

## ENERGY SUPPLIER CONTRACT METHODS WHAT CONSUMERS NEED TO KNOW

- **IMPORTANT RULES:**
  - ONLY SAY YES WHEN AND IF YOU WANT TO
  - DO NOT SHOW ANYONE YOUR BILL OR YOUR ACCOUNT NUMBER UNLESS YOU WANT TO SWITCH TO THEIR SERVICE
    - ALWAYS INSIST: YOU SIGN AND RECEIVE A COPY OF A WRITTEN CONTRACT
    - KEEP THE CONTRACT WITH YOUR IMPORTANT PAPERS
  
- **Direct mail**
  - The written offer must contain all the major terms of the contract
  - You can sign the offer and return
  - Make a copy of your signed agreement before you return it
  - The offer may state that you can call the supplier to complete the agreement
    - If you call the supplier, the phone solicitation rules do **not** apply
    - State clearly during the call the price term, length of contract, any additional fees, cancellation policy and fee (if any) that you agree to
    - Ask questions and do not agree to sign up if you do not understand
  
- **Solicitation in your home or outside your home (e.g., PTA, mall)**
  - **Supplier often use agents (non-employees) to do door to door sales**
  - Some counties require peddler licenses – the agent must have one
  - The agent must have a company logo and ID, and **(NEW)** give you a business card or other writing with name of the company and agent
  - Your local utility will NOT come to your home asking to check your bill or your account number or to offer you a lower price
    - If someone says “I work for the utility” and is pushing a better price, **BEWARE** – you are being **SLAMMED**. Close the door before you are switched without your permission
  - You do not have to sign a contract “right now” or any time – it is better to “lose a deal” than agree without all the facts
  - The supplier must give you a contract and get your signature
  - You have the **RIGHT TO CANCEL IN 3 DAYS**
    - The supplier must give you a **NOTICE OF RIGHT TO CANCEL**

- **Telemarketing**
  - Many suppliers use telemarketers to market their offers
    - **Do Not Call Registry:** If your name is on the registry, get the name of the supplier calling, hang up and file a complaint with the PSC about the supplier
  - The caller must identify herself and the company right away
  - The caller must explain the major terms of the offer
  - In order for this to be a valid agreement, you **MUST** receive a written contract after the call, sign it and send it back
    - **Exception:** ONLY If you have a prior business relationship OR you received information about the offer before the call
    - **TIP:** If these do not apply, say so on the call
  - Telemarketers will record the call or use a third party to verify (TPV) the phone agreement
  - The caller must answer all of your questions
  - If you do not wish to switch to their service, do **not** provide your utility account or customer number
  
- **Internet**
  - Suppliers must have a website
  - You can review contract terms on the website
  - The contract terms and conditions must be printable
  - Your electronic signature is acceptable