



NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF THE RATEPAYER ADVOCATE

TIPS FOR CHOOSING ELECTRIC AND GAS SUPPLIERS

September, 1999

● **OBTAIN AN ENROLLMENT PACKAGE FROM YOUR LOCAL UTILITY.**

Call your utility for an enrollment package. The package should include a list of licensed suppliers offering service in your area, your specific energy usage profile, and information that will help you compare offers from different suppliers.

● **REVIEW PAST UTILITY BILLS.**

Know your pattern of energy usage over time and how much you have been paying. Note whether there are significant differences in your seasonal or time-of-day use of electricity and gas.

● **COLLECT AND READ OFFERS FROM SEVERAL SUPPLIERS.**

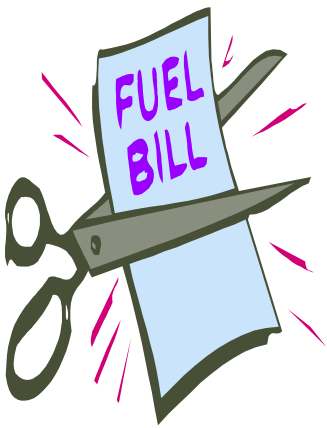
Don't jump at the first offer. Become familiar with different offers and the terms that energy suppliers use.

● **CONSIDER YOUR OBJECTIVES BEFORE YOU SHOP.**

Do you want to maximize savings? How much risk are you willing to take regarding the price of your energy? Is minimizing air pollution a priority for you?

● **INSIST ON RECEIVING A WRITTEN COPY OF THE SUPPLIERS AGREEMENT.**

The agreement will include important information about the rates and services being offered, as well as price, terms and conditions. If you are not fluent in English, ask whether the agreement is available in another language.



● **BE AWARE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT.**

Are the terms and conditions clear and understandable? How long will the quoted price last? Is a deposit required? Is there a late payment fee? What about budget billing?

● **HOW LONG WILL THE TERMS OF THE CONTRACT BE IN EFFECT?**

Residential customers must agree to renewal in writing. If a residential customer does nothing at the end of the contract, the contract will automatically continue on a month-to-month basis.

● **ARE THERE EARLY CANCELLATION OR TERMINATION FEES?**

Residential customers are always free to change suppliers or return to their Electric or Gas Distribution Company for service. However, you may be subject to any early cancellation fees contained in the agreement you sign with a supplier.

● **LEARN MORE ABOUT ENERGY BUYING GROUPS.**

Your town or an organization to which you belong may form an energy buying group that offers residents or members lower electric rates if they join. These buying groups, or energy aggregation groups, may provide the opportunity for small customers to achieve additional rate reductions.

