

# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE: STOP WASTING TIME AND SAVE ON ENERGY

by Megan Walsh  
TIA Director of Membership

Many members have been left in the dark when it comes to utility deregulation and the increasing costs of electricity. If your state has deregulated its utilities, then now is the time to start exploring your energy options. TIA's unique approach to shopping the energy market can meet almost every member's need!

When asked to describe the current, deregulated energy market in the State of Maine, Mr. Jim Lynch, Vice President of Operations and Owner of Maine Commercial Tire, Inc., exhaustedly exclaimed "terrible;" explaining further that, *"electric prices have nearly doubled from the rate I was paying three years ago and there is little competition."*

Mr. Lynch soon discovered in a TIA publication that his Association endorsed a company called Affiliated Power Purchasers International (APPI). He gladly shared his experience working with APPI Account Representative Carolyn Hanna revealing that she, *"did all the leg work, helped me through the bidding process and locked me into a fixed rate for the next three years. Naturally, I still pay more than when utilities were government regulated; however, I have found APPI to be a savings from the incumbent utility rates."*

If your business is in Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and/or Texas, you should contact APPI immediately for electric pricing today. APPI calculates that, on average, members in these states have the potential to save 10-20 percent on monthly electric bills. Best of all, APPI will present the market's most competitive rates from a network of suppliers, and there are no fees for transitioning from your current utility to an alternate electricity supplier.

The transition is easy since seeing deregulation's original intention was to bring new competition to the market. APPI's suppliers bid on the usage (generation/supply) component of your electricity bill; while the current utility continues to provide the distribution and service. The primary difference between regulated and deregulated utilities is the choice APPI gives you to switch from a market driven, often volatile, variable rate to a secure and stabilized fixed price.

Before transitioning to an alternate supplier, there are a few factors that can help in making your decision. First, review your monthly electric bill and examine the "price to compare" or "price to beat." This will reveal the current utility rate and aid you in comparing competitors' prices. APPI will assist you with this.

Next, examine the terms of supplier offers. Often, the supplier offers that APPI presents include a fixed rate with terms up to five years in select markets. Due to an unpredictable energy market, many consumers feel a long-term, fixed rate is more advantageous to managing their operating expenses. Mr. Don Dodson, the Treasurer of A to Z Tire & Battery, Inc., made the switch, because, *"energy prices do not seem to be coming down. Sure, there were minimal risks to signing up with APPI, but there was great potential. I only wish that offers were available in all of the markets that we serve. The more money I save on electric, the more my bottom line increases!"*

Finally, the last measure of due diligence is to contact your state's Public Service Commission (PSC). One of the quickest methods is to conduct a Google keyword search for the phrase "Public Service Commission," followed by your state's name. Here you will find information on the current electric market as well as licensed suppliers. While the PSC provides a wealth of information, the process of researching the market, contacting suppliers, negotiating rates, and signing a contract, is best handled by the professionals at APPI. APPI has already conducted due diligence and will only present you with product and pricing offers from reliable suppliers.

TIA has the solution to electricity and utility savings through endorsed energy consultant APPI. If you have questions regarding APPI's services, please contact me at 800-876-8372 ext. 112 or visit TIA's Member Services page at [www.tireindustry.org](http://www.tireindustry.org).

This column is dedicated to servicing TIA's membership and strives to bring quality programs and services to support your business. In the next edition of Membership Update, we'll explore Comdata.

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