



**Did you know** that you can sign up for 100% wind or solar energy by switching your electricity provider? It's true, **Green** energy is available to all Baltimore residents! This brief guide explains everything you need to know to make the switch, and lists all the providers on the second page. Signing up is as easy as organic locally-grown apple pie, and takes only a few minutes!

### What happens when I switch to renewable energy?

When you switch to a renewable energy provider, you purchase electricity from wind, solar, biomass or hydroelectric. As customers switch to renewables, power companies must cut back on the amount of fossil-fuel powered electricity they produce, and ramp up (or start) production from renewable sources.

When you switch providers, Baltimore Gas & Electric remains your electricity delivery service. BGE receives your portion of their total energy from the provider you support. BGE loses out on some of your business, but they still charge you the same delivery fee.

### What happens to my electricity bill?

The image on the right is from the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of a BGE bill. You'll still be charged for **BGE Electric Delivery Service and Taxes & Surcharges**. The **Electric Supply** cost, however, will increase slightly depending on the renewable provider you choose. Your gas bill will be unaffected.

<b>BGE Electric Supply</b>	132 kWh	x .10575000	13.96
<b>BGE Electric Delivery Service</b>			
Customer Charge			7.50
Distribution Charge	132 kWh	x .02277000	3.01
RSP Chg/Misc Credit	132 kWh	x .00257000	.34
<b>State / Local Taxes &amp; Surcharges</b>			
MD Universal Svc Prog			.37
State Surcharge	132 kWh	x .00014600	.02
Franchise Tax	132 kWh	x .00062000	.08
Local Tax	132 kWh	x .00192000	.25
<b>Total BGE Electric Amount</b>			<b>\$25.53</b>

**Want to know more?** Switching providers doesn't mean the electrons flowing into your home come solely from wind farms – all electricity flows along the same power lines; there's no way to separate wind from fossil fuel energy as it travels across the grid. However, by switching to renewables, you'll increase the percentage of green energy flowing into all Baltimore homes. Suppose 50% of Baltimore residents switch to wind energy: BGE would receive half of its energy from wind farms, which would then be delivered to homes. To meet consumer demand and stay in business, BGE would have to start producing their own wind energy, while cutting back on fossil fuel production.

It's important to recognize that switching to wind or solar power doesn't mean we should stop trying to reduce our energy use (see the list on the right for ideas). That said, switching to renewable energy has a dramatic impact on reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Currently, renewables account for 14% of the world's energy consumption. As more of us make the switch, more money goes into developing better technology to meet rising demand, costs for renewable energy drop, and fossil fuel industries are forced to switch to renewables. **We, the consumers, have the power to control the energy market!**

### Other ways to reduce our carbon footprint:

Reduce meat consumption, particularly red meat ([read why](#)).

Choose alternatives to flying and driving like public transportation, trains, buses, bicycles or walking.

Use energy-saving CFL bulbs.


Hang clothes to dry (which is surprisingly satisfying, in an old-fashioned, do-it-yourself way).

Set washing machines to cold.

## Summary of Renewable Energy Providers to Baltimore City

Signing up is real easy, it only takes a minute! Just choose from the providers below.

Note that providers charge a cancellation fee if you discontinue service before the duration of the term. If you sign up for PEPSCO or WGES, you may discontinue service without penalty if you move out of the service area, and notify them in advance.

Provider & Link to website	Renewable options	Price per kWh*	Comments
<a href="#">BGE</a>	none	10.86 cents	BGE's <a href="#">Energy Choices</a> page has a complete list of energy providers.
<a href="#">PEPSCO Energy Services</a>  Click Me!	100% Wind	13.81 cents	13 month duration.
	Hydroelectric, wind, biomass, solar, municipal waste	13.21 cents	Wind power comes from mid-Atlantic wind farms.
<a href="#">Washington Gas and Electric (WGES)</a>	100% Wind	14.60 cents	1 year duration. Cheaper rates available for longer terms.
	50% Wind, 50% fossil fuel	13.40 cents	Price protection means rates won't rise and fall.
<a href="#">Commerce Energy</a>	100% Wind	13.50 cents	1 year duration. Wind power comes from California.
	50% Wind	13.20 cents	Early termination fee, even if you move out of service area.

\* As of January 27, 2008. Prices are subject to change.

### Why does wind energy cost more?

“The cost of wind energy is determined by the cost of buying, constructing, and maintaining the wind turbines; transmission and distribution costs to bring the energy to the point of use; and the cost of leasing and maintaining the land... The cost for generating electricity from wind has fallen over 80% since the early 1980s and is expected to continue to fall as technology improves.” - *New York Public Interest Research Group*

Tim Flannery, author of the acclaimed *The Weather Makers: How Man is Changing the Climate and What it Means for Life on Earth*, points out that “If enough of us buy green power, solar panels, solar hot water systems, and hybrid vehicles, the costs of these items will plummet. This will encourage the sale of yet more panels and wind generators, and soon the bulk of domestic power will be generated by renewable technologies. This will place sufficient pressure on industry that will compel energy-hungry enterprises to turn to clean power generation.”

Most importantly, when faced with any option to reduce our impact on climate change, we must weigh the cost to the health of future generations by *not* taking action.

### Other resources:

[Wind power FAQ](#). The pros and cons of [burning municipal waste for energy](#).