

Mayor's Update



Excellent News for Newton Electricity Customers

We're hearing a lot about high energy prices, but thanks to Newton Power Choice, our electricity prices here in Newton are an exception.

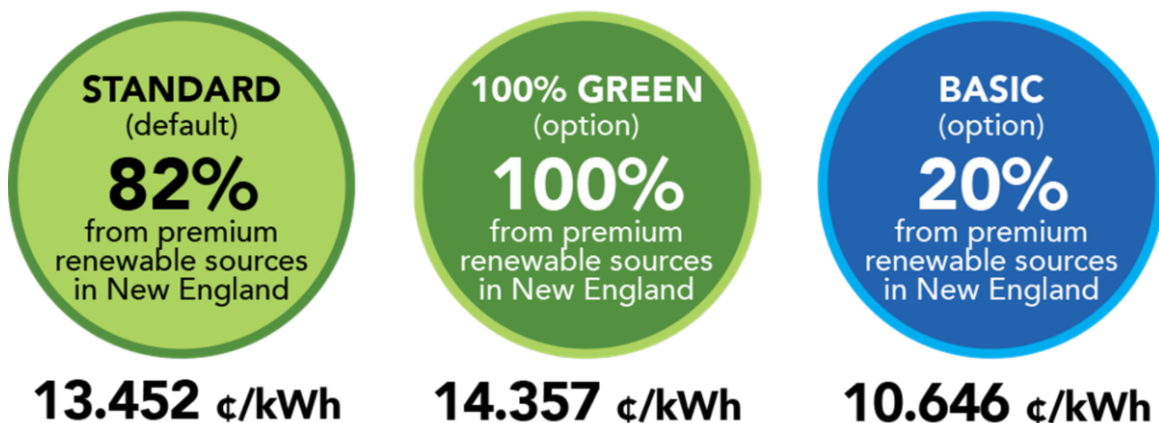
If the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities approves Eversource's recent rate proposal, the price for Eversource Basic Service electricity for residential customers for January 1 through June 30, 2023 will be 25.6 cents per kWh. That is a 62% increase compared to last winter's Eversource Basic Service rate of 15.8

cents per kWh.

Participating in our Newton Power Choice program will be much less expensive.

At the Newton Power Choice default rate (which includes 82% renewables), the median person will save approximately \$67 per month, or \$400, over the next six-month period, as compared to Eversource Basic Service.

For comparison, here are the Newton Power Choice residential rates (through January 2023) compared to Eversource's proposed **25.6 cents/kWh** rate:



This is how the savings break down for the median Newton residential customer who uses 550 kWh per month. The savings are even greater for customers who use more electricity.

Savings from Newton Power Choice (NPC) vs. Eversource

NPC	NPC rate per kWh	Eversource rate per kWh*	Savings per kWh	Savings per month	6 month savings
Basic	\$ 0.106	\$ 0.256	\$ 0.150	\$ 82.25	\$ 493.48
Default	\$ 0.135	\$ 0.256	\$ 0.121	\$ 66.81	\$ 400.88
100%	\$ 0.144	\$ 0.256	\$ 0.112	\$ 61.84	\$ 371.02
*Eversource basic service rate					

What Is Newton Power Choice?

Newton Power Choice is the City’s electricity supply program for our residents and businesses. The program is a form of group electricity purchasing known as electricity aggregation. Our program provides an opportunity for Newtonians to significantly increase both their own and our community’s investment in clean energy. As an added benefit, it allows us to lock in stable electricity prices so that Newton residents are not impacted by dramatic price increases like the one this upcoming winter from Eversource.

With Newton Power Choice, Eversource delivers the electricity; customers continue to contact Eversource for power issues; and Eversource continues to do the billing. The difference with Newton Power Choice is that the City of Newton selects the supplier of the electricity for customers rather than leaving it up to Eversource.

The City of Newton has been the leader in the State in choosing the highest percentage of renewables of any city or town’s electricity aggregation program since signing the first Newton Power Choice contract in November 2018. Our current Newton Power Choice contract includes 82% local renewable sources such as wind and solar as the Standard/Default for our electricity supply.

By State law, Eversource’s prices change every six months, so future savings from Newton Power Choice *cannot* be guaranteed. You can, however, switch from Newton Power Choice back to Eversource Basic Service at any time, without any fee.

Learn more about Newton Power Choice and consider opting up to 100% green electricity [here](#).

Welcome to Newton

Director of Senior Services Mignonne Murray

Please join me in welcoming Mignonne Murray to Newton as our new Director of Senior Services.

Mignonne is an extremely well qualified professional with experience in social and recreational services and facilities for older residents. She comes to Newton from Weston where she has been the Executive Director of the Council on



Aging/Senior Services for the past six years. Prior to that, she worked in Auburn as the Executive Director of the Senior Center & Elder Affairs Division, and in Natick as the Assistant Director & Program Director for the Council on Aging and Human Services Department. (In Natick, she coordinated the move of the Senior Center to a temporary location while the town built its new Community-Senior Center; she then coordinated the move into the new facility and helped develop the policies, procedures and operations at the new site.)

Her experience will be invaluable as we have transitioned Senior Services into satellite locations while a new senior center is built at 345 Walnut Street in Newtonville. The new facility, which we've been calling NewCAL, will open in late summer or early fall 2024 with a new, "forever" name (still to be determined!).

Mignonne lived and worked here in Newton in the early 2000's, serving as the Resident Services Coordinator for three years for the Newton Housing Authority.

"This is an incredible opportunity to come back to Newton at a time when so many phenomenal things are happening," Mignonne said.

She brings so much to Newton. Mignonne is passionate about serving older residents and fostering an age-friendly community. She is curious, involved deeply in the Massachusetts Council of Aging, and continuously looking for best practices. She's warm, upbeat and energetic. She has a long history of working collaboratively across departments.

I look forward to Mignonne joining us Monday, Jan. 9. She takes the baton from Jayne Colino who is retiring after 32 years. "Jayne has always been a mentor; someone I have kept in my professional life as a benchmark. She has been such a leader in the field," Mignonne noted.

Director of Transportation Planning Josh Ostroff

I'm happy to welcome Josh Ostroff to the City of Newton as our new Director of Transportation Planning within our Planning Department.

(Photo: Josh Ostroff with a bike sculpture dedicated in his honor along a rail trail in Natick.)

Josh has a strong background in transportation at both the state and municipal levels. In his most recent position, Josh served as Interim Director with Transportation for Massachusetts, a statewide transportation coalition.



He is passionate about addressing traffic congestion, traffic calming, reliable and accessible public transit, shared ride services (e.g., NewMo and bikeshare), and safe and healthy walking and biking.

A resident of Natick, he served for 10 years as an elected member of the five member Natick Board of Selectmen and after that, as a volunteer, chaired Natick's Transportation Advisory Committee. He believes deeply in civic engagement and including the voices of residents, employees and employers in planning efforts.

Josh's background will serve us well as he starts right in on major transportation planning initiatives in Newton including a pilot roadway redesign for Washington Street and a city-wide bicycle/pedestrian master plan.

Newton in Motion, or NewMo, Expanding Again

In response to your feedback, we just added a 9th vehicle to the fleet and extended service hours for seniors. We also traded in two for fully electric vehicles.

Since adding an 8th vehicle in June, demand has continued to increase, and we've seen wait time continuing to increase. In response, we've added a ninth vehicle to the fleet and brought on more drivers to keep within the 20-minute waits for which we strive. (A tip for those with a flexible schedule. Demand is highest in the afternoon, so for the shorter wait times, ride in the morning.)

We've also extended NewMo service hours for seniors. Older residents can now take NewMo Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. (from the previous 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).



(Photo: A new fully electric Kia Niro.)

Our first two fully electric Kia Neros are also now in the fleet making NewMo one of the first shared ride systems to use electric vehicles. Over the next year or so, we hope to transition to an almost fully electric fleet. (We'll continue to use the two

gas-powered wheelchair accessible vans until good EV models of those are available.)

Help us get even better. Whether you've taken NewMo once or rely on it regularly, let us know what you think of the experience. Take our survey at surveymonkey.com/NewMo by Friday, Dec. 9.

Haven't taken a ride yet? NewMo can provide rides from anywhere in Newton to anywhere in Newton at modest cost. Learn more at newtonma.gov/newmo.



A big high-five to Oak Hill Middle School 7th grader Lucy T. She collected 376 pounds of trash from Newton's Parks as part of her Bat Mitzvah community project. Lucy rallied her friends to help with the weekend clean-ups, picking up 123 pounds of trash at Albemarle Field alone.

(Photo: Lucy collecting trash at Bullough's Pond.)

Voting in Newton on Nov. 8: How and How Many?

In Newton, the overall voter turnout on Nov. 8 was 61%, or 35,513 of the City's 60,329 eligible voters. Turnout in our neighbors range from Boston at 40%, Brookline 54%, Watertown 55%, Waltham 56%, Weston 60%, Wellesley 62% and Needham 64%, according to figures provided by the Globe.

Of those Newtonians who voted, 48% cast ballots in person on election day, 44% mailed in their ballots or dropped them in the secure ballot boxes at City Hall, and 8% cast their ballots in person at City Hall during the two-week early voting period.

Most voters statewide also chose to vote in person on election day (55%), with 37% voting early by mail and 8% voting early in person.

In Newton, the highest voter turnout at 68% was in Ward 5, Precinct 3, the neighborhood to the east of Chestnut Street in Newton Centre between Commonwealth Avenue and Beacon Street. The lowest turnout was in Ward 7, Precinct 3, which is Boston College, where 27% of eligible voters cast ballots.

Interested in seeing how many voted in your ward and precinct? Find the information by scrolling down [here](#).

COVID-19 Boosters Ages 5+

Newton Health and Human Services is again partnering with Holtzman Medical Group to offer the updated, bivalent COVID-19 booster vaccines.

Our free clinics are open to anyone ages 5+ and will offer both Pfizer (ages 5+) and Moderna (ages 6+) boosters. Anyone who has completed a primary vaccine series is eligible to receive this booster at least 2 months after their last COVID-19 vaccine or booster. People who recently had COVID may consider delaying the booster by 3 months from symptom onset or positive test. (Learn more about the booster vaccine [here.](#))

All clinics will be held at the Newton Free Library (330 Homer Street) in the Druker Auditorium.. Clinics are by appointment only. Make an appointment at holtzmanmedical.org/covid19

Clinics will be held on:

Thursday, Dec. 15, 3: 00 to 6:00 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 19, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

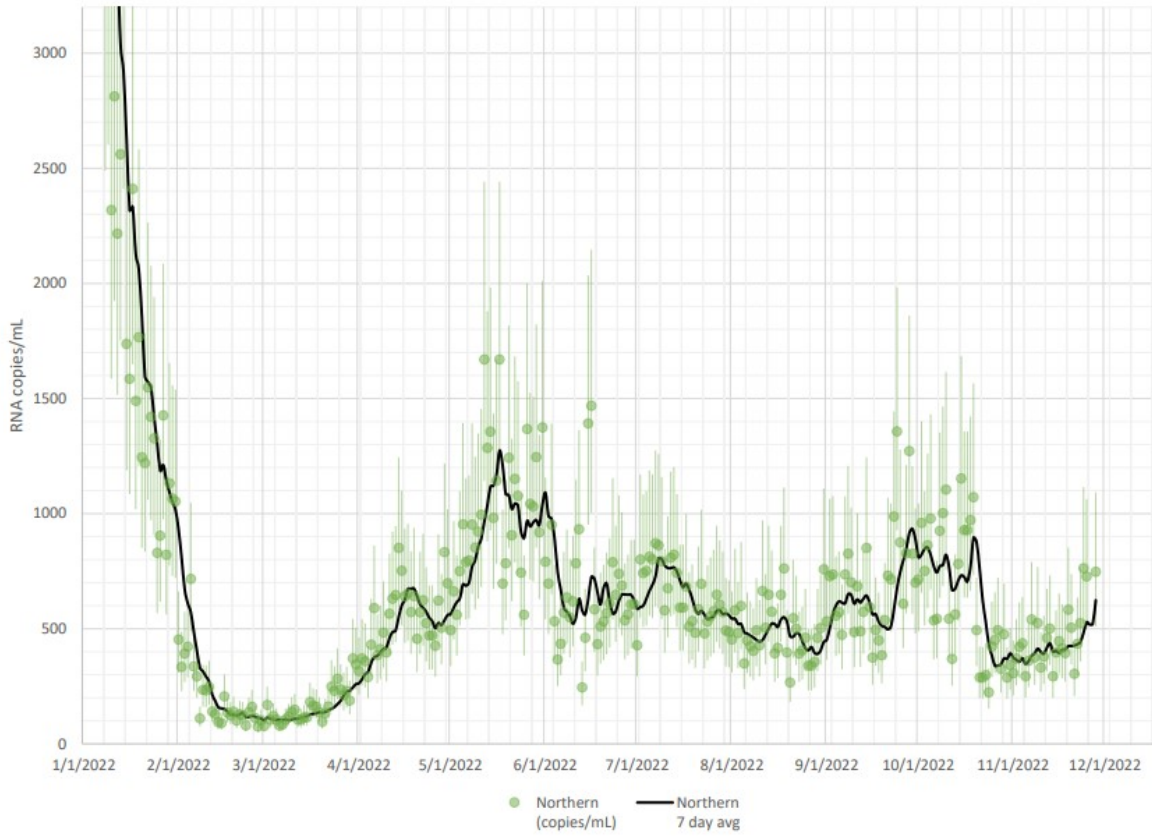
Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Can't make it to one of these clinics? Check vaxfinder.mass.gov for locations in and around Newton to get a vaccine.

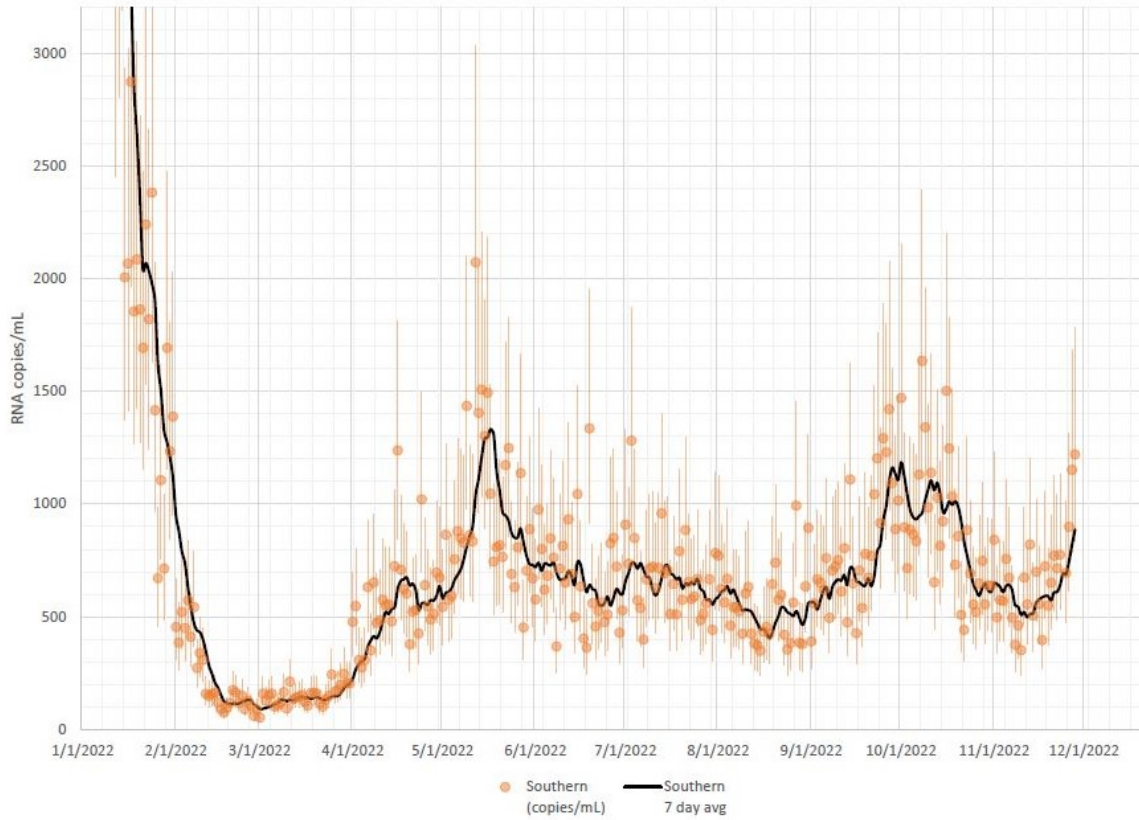
Not sure when your last vaccine was? Click [here](#) to download your vaccine record. Massachusetts also offers in-home vaccinations; find more information [here](#).

The latest MWRA wastewater tracking data through Monday, Nov. 28 shows the numbers rising. This data has been an accurate indicator of the prevalence of COVID-19 infections throughout the pandemic. Newton is divided with half in the North system and half in the South. Find more MWRA info [here](#).

Recent North System RNA Signal by Date



Recent South System Viral RNA Signal by Date



Find more information from the CDC at [cdc.gov/COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID-19) about how to protect yourself and others.

High Winds

The wind has already started swirling as I write this, and the forecast for tonight predicts strong to damaging winds with a cold front moving in.

The heaviest winds look like they'll hit Newton between 4:00 and 10:00 p.m. with peak gusts between 45 to 55 miles per hour (mph), capable of potentially bringing down trees and powerlines. (Thankfully, most of the leaves are off the trees which helps a lot during high winds.) While tomorrow remains windy, the strongest gusts are expected to be a bit lower, in the 40 to 45 mph range. Newton's Urban Forrester Marc Welch and his team are ready.

If you need assistance during the storm, please call Customer Service at 617-796-1000 or use the 311 app on your smart phone or computer.

As always, in an emergency, call 911.

If you lose power, report it directly to Eversource [here](#), or call 877-659-6326 . . . and stay away from any downed wires.

Holidays Can Be Stressful – We're Here to Help

The holidays are a time of joy, comfort, family and tradition for many in our community. For others, the reality is that this season can be filled with anxiety, grief, and loneliness.

Newton's social workers note that, most likely, we all experience a mixture of these emotions during the holiday season when stress increases and obligations feel constant. Stress can impact us all differently and they suggest we take time to care for ourselves to ensure our overall health and well-being. Caring for ourselves may include saying "no" without guilt, asking for help without shame or embarrassment, treating yourself with kindness and compassion, and finding time for a walk outside, for adequate rest, and for healthy nutrition.

Our social workers in Newton's Health and Human Services Department have gathered [mental health resources](#) and [substance use resources](#) should you or a loved one need additional support during this time. Please call 617-796-1420 to speak with the team in Social Services.

Warmly,

Ruthanne

P.S. Enjoy the busy holiday weekend in Newton (but feel free to stay home if that feels more relaxing!):

- Join us for **Holiday Mini Golf at City Hall** where the course will wind through the secret staircase in the Mayor's Office, City Hall Chambers and the War Memorial. Tee times are open on Saturday, Dec. 3 from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This event benefits the annual Holiday Gift Drive sponsored by The Village Bank in partnership with the Newton Health and Human Services Department and the Newton Rotary. If you can, bring an unwrapped gift as your entry to play a round. Find more info [here](#).
- Looking for a unique gift? Check out the Newton Cultural Alliance's Celebrate Newton! – **Holiday Craft Fair** on Sunday, Dec. 4 at Newton South High School, 140 Brandeis Road from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Find a directory of the 50 vendors and more information [here](#).
- The New Art Center is hosting a **Festivals of Light Community Culture Day** on Sunday, Dec. 4 from noon to 4:30 p.m. at 61 Washington Park with art-making and performances to celebrate Hanukkah, Diwali, Kwanzaa, and Las Posadas.
- Enjoy **two Village tree lightings** on Sunday, Dec. 4, both with caroling and hot chocolate. The first is at the **Waban** Library Green, 1608 Beacon Street, at 4:45 p.m., and then head to Coletti-Magni Park at 6:15 p.m. for the **Nonantum** Tree Lighting, 386-392 Watertown Street.

P.P.S Congratulations to the **Newton North Girls Volleyball State Champions!** The Tigers beat Lincoln-Sudbury to win Newton North's fourth girls volleyball title (the last was in 2018) and the first with Coach Nile Fox.

(Photo: Senior Abigail Write hoists the championship trophy as teammates and fans celebrate. Photo Credit: Mark Stockwell for the Boston Globe.)



P.P.P.S. Enjoy music and dances from **Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite** by the New Philharmonia Orchestra and the Boston Ballet School on Sunday, Dec. 11 at Brown Middle School, 125 Meadowbrook Road, at 3:00 p.m. Find information and purchase tickets [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. Learn how to identify symptoms of **teenage stress**, strategies to manage them and how to find help at a Stress Survival Workshop on Wednesday, Dec. 14 at the Newton Free Library Druker Auditorium, 330 Homer St., from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The workshop, presented by City of Newton Youth

Services in partnership with Families for Depression Awareness, The Newton Free Library and the Newton Youth Commission, will be led by Families for Depression Awareness and a licensed mental health professional.

P.P.P.P.S. A reminder that the **Overnight Winter Parking Ban** goes into effect tomorrow, Dec. 1 through Friday, March 31. During these four months, parking on City streets is prohibited for more than one hour from 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. Free Municipal Parking Lot stickers are available to residents from the Newton Police Department. You need a valid driver's license and vehicle registration. (Proof of residency is also required if your car is not registered in Newton.) Parking permits are given out on a first-come first-serve basis. Get more information [here](#), and the application for a Municipal Lot Parking sticker is [here](#).

P.P.P.P.S. Interested in learning more about the **override** and debt exclusion questions voters will decide on March 14?

- [Virtual Q&A](#) - Sunday, Dec. 4, at noon
- [Virtual Roundtable on Senior Services](#), Tuesday, Dec. 6, 6:00 p.m.
- [Virtual Chat with Urban Forrester Marc Welch on Trees](#), Wednesday, Dec. 7, 9:00 a.m.
- [In-Person Town Hall at Zervas Elementary School](#), Thursday, Dec. 8, 7:00 p.m. (tours of the school start at 6:30 p.m.)

Find answers to frequently asked questions, an override calculator, a calendar of meeting and more information at newtonma.gov/override.



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!