

## **Illinois Natural Gas Choice Consumer Protections**

Excerpt from Illinois Commerce Commission Consumer Education Web Site:

<http://www.icc.illinois.gov/ags/consumereducation.aspx#s5>

### **Obligations of AGS**

- An AGS must obtain customer authorization before switching a customer to another supplier. At a minimum, the authorization must include the identity of the customer, confirmation that the person is authorized to make the change, confirmation that the person wants to make the switch, address where service is to be provided, the price of the service and the material terms and conditions of the service including any early termination fee.
- Before switching a customer, an AGS must clearly and conspicuously disclose in writing the prices, terms and conditions of products and services.
- An AGS must disclose a customer's right to rescind an agreement. The AGS must disclose that the gas utility will send a notice confirming the switch, that the customer has 10 business days from that date to rescind the switch, that the customer can contact the utility or the AGS to rescind the switch, and the contact information for the utility.
- An AGS is required to disclose the amount of any termination penalty or fee that applies. If an early termination fee applies, the AGS must allow the customer to cancel the contract without any termination fee or penalty within 10 days after the date the first bill is issued. This does not relieve the customer of the obligation to pay for services already received under a contract which was entered into lawfully.
- An AGS must comply with Illinois law regarding solicitation and sales verification requirements applicable to in-person solicitation (including door-to-door solicitation), telemarketing, consumer initiated calls, and internet enrollment.
- Additional solicitation and sales verification requirements apply to in-person and telephone solicitations.
- An AGS soliciting customers in-person, including door-to-door solicitation, must clearly and conspicuously disclose the salesperson's name and company's address, phone number and website; contact information for the ICC.
- An AGS soliciting customers by telephone must disclose the name of the person making the solicitation, the name of the AGS, the purpose of the call and ask permission to continue the call.
- An AGS is prohibited from misrepresenting its affiliation with the gas utility, governmental bodies and consumer groups. An AGS is required to establish a call center and provide a toll-free number for customers to resolve complaints.
- An AGS may not obligate a customer to the terms of the agreement if that customer moves outside Illinois, to a location without a transportation service program or to a location where the customer will not require natural gas service. This does not relieve the customer of their obligation to pay for services already provided.
- An AGS may not assign the customer's agreement to another AGS unless that AGS is certified by the ICC, the rates and terms of the agreement do not change during the remainder of the time covered by the agreement, and the customer is given no less than 30 days prior written notice of the assignment including contact information for the AGS assigning the contract and the new AGS.