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How can SJCE offer lower rates than PG&E?



Despite offering more renewable and carbon-free energy, SJCE's default [GreenSource \(http://www.sanjosecleanenergy.org/your-choices\)](http://www.sanjosecleanenergy.org/your-choices) service is cheaper than PG&E's standard generation service for three main reasons:

- **Renewables Market:** We're taking advantage of low prices for renewable energy, which continue to decrease.
- **Not-for-profit:** As a government agency, we do not have to pay dividends to shareholders and pass savings along to our customers.
- **Efficiency:** Community Choice Energy programs like SJCE are leaner and operate more efficiently than investor-owned utilities, spending a smaller percentage of revenue on operating expenses.

What is San José Clean Energy?



San José Clean Energy is the new nonprofit, locally controlled electricity generation service provider for residents and businesses in the City of San José. We will provide residential and commercial electricity customers with clean, carbon-free power options at competitive prices, from sources like solar, wind and hydropower. We source electricity for customers and PG&E delivers it over existing utility lines, and continues to do maintenance, billing and customer service as they always have.

As a city department, any revenues that exceed our costs will be used to benefit the communities we serve.

Isn't PG&E the electricity provider in San José?



Until now, PG&E has been the only electricity provider in San José. In 2002, California Assembly Bill 117 established Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), a new way for California communities to provide local residents and businesses with a choice of electricity providers. A city or a group of cities pool (aggregate) the electricity demand from residents and businesses in their area and buy electricity for them. CCAs offer cleaner, carbon-free electricity. SJCE is the new CCA for the City of San José and we're the largest city in the country to operate a CCA.

Does SJCE completely replace PG&E?



No, we are partners in providing your electricity service. SJCE replaces PG&E's electric generation services with a local, publicly controlled electric generation service. We buy clean, carbon-free electricity for you, which PG&E then distributes to San José homes and businesses. PG&E continues to provide customer and billing services, maintains power lines and fixes outages. It also provides all natural gas services.

As an SJCE customer, can I expect the same reliability as from PG&E?



Yes, reliability will absolutely stay the same. SJCE provides electric generation services, but PG&E still has responsibility for power transmission, distribution, billing and service, and it continues to maintain the power distribution network as it always has.

How is SJCE run?



As a City department, SJCE is governed by San José City Council, which ensures public transparency. There is also a Community Advisory Commission (advisory commission). The City Council meets weekly and the Community Advisory Commission meets monthly. All meetings are open to the public and your comments are encouraged.

Are my tax dollars paying for this?



No. SJCE is entirely self-funded by revenues we receive from customers.

Are there shareholders and dividends?



No. SJCE is “owned” by the City of San José and is a City department called Community Energy. There are no shareholders so all revenues stay right here. We don't have to charge extra to generate a profit or pay dividends, which helps keep our prices competitive even though renewable energy is more expensive, and allows us to invest in local clean energy generation projects.

Will I still receive the California Climate Credit?



Yes, you will continue to receive the credit as an SJCE customer. You don't need to do anything to receive it; it's automatically applied to your bill. [Learn more about the California Climate Credit \(<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/climatecredit/>\)](#).

What is Community Choice Energy (CCE)?



SJCE is a Community Choice Energy (CCE) program, also know as a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA).

In 2002, the California state government passed a law (Assembly Bill #117) allowing local governments to purchase electricity on behalf of their residents and businesses, forming CCEs. The law was passed to:

1. Give consumers more control over their energy mix and rates. CCEs are governed by elected officials. CCE customers benefit from cleaner energy (<http://www.sanjosecleanenergy.org/whats-clean-energy>) at competitive rates.
2. Give consumers a choice for their electricity generation provider – the CCE covering their municipality or the investor-owned utility (here in San José, that's PG&E). Either way, PG&E remains the sole electricity delivery provider responsible for transmitting the electricity to your home or business, maintaining the powerlines, and responding to outages.

SJCE is one of [19 CCEs currently in operation in California \(<http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/>\)](#), together providing electricity to over 8 million homes and businesses. CCEs have collectively saved customers millions of dollars and cut greenhouse gas emissions drastically since 2010. [Learn more about the impact of CCEs \(<http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/>\)](#).

Why am I receiving my bill later than expected?



PG&E has a window of 2-3 days before or after a customer's scheduled end of cycle to send usage information to our SJCE billing team. Our billing team usually turns around the bill and sends it back to PG&E on the same day. This new billing process can sometimes result in customers receiving their bill several days later than before SJCE service started.

What are the benefits of San José Clean Energy?



In 2017, the San José City Council voted to form SJCE to provide the following benefits to residents and businesses:

- **Cleaner & cheaper electricity:** SJCE's default service GreenSource contains more renewable power than PG&E's standard service to help fight climate change and preserve the planet for future generations. It is also 1% cheaper than PG&E's standard generation service.
- **More local control:** SJCE is governed by the San José City Council, your elected representatives, so you have a voice.
- **More choice:** Before SJCE launched in February 2019, PG&E was a monopoly. Residents and businesses now have two choices for electricity generation services – SJCE and PG&E – increasing competition and driving down prices.
- **Reinvesting in our community:** As a government agency, profits are reinvested into the community – instead of going to shareholders – through lower rates and community programs that further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote equity.

Does SJCE support SmartRate?



No. SmartRate is a program offered only to PG&E electricity generation customers.

I opted into a Time-of-Use schedule. Does SJCE support these rate schedules?



Yes. SJCE supports Time-of-Use rate schedules, which have peak pricing during certain periods of the day, Monday through Friday, and off-peak pricing at all other times. The generation rates SJCE customers pay for peak and off peak usage are 1% below PG&E's generation rates. [View SJCE Time-of-Use rates \(https://www.sanjosecleanenergy.org/sites/default/files/Documents./Rates_Sheets/SJCE%20_Residential%20Rates_November%202018%20with%20PCIA%20FF.pdf\)](https://www.sanjosecleanenergy.org/sites/default/files/Documents./Rates_Sheets/SJCE%20_Residential%20Rates_November%202018%20with%20PCIA%20FF.pdf).

Have CCE programs worked well elsewhere?



Yes. No CCE program has ever failed. SJCE is one of [19 Community Choice Energy \(CCE\) programs \(http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/\)](http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/) currently in operation in California, together providing electricity to over 8 million homes and businesses. CCEs have collectively saved customers millions of dollars and cut greenhouse gas emissions drastically since 2010.

As government agencies, they have reinvested revenue into their communities through rate savings and energy programs encouraging adoption of electric vehicles, building electrification, installation of rooftop solar, and more. [Learn more about the impact of CCEs \(http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/\)](http://www.cal-cca.org/cca-impact/).

Who do I call if there is a power outage?



PG&E (<https://www.pge.com/mybusiness/customerservice/energystatus/reportanoutage/>): 1-800-468-4743. Since PG&E remains the electricity transmission and distribution provider, they are still responsible for maintaining powerlines and responding to power outages. PG&E is also responsible for notifying customers of planned power outages.

How does SJCE get electricity; where does it come from?



San José Clean Energy buys its power from a number of suppliers. Sources of renewable and carbon-free power include California wind, solar and geothermal; Colorado wind; and hydroelectric power from the Pacific Northwest. Like all electricity providers in California, we will report the percentage of each eligible renewable technology to the California Energy Commission on a yearly basis in the form of a power content label (<https://www.energy.ca.gov/pcl/>). This will happen for the first time later this summer, and the Power Content Label will be posted on both the CEC website and here.

Does SJCE offer a Balanced Payment Plan or budget billing program?

SJCE does not currently offer a Balanced Payment Plan (BPP) or comparable budget billing program. Customers currently enrolled in PG&E's BPP will remain on the program, however the BPP only applies to the PG&E (electricity delivery) portion of the bill.

Can SJCE run out of power?

No, SJCE cannot run out of power. Should SJCE fail to purchase enough electricity for our customers on a given day, the California Independent State Operator (CAISO, the grid operator) would step in and provide enough energy to make up the difference. This is a seamless process with no interruption in service for you. CAISO then bills SJCE for the energy procured by CAISO on behalf of SJCE and its customers.

Will I still receive my PG&E employee discount as an SJCE customer?

Yes. Since PG&E employee discounts are applied to the electricity delivery portion of electricity bills, former and current PG&E employees will continue to receive their employee discount after becoming SJCE customers.

Who do I call if I have questions?

If you have questions about San José Clean Energy you can call us toll free at 833-432-2454. Or email us at customerservice@sanjosecleanenergy.org. If you have questions about PG&E, call PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.



(<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/>)

Community Energy Department

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San José, CA 95113
833-432-2454

info@sanjosecleanenergy.org (<mailto:info@sanjosecleanenergy.org>)

San José City Council (<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=146>)

[SJCE Advisory Commission \(/advisory-commission\)](#)

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