



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate

CONSUMERS' FACT SHEET

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

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UNDERSTANDING THE GUIDELINES FOR DOOR-TO-DOOR SOLICITORS



As Ohioans are presented with more opportunities to choose their natural gas suppliers, it is important to understand the rules that govern what marketers can and cannot do to get consumers' business.

Increased competition in the natural gas marketplace is one way to keep bills low. When more suppliers are available for homeowners to choose from, the chances are better that lower rates will result.

However, consumers need to keep in mind that with the growing number of independent suppliers competing for new clients, chances are that Ohioans will receive a visit from a door-to-door salesperson. If consumers are visited by a solicitor, they should know that there are rules that must be followed when asking to switch natural gas suppliers.

Ohio law clearly defines the code of conduct that natural gas salespersons must follow. If consumers receive a visit from someone claiming to represent a marketer, he/she should make sure the salesperson does the following:

- ▶ States that he/she is a representative of the marketer and NOT the utility;
- ▶ Fully explains any documents to be signed, how much it will cost, including tax, and how long the contract will be in effect; and
- ▶ Verbally explains the right to cancel and has given right-to-cancel forms.

All door-to-door salespeople must show valid photo identification issued by the natural gas supplier. Within three days of receiving a consumer's signature, the marketer is required to notify the natural gas utility of his/her intention to switch companies.

Customers can review the "Comparing Your Energy Choices" fact sheet on the OCC Web site, www.pickocc.org, for up-to-date information about current suppliers and their offers.