

Bethalto Residents Have Choice Between New Energy Rates

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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BETHALTO - The Village of Bethalto is advising residents to consider remaining part of its energy aggregation program despite Ameren currently having a lower market rate. The energy aggregation program is meant to protect residents from market volatility by charging a fixed rate regardless of the market through 2024 - but if residents wish to opt-out and switch to Ameren, the village has also outlined the steps to do so.

The new Ameren rate is \$0.08162 compared to Bethalto's program rate of \$0.1220. Ameren's new rate went into effect on June 1, and the aggregation program's fixed rate will expire in December 2024.

According to a press release from the village, "Residents need to understand the newly filed Ameren rate can return to an upward swing anytime during that period ... The Village's Program has been very successful since its inception in 2012."

Also noted in the press release were the savings from the previous round of the aggregation program, which locked residents into a low rate of \$0.0439 for 24 months, while Ameren's rate went above \$0.1200 for several months.

“The program is based on longevity and those communities who belong to the program, such as Bethalto, have all saved money over the Ameren rate since the inception of the program. Not only has it saved the residents money over the length of the program, but it has also given residents the rate protection regardless of the volatility and conditions in the marketplace.”

Good Energy's Government Affairs Director Steve Bryant has asked residents to remain patient and let the program continue to work long-term. However, if residents participating in the program wish to opt-out, the village offers a cost-free opt-out option.



If residents wish to opt-out of the program, they can contact Constellation New Energy 24/7 at (833) 618-0294 or visit [constellation.com/il-bethalto](https://www.constellation.com/il-bethalto). In order to opt-out, residents will need their Ameren account number, the name on the account, and their service address, all of which can be found on their Ameren electric utility bill.

Customers that choose to opt-out of the aggregation program are subject to a “contract lock” period. The release noted that there is a utility hold after leaving the aggregation program and returning to Ameren.

“If the resident does not choose a different alternative supplier within 60 days, they must remain with the Utility (Ameren) for an additional 10 months or one year total and will not be able to re-join the Bethalto Municipal Aggregation Program should Ameren increase their rates.”

When the current municipal aggregation contract was signed in the fall of 2022, Ameren’s rate was \$0.1227 and “forecasted to go even higher by many of the experts,” according to the release. “Therefore, we wanted to protect the residents from the possibility of those higher rates, and the program fulfilled that objective.

“Therefore, we urge the residents to do their own research to determine what the best choice is for them.”