

Central Coast Power

Talking Points

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Central Coast Power is a consortium of local governments that has formed to explore the feasibility of a Community Choice Energy program to

- (1) empower our local **COMMUNITY** with the **CHOICE** of how and where our electricity is created and
 - (2) enhance the **SUSTAINABILITY** and **ECONOMIC** vitality of the tri-county region including San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties.
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KEY MESSAGE #1

Community Choice Energy offers participating communities a new choice for the type of electricity that powers their homes and businesses.

- Assembly Bill 117 established CCE in 2002 to enable local governments to leverage the purchasing power of their residents, businesses, and public entities to purchase or generate power for their communities.
- In other words, CCE is cooperative purchasing for electricity.
- CCE introduces competition into the marketplace and provides a choice about the energy sources customers wish to support.

KEY MESSAGE #2

Community Choice Energy puts energy purchasing and pricing options in local hands.

- CCE allows the community to determine what type of energy mix and programs serve its needs, while keeping electricity rates competitive.
- Based on community preferences and priorities, local decision-makers choose the type of electricity—often times with more renewably sourced power than the existing utilities offer—and where that electricity comes from, potentially including local sources.
- Renewable energy generation, energy efficiency incentives, and other clean energy programs can help reach local and state climate action goals.

KEY MESSAGE #3

Community Choice Energy is a new, but tested, model for providing electricity that can enhance the sustainability and economic vitality of the tri-county region.

- The first CCE program in California—Marin Clean Energy—has been successfully operating for more than 6 years.

- The operational CCE programs across the state report more than 85 percent of eligible customers participate in their local CCE option. Opt-out rates for new programs continue to decline with Peninsula Clean Energy reporting less than 2 percent of customers opting out.
- The two longest-running CCE programs—in Marin and Sonoma—are financially sound, investing in local projects, maintaining stable rates, and building reserves that may be reinvested locally in renewable energy, energy efficiency, and jobs. The newer CCE programs are also off to a solid start.

KEY MESSAGE #4

A Community Choice Energy program is typically run by a public agency, accountable to the community, not shareholders.

- A non-profit public agency may be formed through a joint powers authority made up of participating local government officials.
- There are no shareholder investors—all revenue is used to directly benefit local customers.
- Elected officials in the tri-county region have the option to choose CCE for their communities based on the results of a forthcoming feasibility study.

KEY MESSAGE #5

Electricity delivery will remain the same.

- If CCE is offered, the CCE program operator—Central Coast Power—would purchase the electricity flowing to area homes and businesses and set rates for that portion of customer bills.
- PG&E or SCE would continue to deliver the electricity over its existing power lines, maintain those lines, send bills, and provide customer service.
- Most customers would not notice any change other than the current utility’s electric generation charge being replaced by a CCE electricity supply charge on their utility bill.

KEY MESSAGE #6

A feasibility study is underway to determine whether CCE can meet local policy goals while maintaining competitive electricity rates.

- An Advisory Working Group, comprised of participating jurisdictions, is overseeing the development of the study that will present an unbiased look at the benefits and costs of CCE based on existing CCE programs’ experiences and current and projected future market conditions.
- The study includes an in-depth assessment of our region’s expected future electricity needs and anticipated costs and impact on customer bills to set up a new public entity to meet those electricity needs with 33%, 50%, 75% or 100% renewable energy content.
- The feasibility study will evaluate which scenarios best meet our policy goals, such as lowering greenhouse gas emissions and supporting the local economy, and minimize risk.

For more information, visit: centralcoastpower.org or email info@centralcoastpower.org