Save Time and Trees … Reduce Junk Mail

Jane Mosier

April 25, 2025

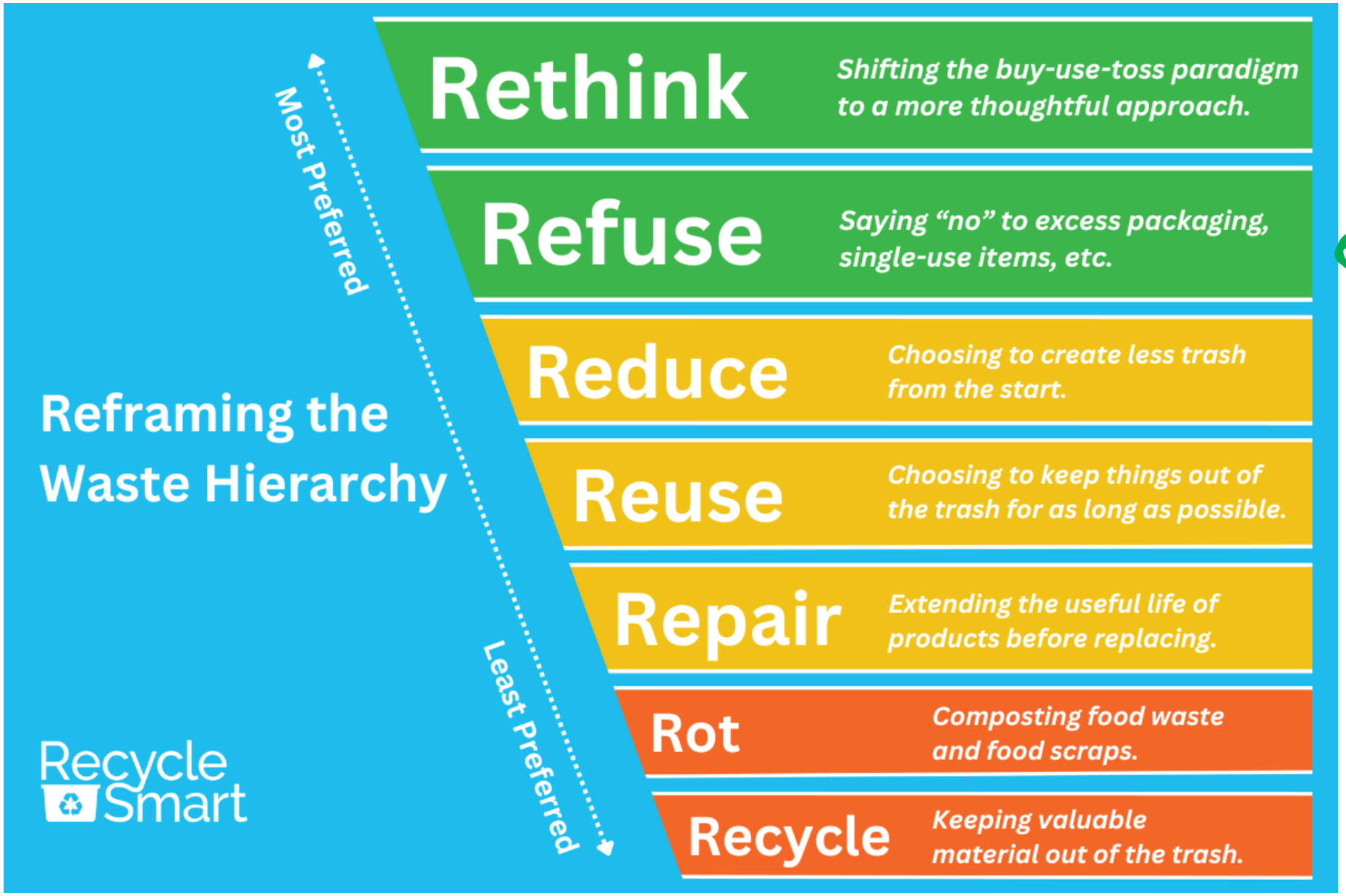
Chelmsford Climate Action Team

Agenda

- Reducing Junk Mail
- Predatory Electric Suppliers

Use the "Steps to Opt Out of Junk Mail" document on the CCAT website

Chelmsford Climate Action Team



www.chelmsfordrecycles.com

Junk Mail Isn’t Just Annoying

- 100 billion pieces of junk mail each year in the US
- Making that paper requires
  - 100 million trees and
  - enough water to fill 160,000 Olympic sized pools
- Disposing of junk mail costs taxpayers more than $250 million/year

PSI SINCE 2000 PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP INSTITUTE

What to Know Before You Start

- Are you a *Prospect* or a *Customer*?
  - Opt out services work for Prospects
  - Customers will continue receiving mail until you ask each sender to stop
  - You may be considered a “customer” for years
- All opt out actions take weeks to months to take effect
- Most are free
- Following this process won’t eliminate ALL junk mail

Collect and Sort Your Junk Mail
Dangerous
Annoying
Prescreened credit and insurance offers
Competing electric

Pre-Screened (or Firm or Pre-Approved) Credit and Insurance Offers

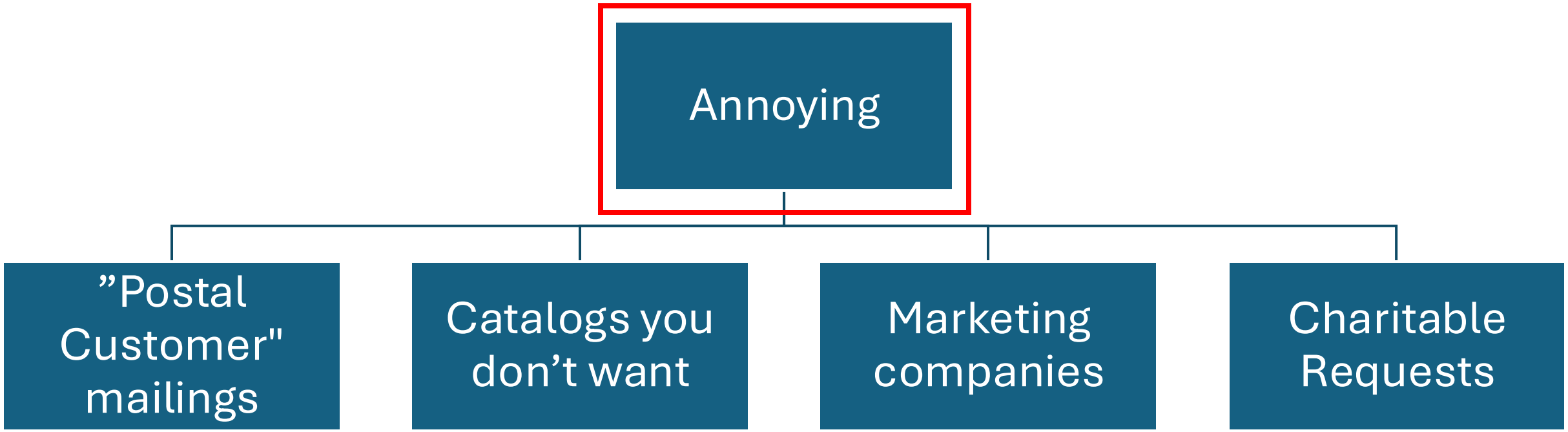
- Throwing them away may invite identity theft
- Can write “Refused” on unopened mail received through USPS
  - Won’t prevent *future* mailings and might be thrown away
- Shred them
  - Can be composted at home, but not commercially
  - Can’t be recycled at home

- **Take them to Chelmsford’s next shredding event**
  - **May 10, 2025: 9am-1pm at DPW, 9 Alpha Rd**
- **AND Avoid them through Opt-Out Prescreen**

- A free service mandated by Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA)
- *Only available at this website (they'll ask for your SSN and DOB)*

OptOutPrescreen.com or 888-5-OPT-OUT

- How does this work?
  - Credit and insurance companies want to make an offer
  - They ask the Consumer Credit Reporting Companies for names and addresses of people whose profile matches their criteria
- You can “Opt-Out” -- ask that your name not be included
  - Electronic Opt-Out for 5 years through their website
  - Permanent Opt-Out by Mail
- You can opt back in later if you want to
- Doesn’t impact your credit rating
- Only opts out of preapproved offers
- Can only opt-out for yourself and others for whom you are legal parent, guardian, executor, administrator, etc.

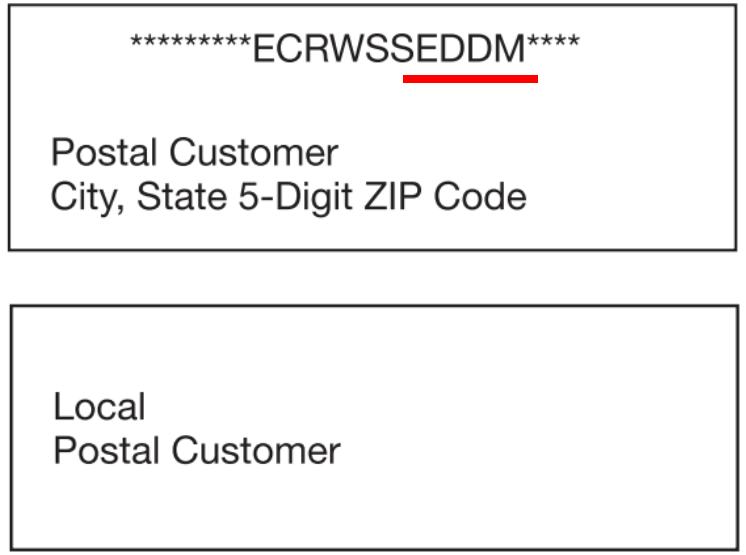


My Priorities

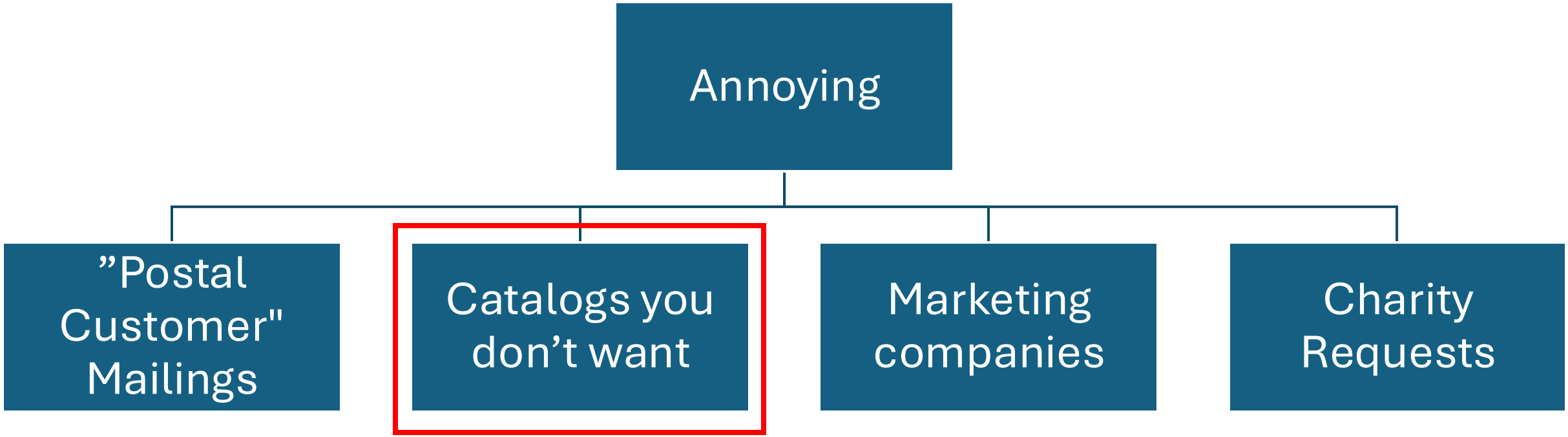
- Size of item (e.g., catalog versus postcard)
- Contain “gifts”
- Frequency

Every Door Direct Mail:
A service provided by the USPS

No way to opt out



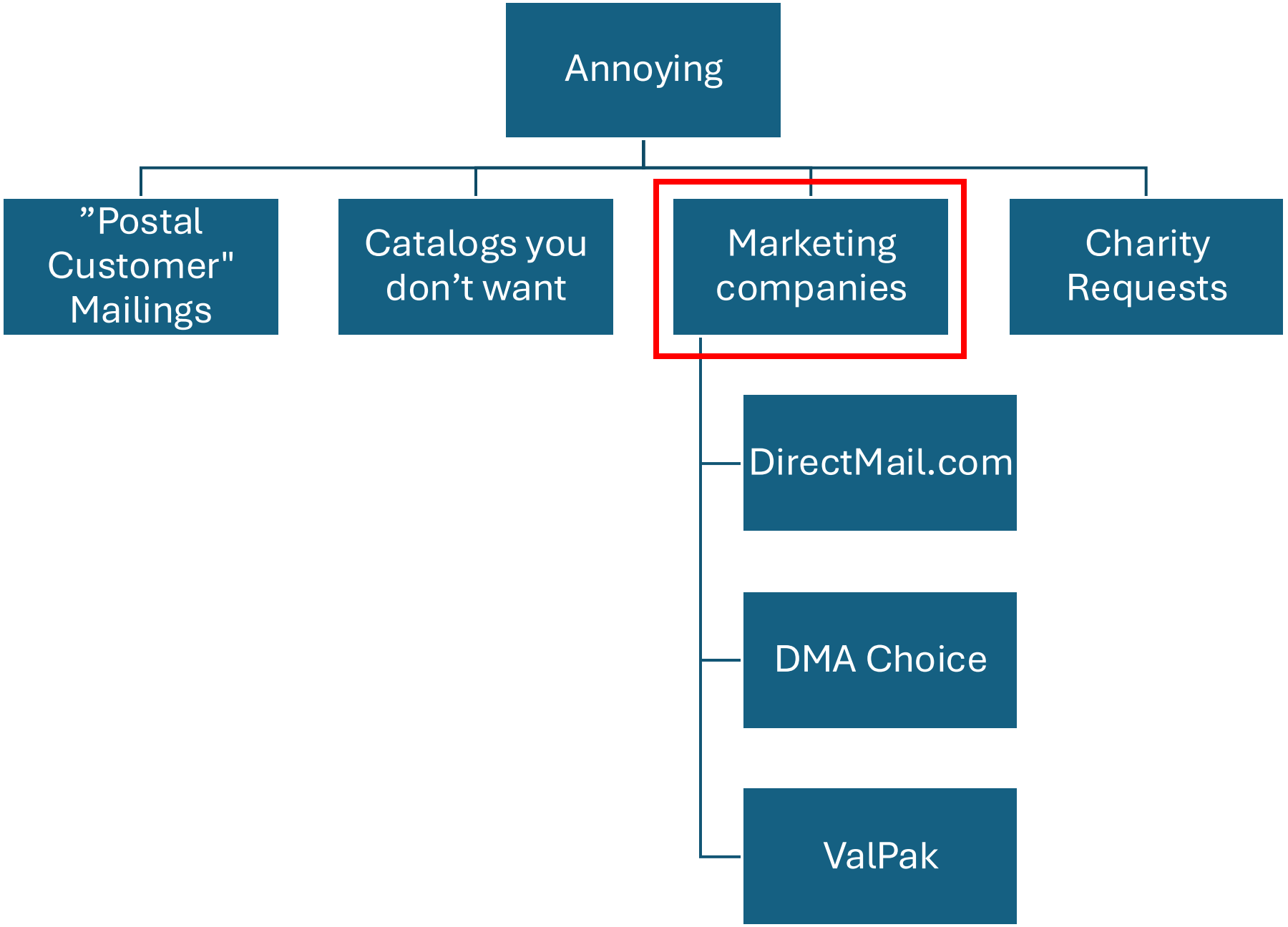
- **Established in 2011**
- **Mail sent to all customers in a neighborhood, city or ZIP Code**
- **Nearly 3 billion pieces sent in 2023**


Annoying
”Postal Customer" Mailings
Catalogs you don’t want
Marketing companies
Charity Requests

CatalogChoice

www.catalogchoice.org

- Free service, funded by donations
- “Prevented ONE MILLION POUNDS of paper waste in 2024”
- You create an account and then opt out of catalogs company by company
- You may need to contact the catalog company directly (Catalog Choice will tell you)


Annoying
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Catalogs you don’t want
Marketing companies
Charity Requests
DirectMail.com
DMA Choice
ValPak

DirectMail.com™

Intelligent Marketing Solutions. *Delivered.*

Consumer Lists

As low as 3.5¢/ name

The most comprehensive and accurate source for consumer marketing data today.

GET STARTED

Business Lists

As low as 7.5¢/name

Target businesses from our 14 million plus monthly updated lists.

GET STARTED

New Mover Lists

As low as 5.5¢/name

Target individuals and families that recently moved into your market.

GET STARTED

Email Lists

As low as 7.5¢/name

Top-Tier Email Lists, Updated Daily, Saving you time and money

GET STARTED

Specialty Lists

As low as 5.5¢/name

Target Specialized Markets, Custom Lists, Professions and Trades.

GET STARTED

National Do Not Mail List

- Not the same as the US Govt-sponsored Do Not **Call** list
- Not US Govt sponsored or mandated
- Free service with no end date
- DirectMail.com is a data reseller who
  - ALSO maintains lists of those who don't want to receive mail
  - Shares opt-out lists with marketers who subscribe to them
  - Lets you decide what you want to opt in or out of
- *It is up to the marketers to check their mailing lists and remove the "Do Not Mail" subscribers*
- www.directmail.com/mail_preference/

National Do Not Mail List

Legend:
☒ - Mail you do NOT want to receive
☑ - Mail you want to receive

Catalogs
☒ Children's clothing ☒ Electronics ☒ Home products ☒ Men's clothing
☒ Women's clothing

Charitable Requests
☒ Diabetes Information ☒ Disaster ☒ Environmental ☒ Health
☒ Hunger ☒ Law Enforcement ☒ Political ☒ Religion

Credit Card Applications
☒ AMEX ☒ Discover ☒ Gasoline ☒ Master Card
☒ VISA

Health Care
☒ Dental Care ☒ Health Insurance ☒ Weight Loss

Home Improvement Offerings
☒ Alarm Systems ☒ Audio / Visual Offers ☒ Contractors ☒ Electric
☒ Flooring ☒ HVAC ☒ Lawn & Landscape ☒ Painting
☒ Plumbing ☒ Siding ☒ Windows

Magazines
☒ Arts, Crafts & Hobbies ☒ Fashion ☒ Fishing ☒ Food & Cooking
☒ Health & Fitness ☒ Home & Garden ☒ Hunting & Guns ☒ Money & Business
☒ Sports

Mortgage Offerings
☒ Debt Consolidation ☒ Refinance

Politically Oriented
☒ Democratic ☒ Independent ☒ Local Elections ☒ National Elections
☒ Republican

Retail Store Offerings
☒ Computers ☒ DISH TV ☒ DVD / Video Rentals ☒ Furniture
☒ Home Improvement ☒ Mattresses ☒ Rugs ☒ Televisions

Telephone Offerings
☒ Cellular ☒ Local ☒ Long Distance ☒ VOIP

◀ Go Back Submit Registration ▶

DMAchoice.org

- Run by the nonprofit Association of National Advertisers (ANA)
  - Over 1,000 client companies, representing an estimated 20,000 brands, and over 500 marketing solution providers
- ANA does not sell advertising mailing lists
- Opting out for 10 years costs $6 online, $7 by mail
- One account allows 5 names and 5 addresses that can be updated

DMAchoice.org

DMAchoice | ANA Consumer Preference Service

Additional Consumer Choice Tools

Opt-out the Deceased (postal mail)	Opt-out as a Caretaker (postal mail)	Email Opt-out Service (email)	Register for Pennsylvania and Wyoming Do-Not-Call Lists (phone)

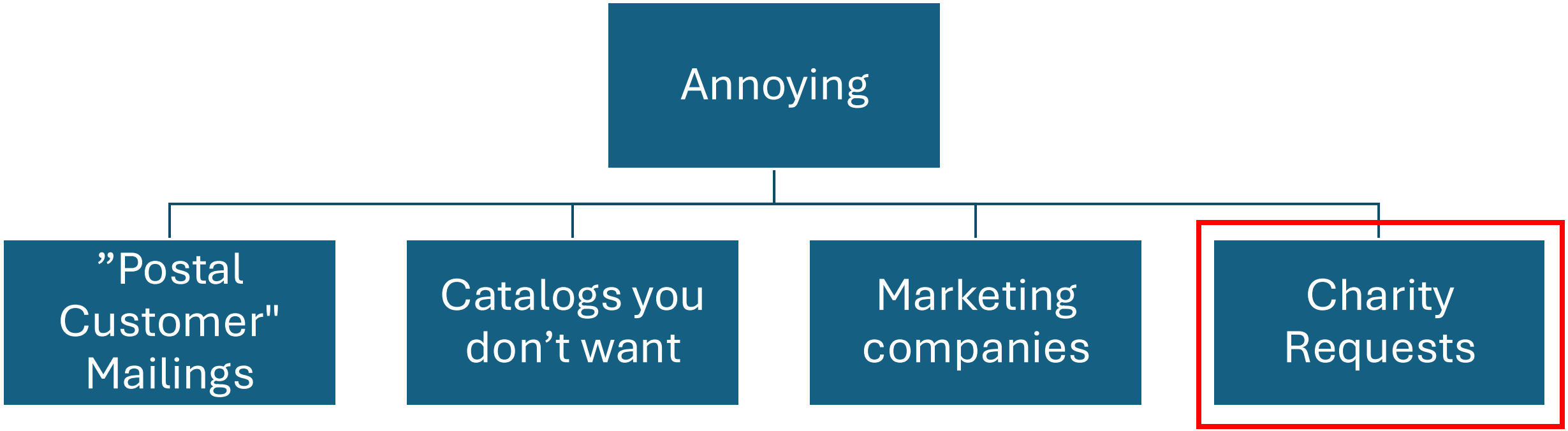
ValPak www.valpak.com/remove-address

- Targeted marketing based on neighborhood, demographics, interests, etc.
- Includes “blue envelopes,” flyers, postcards and other options
- Often local

Find local coupons online:

www.valpak.com/local/chelmsford-ma

Or on their website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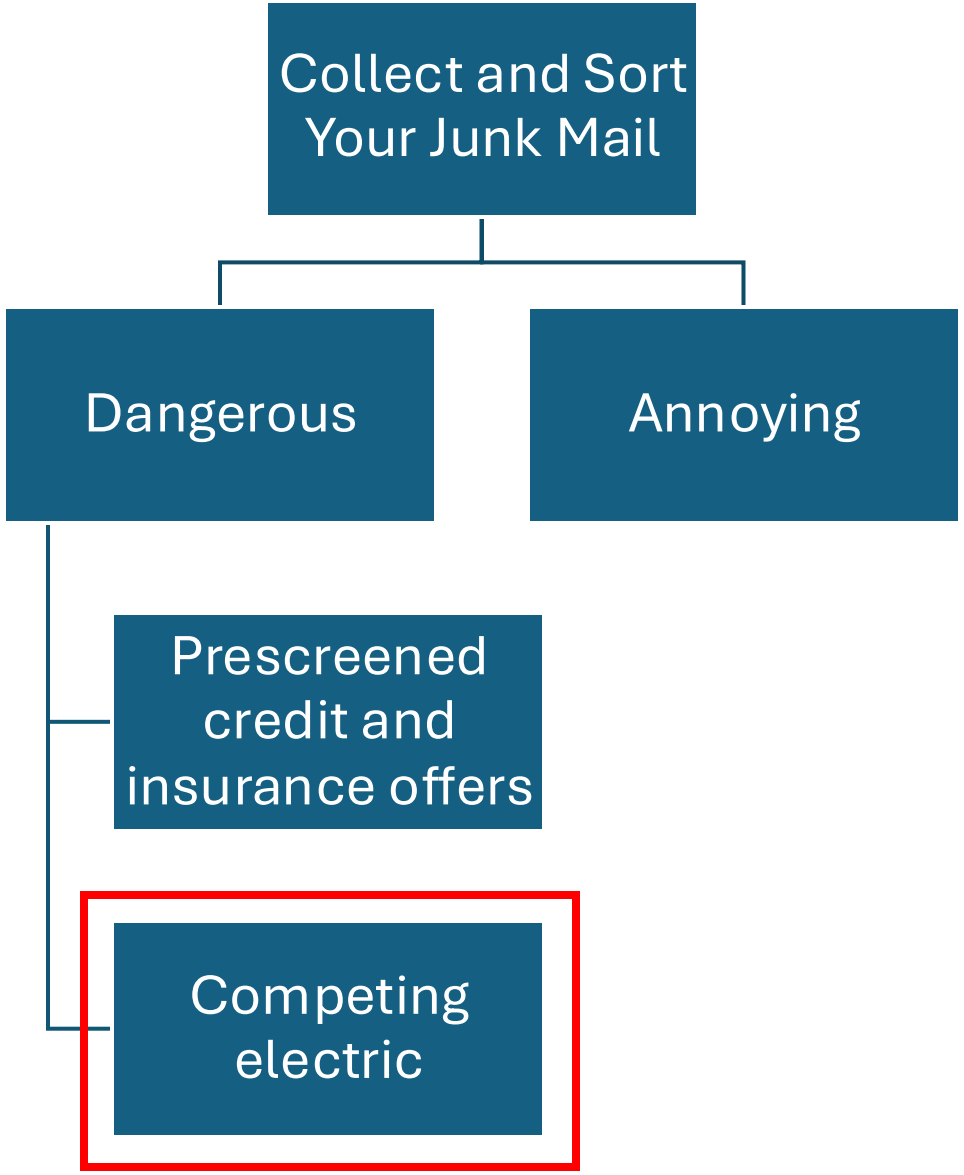
Charity Requests

- If you donate to a charity …
  - Most follow up quickly with another request and then request again regularly – because that works!
  - To eliminate additional requests:
    - Sign up to donate monthly
    - OR ask to opt-out of postal mail (maybe except tax receipts)
  - **Ask them not to sell or rent your data**
- If you haven't donated …
  - Opting out from marketing companies will help
  - Contact them directly if you're still receiving mail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Opting Out of Competing Electric Offers

- Clean Choice Energy: https://cleanchoiceenergy.com/contact
- Smart Energy: 1-800-443-4440
  - Need the PIN inside their offer
- Any other junk mail, including Competing Electric Offers:
  - Check their website for opt out instructions or a phone number
  - Often hidden under “contact us”

Predatory Electric Suppliers-Watch out!

- Recognized by Governor as predatory- but wasn't included in 2024 Climate legislation package.
- Before signing up look at-
  - Rates. Constant or can change?
  - Duration of commitment
  - Check out Chelmsford Choice before signing

ENERGY

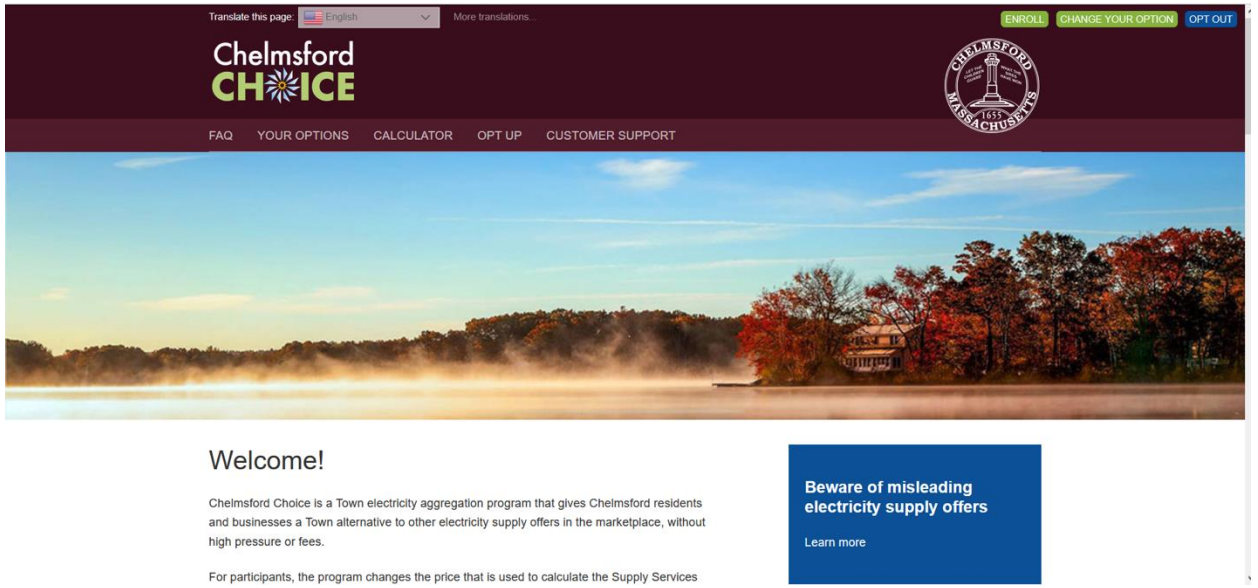
Governor eyes ban on independent electric suppliers

Efforts to end competitive electric supply stalled out last year on Beacon Hill

Chelmsford Choice

https://www.masspowerchoice.com/chelmsford

- Town-managed electricity aggregation program since 2014
  - Competitive rates
  - Rates locked in for duration of contract (2 or 3 years)
  - 100% Renewable option like having solar on your roof!



	BASIC *(automatic enrollment)*			GREENER 67% from new regional renewable energy resources *(option)*			GREENEST 100% from new regional renewable energy resources** *(option)*			National Grid's Basic Service *(if you opt out)*		
Price	**14.843 ¢/kWh***			**16.415 ¢/kWh***			**17.849 ¢/kWh***			**14.672 ¢/kWh** – residential **13.409 ¢/kWh** – commercial **14.445 ¢/kWh** – industrial		
Price period	November 2023 – November 2025			November 2023 – November 2025			November 2023 – November 2025			February 1 – July 31, 2025, residential & commercial. February 1 – April 30, 2025, industrial.		
Electricity from renewable sources	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**