz, son of former Newton resident, Morrie Schwartz, the beloved subject of the bestseller *Tuesdays with Morrie*, for a talk about Morrie's posthumously published book, *The Wisdom of Morrie*. Before becoming ill with ALS, Morrie wrote a manuscript on aging joyfully and creatively. Rob edited the work and added essays to fill the book with insights, stories, anecdotes, and advice told in Morrie's timeless voice. The event is in person on Tuesday, May 30, at 7:00 p.m. at the Newton Free Library, 330 Homer Street. Register [here](#).



P.P.P.P.S. A puppet show and boxing exhibition, a Beatles tribute band and lots of great food (The Don BBQ, DePasquale Sausages and Uncle Joey's Cannoli) are all part of the fun at **Nonantum Village Day** on Sunday, June 4. Festivities are from 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Coletti-Magni Park, 386-392 Watertown Street between Adams and Chapel Streets.

P.P.P.P.P.S. Newton's Cultural Development staff is bringing us another summer of [Artful Pianos](#) – the beautifully painted pianos in parks and public spaces across Newton. With the generous support of sponsors Newton Community Pride and M. Steinert & Sons, nine pianos have been transformed into works of art. Congratulations to the talented group of artists: Jacob Ginga, Leslie & Grey Held, Katie Hu, Sasha Kuznetsova, Stephanie Li, Sherwin Long, Melissa



Constant Contact

Pandina, Jill Strait, Deanna Tartaglia and Nell Valle. Want to plan a community event around a piano? Email culture@newtonma.gov – we would love to join you and help spread the word.

P.P.P.P.P.S. Stop by Historic Newton's Mary Morganti's Annual Plant Swap

when dozens of local gardeners share the bounty of their spring gardens. Gardeners will also be on hand to share information on taking care of and starting a garden.

No need to bring your own plant in order to take one home, but bringing pots or plant trays is recommended. Kids are welcome and can learn the basics of the Native American Three Sisters planting system. Stop by Saturday, June 10, 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds, 286 Waverley Ave. (Participants can drop off plants at Durant-Kenrick on the day before the event, Friday, June 9, between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m.) Find more information about the swap [here](#).



Previous P.S.s Happening Soon

P.S. Memorial Day Weekend events:

- Sunday, May 29, meet at Forte Park, 235 California St. at 9:00 a.m. to join the family of Richard J. Forte who died while serving in Vietnam. We will then proceed to bridges and memorials to honor other Newtonians who made the ultimate sacrifice.
- Sunday, May 29, at 3:00 p.m. the Newton Memorial Day Parade begins at Newton North High School, 457 Walnut St., crosses over the Mass Pike onto Watertown Street and ends at Coletti-Magni Park in Nonantum. (It's

lot's of fun with horses, superheroes, antique cars, 8 live bands including the North End Band and a steel band and much more.)

- Monday, May 30, the Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony begins at 10:00 a.m. at the Newton Ceremony near the front entrance.



Mayor Ruthanne Fuller | 1000 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA 02459

[Unsubscribe jmulvey@newtonma.gov](mailto:jmulvey@newtonma.gov)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by rfuller@newtonma.gov powered by



Try email marketing for free today!