BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Utility Accounts & Outage Maps

Electric, gas and water accounts, outages, help paying and choosing a supplier — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for Portage County homes and families

Take your time — looking around online can't break anything

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For Ohio Edison, Enbridge Gas Ohio & Portage County water customers · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your guide to the electric, gas and water accounts that serve Portage County homes. Start with the one-hour plan in Part 1, then turn to whatever you need: outages, the smell of gas, help paying, or comparing suppliers. Read in any order and at your own pace. If a website looks a little different, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Getting Started

Who actually serves your home, the few words on a utility bill that matter, and a calm one-hour plan to get your electric, gas and water accounts online.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. This guide is about the bills and services nobody thinks about until something goes wrong: your electric, your gas and your water. When the lights go out in a storm, when a bill looks too high, or when a stranger at the door says you can "save on your electric," it helps to know exactly who to call and where to look.

I'm Bill. For more than 30 years I've helped people make sense of their technology, and I serve folks right here in Portage County, Ohio. I wrote this guide for our corner of the state, with the real companies, websites and phone numbers that serve Portage County homes, checked against their own official websites in November 2026.

Who this guide is for

- Anyone in Portage County who pays an Ohio Edison electric bill, an Enbridge Gas Ohio gas bill, or a city or county water and sewer bill.
- Anyone who would like to stop writing checks and see bills online, but wants to do it safely.
- Anyone who has sat in the dark wondering whether the power company even knows the power is out.
- Grown children and caregivers who help a parent keep the utilities paid and the heat on.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this guide does for you

By the end you'll be able to set up your online utility accounts, choose paperless billing or automatic payment if you want them, report an outage in under a minute, read the outage map, know exactly what to do if you smell gas, find help paying a winter heating bill, and compare electric and gas suppliers without getting talked into a bad contract.

The big promise: you can't break it

Looking at your account online, checking an outage map or reading the state's price chart can't hurt anything. Explore all you like. There are only three places where I'll ask you to slow down: signing a supplier contract, giving anyone your account number, and anything to do with the smell of gas. I'll point those out clearly when we get there.

You're never stuck alone

If anything here feels like too much, call or text me at **(330) 200-8042**. We'll sort it out together, with no judgment. There's no silly question when it comes to keeping the lights and heat on.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

Who Serves Your Home?

Before we set up anything, let's be sure of the names. Utility companies merge and rename themselves, and a bill from a few years ago may show a name that no longer exists. The safest source is always the newest bill in your hand.

The companies that serve most Portage County homes

Service	Company	Official website
Electric	Ohio Edison, a FirstEnergy company	firstenergycorp.com
Natural gas	Enbridge Gas Ohio (formerly Dominion Energy Ohio)	enbridgegas.com/ohio
Water and sewer	Your city or village, or Portage County Water Resources	Printed on your water bill

GOOD TO KNOW

Not everyone has the same companies

Some homes are served by a different gas company, a village or city electric system, or an electric cooperative. Homes on a private well and septic system have no water or sewer bill at all. If your bill names a different company, the ideas in this guide still apply; just use the phone numbers printed on *your* bill.

Look it up by address

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), the state agency that oversees utilities, has a **Find Your Utility Information** tool on its Energy Choice Ohio website, plus electric and natural gas provider maps. You type in an address and it tells you which companies serve it. That's handy when you move, or when you help a parent in another town.

TIP

Your utility vs. your supplier

Ohio Edison and Enbridge Gas Ohio own the wires and pipes, and they're the ones you call for outages and leaks, no matter who you buy the energy itself from. A "supplier" only sells the electricity or gas that flows through those wires and pipes. We cover suppliers in Chapter 30, *What Energy Choice Means*.

CHAPTER 3

Reading Your Bill: The Words That Matter

A utility bill is crowded with numbers. You only need a handful of them to set up an online account, report an outage, compare prices, or spot a scam.

On the bill	What it means for you
Account number	Your ID with the company. You'll need it to register online. Treat it like a bank number: don't read it to anyone who called *you*.
Service address	The home the bill is for. It may differ from the mailing address.
Amount due and due date	What you owe and when. A past-due amount shows here too.
Distribution or delivery charges	What Ohio Edison or Enbridge charges to deliver energy over its wires or pipes. You pay this no matter who your supplier is.
Generation or supply charges	The cost of the energy itself. This is the part a supplier can change.
Price to Compare (electric)	The number you use to compare electric offers on the state's chart. See Chapter 31, *Using the Apples to Apples Chart*.
Mcf or Ccf (gas)	Units of natural gas. Your current gas rate per Mcf or Ccf is what you compare on the state's chart.
Supplier name	If you've switched, or your town buys power for you, a supplier's name appears on the bill. See Chapter 32, *Aggregation: When Your Town Shops for You*.

TIP

Keep one recent bill in a folder

Even if you go paperless, keep one recent bill (or a saved copy on your computer) where you can find it. It has every phone number and account number you'll need when the power is out and your internet is down.

SCAM ALERT

Your account number is the key scammers want

Door-to-door and phone salespeople often ask to "see your bill" so they can copy the account number and switch your supplier. Never show it to someone who came to you. See Chapter 35, *Door-to-Door and Phone Supplier Sales*.

CHAPTER 4

Your One-Hour Utility Setup Plan

You don't have to read this whole guide to get the important things done. If you have an hour and your latest bills, do these things in this order. Each one points to the chapter with the slow, step-by-step directions.

1. **Write the emergency numbers somewhere you'll find them in the dark**: the Ohio Edison outage line and the Enbridge Gas Ohio emergency line. See Chapter 40, *Your Utilities Cheat-Sheet*.
2. **Sign up for outage texts from Ohio Edison**, so you can report an outage with one word. See Chapter 14, *Outage Texts: OUT and REG*.
3. **Create your FirstEnergy online account** for your Ohio Edison bill. See Chapter 6, *Creating Your FirstEnergy Online Account*.
4. **Create your Enbridge Gas Ohio online account.** See Chapter 20, *Your Enbridge Gas Online Account*.
5. **Find your water and sewer provider's online portal**, if it has one. See Chapter 24, *Who Handles Your Water and Sewer*.
6. **Decide, calmly, about paperless billing and automatic payment.** See Chapter 8, *Paperless Billing, AutoPay and Budget Plans*.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why do it on a calm day

In a storm, with the house dark and your phone battery dropping, nobody wants to hunt for a password or an account number. A calm hour now means a one-minute outage report later.

What to have handy

- Your latest electric, gas and water bills (for the account numbers).
- An email address you check, and its password.
- Your cell phone, for text alerts and sign-in codes.
- A notebook or password manager for the new passwords you'll create.

TIP

One account at a time

Do the electric account, take a break, then do gas. Mixing up which password goes with which company is the most common snag, and it's easy to avoid by going slowly.

CHAPTER 5

Passwords, Email and Your Utility Accounts

A utility account holds your name, address, payment details and sometimes your bank account. It deserves the same care as an online banking login.

Good habits for every utility account

- Use a different password for each utility, and never the same one as your email or bank.
- Use an email address you actually check. Bills, outage updates and payment receipts all go there.
- Add your cell phone number if the site offers it. It helps you get back in if you forget your password.
- Write the website address down along with the password, so you never have to search for it.

Always type the address yourself

When you want to pay a bill or check an outage, type the company's address into your browser yourself: **firstenergycorp.com** for Ohio Edison, **enbridgegas.com/ohio** for Enbridge Gas Ohio. Don't click an ad or a link in an unexpected text. Search results sometimes show look-alike payment sites at the top.

HEADS UP

Third-party bill-pay sites

Some websites let you pay "any utility" and may add a convenience fee. They aren't scams by definition, but they aren't your utility either. When in doubt, pay through the company's own website, its phone line, or by mail.

GOOD TO KNOW

Forgot your password or got locked out?

Every utility site has a **Forgot password** or similar link on the sign-in page. It sends a reset link to the email on file. If that email is old and you can't get into it, call the customer service number on your bill and they'll help you update it.

TIP

A password manager helps

If you already use the password feature built into your iPhone, Android phone or web browser, let it save these new passwords too. Then you only need to remember the one that unlocks your phone.

PART 2

Ohio Edison: Your Electric Account

Ohio Edison is part of FirstEnergy, so your electric account lives on firstenergycorp.com. Here's how to set it up, pay, go paperless, and keep an eye on your usage.

CHAPTER 6

Creating Your FirstEnergy Online Account

Ohio Edison is one of FirstEnergy's electric companies, and its customers manage their accounts on FirstEnergy's website. Don't let the different name throw you: if your bill says Ohio Edison, **firstenergycorp.com** is the right place.

What an online account does for you

- See your bill and your payment history any time, without digging through paper.
- Pay online, set up text and email alerts, and report outages tied to your address.
- Look at how much electricity you use, month by month.
- Start, stop or move service when you move house.

To create your account

1. Have your latest Ohio Edison bill in front of you.
2. On a computer, tablet or phone, type **firstenergycorp.com** into the address bar.
3. Tap or click **Log In / Register** at the top of the page.
4. Choose **Register**, then follow the prompts. You'll be asked for details from your bill, such as your account number, plus an email address and a new password.
5. Watch your email for a confirmation message, and follow its link if it asks you to.
6. Sign in. If you have more than one Ohio Edison account (a second home, say), use **Add An Account** under **Manage Account**.

TIP

If the screens look a little different

Utility websites change their look every so often. If a button name doesn't match exactly, look for the closest match. The idea is always the same: register once with your account number, then sign in with your email and password.

HEADS UP

Only on the real website

Register only on firstenergycorp.com, which you typed in yourself. Never create an account from a link in an unexpected text or email that says your account "needs to be verified."

CHAPTER 7

Paying Your Electric Bill Online

Once you're signed in, paying online takes about a minute, and you get a confirmation right away. No stamps, no wondering whether the check arrived.

Paying while signed in

1. Go to **firstenergycorp.com** and sign in.
2. Open **My Account**, then choose **Pay My Bill**.
3. Check the amount, choose how you want to pay, and follow the prompts.
4. Write down or save the confirmation number when it appears.

Other ways to pay

- **Pay as a Guest**: a one-time payment without creating an account. Handy when you pay for a parent.
- **Ways to Pay**: FirstEnergy's page that lists every payment option, including mail and phone.
- **Bill & Payment History**: see past bills and confirm a payment went through.

GOOD TO KNOW

Payment fees

Paying from a bank account through your own utility account is the most common way to pay online. Some card payment options may carry a fee charged by a payment processor. The **Ways to Pay** page explains the current options and any fees; read it before you choose.

SCAM ALERT

Ohio Edison will not ask for gift cards

No real utility asks you to pay with gift cards, a Bitcoin machine, or a payment app to a stranger's name. If anyone does, it's a scam. Hang up and see Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

CHAPTER 8

Paperless Billing, AutoPay and Budget Plans

These three options can make life simpler, but they aren't right for everyone. Here's what each one does, so you can decide for yourself. The same ideas apply to your gas and water bills.

Option	What it does for you
Paperless billing	Your bill arrives by email instead of mail. Good if you check email often. Not good if email piles up unread.
Automatic payment (AutoPay)	The bill is paid from your bank account or card on the due date, every month. Good for never missing a due date. You still need to look at the bill each month.
Budget or equal-payment plan	Your yearly costs are averaged so you pay about the same amount each month, with adjustments along the way. Good for avoiding a huge January heating bill.

Where to find them on FirstEnergy

Sign in at **firstenergycorp.com** and look under **Manage My Account** and **Ways to Pay**. FirstEnergy has its own names for these programs, and they can change, so read the description on the page before you enroll. If you'd rather talk it through, call Ohio Edison customer service at **1-800-633-4766**, the number printed on your bill.

HEADS UP

AutoPay still needs a monthly glance

If a bill is wrong, or a supplier you never chose shows up on it, AutoPay will pay it anyway. Spend one minute each month looking at the amount and the supplier name. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

TIP

A good combination for many people

Paperless plus a monthly email reminder plus paying it yourself gives you the convenience without losing track. If you're away for the winter, AutoPay plus a budget plan keeps things steady.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why a budget plan helps

Northeast Ohio winters mean big heating bills in some months and small ones in others. Averaging takes the shock out of the cold months, which makes it much easier to plan a fixed income.

CHAPTER 9

Looking at Your Electric Usage

Your online account can show how much electricity you use. That helps you understand a high bill, spot a problem like a failing appliance, and see whether a change you made actually saved money.

1. Sign in at **firstenergycorp.com**.
2. Open **My Account**, then choose **Analyze Usage**.
3. Look at the months side by side. Summer air conditioning and winter electric heat usually show up as bumps.
4. If a month looks far higher than the same month last year, and the weather was similar, that's worth a call to customer service.

Other tools on the same site

- **Submit Meter Reading**: for times when you're asked to send in your own meter reading.
- **Save Energy > Ohio**: Ohio-specific energy saving programs.
- **Home Energy Analyzer**: questions about your home that point out where energy goes.

TIP

Compare with last year, not last month

Electric use swings with the seasons. Comparing January to last January tells you far more than comparing January to October.

GOOD TO KNOW

Smart meters

Many homes now have a smart meter that sends readings automatically. FirstEnergy has a **Smart Meters** page in its Save Energy section if you'd like to read more about yours.

CHAPTER 10

Text and Email Alerts from Ohio Edison

Alerts are short messages FirstEnergy sends you by text or email. They can warn you before a big storm and update you while your power is out, so you're not left guessing.

What alerts can do for you

- Severe weather alerts ahead of storms.
- Restoration updates after you've reported an outage.
- Account messages, depending on what you choose.

To set up alerts

1. Sign in at **firstenergycorp.com**.
2. Open **My Account**, then choose **Text & Email Alerts**.
3. Pick which alerts you want, and whether they come by text, email, or both.
4. Save your choices. You can come back and change them any time.

TIP

Separate from outage texting

Alerts that come *to* you are one thing. Reporting an outage *by* text, with the word OUT, is another. Most people want both. See Chapter 14, *Outage Texts: OUT and REG*.

GOOD TO KNOW

Message and data rates

FirstEnergy notes that message and data rates may apply. On most cell plans with unlimited texting, that simply means no extra charge.

CHAPTER 11

Moving, Starting or Stopping Electric Service

Moving into a new home, moving to assisted living, or settling a parent's estate all mean starting or stopping service. FirstEnergy handles all three online.

1. Go to **firstenergycorp.com**.
2. Open the **Moving Requests** menu.
3. Choose **Start, Stop, or Move Service** and answer the questions.
4. Pick your dates carefully. Stop service at the old home the day after you leave, and start it at the new home the day before you arrive.
5. Later, use **Check Your Status Request** to make sure it went through.

TIP

Read the meter on moving day

Take a quick photo of the electric meter on the day you leave and the day you arrive. If a final bill seems off, the photo settles it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Gas and water are separate

Starting or stopping electric service doesn't touch your gas or water. Enbridge Gas Ohio has its own **Start/Stop Service** page (see Chapter 20, *Your Enbridge Gas Online Account*), and your water provider has its own process too.

HEADS UP

Settling an estate

When a loved one passes, don't simply stop the service if the house still needs heat to keep pipes from freezing. Call customer service and ask about transferring the account to the estate or a family member.

PART 3

When the Power Goes Out

How to report an outage by phone, text or website, read the outage map, stay safe around downed lines, and get ready before the next storm.

CHAPTER 12

Reporting a Power Outage

It's natural to assume the power company already knows your power is out. FirstEnergy says plainly that it often doesn't. Its equipment can tell when a large block of customers loses power, but not where each individual outage is. Your report helps crews pinpoint the damage.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why your report matters

FirstEnergy asks customers not to rely on neighbors to report an outage: the more reports it gets, the better it can find the problem. If your neighbor's lights come back on and yours don't, report again. The problem may be the wire to your house alone.

Four ways to report

How	What to do
Phone	Call **1-888-LIGHTSS (1-888-544-4877)**. It's an automated line that uses your phone number to find your account, so you don't need to wait for a person.
Text	Text **OUT** to **544487**. Register first by texting **REG** to 544487. See Chapter 14, *Outage Texts: OUT and REG*.
Website	Go to **firstenergycorp.com**, open **Outages**, and choose **Report a Power Outage**.
Outage map	View and report outages on the **Outages Map**. See Chapter 13, *Checking the Outage Map*.

TIP

Call from the phone on your account

Because the automated line looks you up by the number you're calling from, call from the phone number Ohio Edison has on file. If it can't find you, have your account number ready.

STAY SAFE

Downed wire? Call 911 first

For a downed power line or any other electrical hazard, FirstEnergy says to call 911. Then stay at least 30 feet away. See Chapter 15, *Downed Lines and Electrical Hazards*.

GOOD TO KNOW

Hearing or speech difficulties

FirstEnergy says customers with a communications disability can report an outage through a TTY/TDD relay service, the online form, or the text message service.

CHAPTER 13

Checking the Outage Map

The outage map shows where the power is out right now, how many customers are affected, and, when available, the cause and an estimated time your power will be back. FirstEnergy calls it the best source of information on its restoration efforts.

To open the map

1. Go to **firstenergycorp.com**.
2. Open the **Outages** menu and choose **Outages Map**.
3. Zoom in on your area with your fingers or the plus button, or search for your town.
4. Tap or click a marked area to see details such as the cause and the estimated restoration time.

Understanding the estimated restoration time

In a big storm, FirstEnergy may hold off on estimates while it assesses the damage. It may also post a **global** estimated restoration time: the time it expects the *very last* customer to be back on. Many people get their power back well before that time. Estimates are updated as crews learn more.

TIP

Other handy pages in the same menu

My Town looks up outages by community. **Planned Outages** lists scheduled work. **Storm Information** has updates during major weather.

HEADS UP

Save your phone's battery

Maps use a lot of battery. Check once, note what it says, and close it. Then check again in an hour or two rather than every few minutes.

GOOD TO KNOW

Internet and cable are separate

FirstEnergy only restores electric service. If your phone line, internet or cable TV is also out after the power returns, contact those companies separately.

CHAPTER 14

Outage Texts: OUT and REG

Texting is the fastest way to report an outage, and it works even when your internet is down. It takes two minutes to set up today, and two seconds to use during a storm.

Set it up once, on a calm day

1. Open the **Messages** app on your cell phone.
2. Start a new message to the number **544487**. (That spells LIGHTS on a phone keypad.)
3. Type **REG** and send it.
4. Follow the replies. You may be asked to confirm your account.
5. Save 544487 as a contact named **Ohio Edison Outage** so it's easy to find in the dark.

When the power goes out

1. Open **Messages** and find your **Ohio Edison Outage** contact.
2. Type **OUT** and send it.
3. Read the reply, which confirms your report.

GOOD TO KNOW

Message and data rates may apply

That's FirstEnergy's own wording. With most cell plans, texts cost nothing extra.

SCAM ALERT

The real number is 544487

Scammers sometimes text from ordinary-looking phone numbers claiming to be the power company. Real outage texts you signed up for come from the short number you saved. A text that demands payment to "avoid disconnection" is a scam. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

CHAPTER 15

Downed Lines and Electrical Hazards

STAY SAFE

Call 911 for any downed wire

FirstEnergy says to call 911 right away if you see a downed power line, then stay at least 30 feet away and keep others back. Thirty feet is about the length of a school bus.

After a storm it's tempting to walk out and look. Please don't go near any fallen wire. You can't tell by looking whether it's live.

What FirstEnergy wants you to know

- The black coating on a wire is **not** insulation that protects you. It's weather protection for the wire.
- A wire can be live whether or not it's touching the ground, and whether or not it's sparking.
- The ground around a downed wire can be energized. Stay at least 30 feet away in every direction from ordinary neighborhood lines.
- For the big high-voltage transmission lines, stay at least 100 feet away.
- Anything the wire touches, like a fence, a car or a puddle, can be dangerous too.

Trees near the lines

If you see a tree that looks like it could fall on power lines, FirstEnergy asks you to report it by calling **800-662-3115**, or online with **Report Tree Problem** under **Service Requests**. Don't trim near the lines yourself.

HEADS UP

Keep pets and grandchildren inside

After a storm, keep children and pets away from yards with fallen branches until you're sure no wires are tangled in them.

CHAPTER 16

Medical Equipment and the Critical Care List

If someone in your home depends on electric medical equipment, such as an oxygen concentrator, a power outage is more than an inconvenience. FirstEnergy has a list for exactly this situation.

How the Critical Care list works

1. Call FirstEnergy at **800-662-3115** and say someone in your household depends on electric life-support equipment.
2. FirstEnergy sends a form. Your doctor fills it in and signs it.
3. Return the form. FirstEnergy adds your name to its Critical Care list.
4. Repeat every year: the doctor must sign the form annually.

What being on the list does, and doesn't, do

- FirstEnergy uses the list to phone Critical Care customers when an outage may last more than 24 hours.
- The list is shared with county and city emergency management offices.
- There's no charge for the service.
- It does **not** guarantee your power comes back first. FirstEnergy stresses that you still need a backup plan, such as a battery backup.

STAY SAFE

Have a backup plan anyway

Talk to your equipment supplier about battery backup, know how long your batteries last, and decide ahead of time where you'd go if an outage drags on. In a medical emergency, call 911.

TIP

Battery backups for everyday devices

For your internet modem, router or a lamp, a small battery backup (a UPS) can keep things running for a while. Bill's guide *Surge Protectors & Battery Backups* covers choosing one.

CHAPTER 17

Getting Ready Before the Next Storm

A little preparation turns a frightening outage into an inconvenience. Most of this is about your phone, because during an outage your phone is your flashlight, your radio and your link to Ohio Edison.

A short storm checklist

1. Charge your phone, and keep a charged power bank or two.
2. Text **REG** to 544487 now, so reporting later is one word. See Chapter 14, *Outage Texts: OUT and REG*.
3. Write the outage line, **1-888-544-4877**, and the Enbridge Gas Ohio emergency line, **1-877-542-2630**, on paper by the phone.
4. Keep flashlights with fresh batteries where you can find them in the dark. Avoid candles if you can.
5. Know how to open your garage door by hand if it has an electric opener.
6. If you rely on medical equipment, see Chapter 16, *Medical Equipment and the Critical Care List*.

Generators

A backup generator can keep important things running, but it must be installed and run exactly as its maker says. FirstEnergy points out that an improperly connected generator is a danger to you and to the line crews working to restore power. Never run a portable generator indoors, in a garage or near an open window, because its exhaust contains deadly carbon monoxide.

TIP

Power blinks

A blink of a few seconds is FirstEnergy's equipment briefly shutting off to isolate a problem, then resetting. It can happen even on a sunny day. If blinks happen often at your home, FirstEnergy asks you to call 1-888-544-4877 to let it know.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Peace of mind

When you know exactly how to report an outage and where to see progress, the dark is a lot less worrying.

CHAPTER 18

After the Power Comes Back

When the lights come back on, a few minutes of checking saves trouble later.

Your devices

- If the internet doesn't come back, unplug your modem and router for 30 seconds, then plug them back in.
- Reset clocks on the microwave, stove and coffee maker.
- Check that your refrigerator and freezer are running.
- If your home has a security system or medical alert base, check its status light.

Food, damage and your bill

Question	Answer
Spoiled food	FirstEnergy says it does not reimburse for food lost or equipment damaged in a weather-related outage. Call your homeowner's or renter's insurance to ask whether your policy covers it.
Your bill	You're only charged for electricity you use. While your power was out, the meter didn't record use, so you aren't charged for that time.
Still out when neighbors are on	Report again. The problem may be in the wire to your house alone.

HEADS UP

When in doubt, throw it out

If your refrigerator was off for a long time, don't taste food to check it. Follow food safety guidance from your doctor or a trusted public health source.

SCAM ALERT

"Outage refund" calls are fake

After big storms, scammers call offering a "refund" or "credit" for the outage if you'll confirm your account or card number. FirstEnergy doesn't reimburse weather outages, so any such call is a red flag. Hang up. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

PART 4

Enbridge Gas Ohio: Your Gas Account

Dominion Energy Ohio is now Enbridge Gas Ohio. Here's what changed, how to manage your gas account online, and exactly what to do if you ever smell gas.

CHAPTER 19

Dominion Is Now Enbridge Gas Ohio

For many years, gas bills in this part of Ohio said **Dominion Energy Ohio**. That company is now **Enbridge Gas Ohio**. Same pipes, same gas, same service crews. The name, logo and website changed.

What you need	Current details
Company name	Enbridge Gas Ohio
Website	**enbridgegas.com/ohio**
Online account sign-in	**Sign in / Register** on the website, which takes you to mya.enbridgegas.com
Smell gas? (24 hours)	**1-877-542-2630**, or 911, from a safe distance
Billing and payments	**1-800-362-7557**, Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern, closed holidays. Hearing and speech impaired customers can dial 711.

HEADS UP

Pick Ohio on the Enbridge website

Enbridge Gas also serves Ontario, Quebec, Utah, Idaho, Wyoming and North Carolina. Its website may ask you to choose a location, and it can guess wrong. Make sure **Ohio** is selected, or type **enbridgegas.com/ohio** directly.

SCAM ALERT

Scammers love a name change

A rename is the perfect cover for a caller who says your account must be "transferred" or "re-verified" for a fee. There's no fee for the name change. Enbridge has its own scam warning page at **enbridgegas.com/scams**. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

TIP

Update your saved numbers

If your phone or address book still says "Dominion" for the gas company, update it now with the numbers above. Old contact entries cause confusion in an emergency.

CHAPTER 20

Your Enbridge Gas Online Account

Enbridge Gas Ohio says its online account lets you pay your bill, start a service order, or enroll in a billing program. It's the gas-company twin of your FirstEnergy account.

1. Have your latest Enbridge Gas Ohio bill handy.
2. Type **enbridgegas.com/ohio** into your browser.
3. Tap **Sign in / Register**.
4. If you're new, choose the option to register and follow the prompts, using details from your bill and your email address.
5. Confirm your email if asked, then sign in.

Useful pages on the Enbridge Gas Ohio site

- **Billing > Pay my bill**: the different ways to pay.
- **Billing > Understand my bill**: what each line means.
- **Billing > Read your gas meter**: how to read the meter yourself.
- **Start/Stop Service**: for moving.
- **Energy Choice**: about gas suppliers. See Chapter 30, *What Energy Choice Means*.

GOOD TO KNOW

Having trouble signing in?

The Contact Us page links to an account support page for sign-in problems. If that doesn't help, call 1-800-362-7557. Enbridge says its busiest times are weekdays 9 a.m. to noon and 4 to 6 p.m., so call outside those hours for a shorter wait.

HEADS UP

The emergency line can't help with your account

Enbridge keeps its emergency line for emergencies. For billing or account questions, use the billing number, 1-800-362-7557.

CHAPTER 21

Paying the Gas Bill and Budget Billing

Gas bills in Northeast Ohio swing hard with the seasons: small in summer, large in January. Enbridge Gas Ohio offers ways to pay and a plan to even things out.

To pay online

1. Sign in at **enbridgegas.com/ohio** with **Sign in / Register**.
2. Find the option to pay your bill and follow the prompts.
3. Save the confirmation number.

Budget Billing

Enbridge Gas Ohio has a **Budget Billing** page under **Billing**. Budget billing averages your yearly gas costs so your monthly payment is steadier, which makes a fixed income easier to plan. Read the page for current details, then enroll in your online account or by calling 1-800-362-7557.

TIP

Paperless and automatic payment

The same thinking from Chapter 8, *Paperless Billing, AutoPay and Budget Plans* applies to your gas bill. Look in your Enbridge online account for paperless and automatic payment choices, and still glance at each bill.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

If money is tight

Enbridge's **Help paying your energy bill** page is the place to start, along with the state programs in Chapter 26, *HEAP: Help With Heating Bills* and Chapter 28, *PIPP Plus: Paying a Share of Your Income*. Call before a bill is overdue: you have more choices early.

CHAPTER 22

If You Smell Gas

STAY SAFE

Leave first. Call from outside.

If you smell gas, get everyone out of the house right away. Then, from a safe distance such as a neighbor's home, call **911** and Enbridge Gas Ohio's 24-hour emergency line at **1-877-542-2630**. Enbridge says this emergency response is free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

What natural gas smells like

Natural gas has no smell of its own. Gas companies add a harmless chemical so leaks smell like rotten eggs or sulfur. If you notice that smell indoors or near the meter, treat it as a leak.

Until you're safely outside

- Don't switch lights or appliances on or off.
- Don't use your phone inside the house; make the call once you're outside and away.
- Don't light a match, lighter or candle, or start a car in an attached garage.
- Leave the door open on your way out if it's easy, but don't stop to open windows.
- Don't go back in until the gas company or fire department says it's safe.

HEADS UP

You can't report a leak online

Enbridge says a gas leak can't be reported online. It has to be a phone call to 1-877-542-2630 or 911, made from a safe place. Don't send an email or use a website form.

TIP

Put the number in your phone today

Save **1-877-542-2630** as a contact named **Gas Leak - Enbridge**. In a scare, you'll find it in seconds.

GOOD TO KNOW

Other gas companies

If your bill comes from a different gas company, its emergency number is printed on the bill. The rule is the same: leave, then call from outside.

CHAPTER 23

Call Before You Dig: 811

Gas lines, electric cables and water pipes run under many yards, sometimes only a short way down. Before you or a contractor dig for a fence, a mailbox post, a garden bed or a tree, there's a free service that marks the lines for you.

1. A few days before digging, call **8-1-1** or **1-800-362-2764**, or go to **oups.org** (Ohio Utilities Protection Service).
2. Describe where you plan to dig.
3. Wait for the utilities to mark their lines with paint or flags.
4. Dig carefully around the marks.

STAY SAFE

If you hit a gas line

Stop, leave the area, and call 911 and 1-877-542-2630 from a safe distance. Don't try to fix it or cover it up.

TIP

Ask your contractor

If you hire someone to dig, ask whether they've called 811. A good contractor will have.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why bother

Marking is free, and it keeps you from cutting off your own gas, power or internet, or worse.

PART 5

Water and Sewer

Water and sewer in Portage County come from different providers depending on where you live. Here's how to find yours and use its online tools.

CHAPTER 24

Who Handles Your Water and Sewer

Electric and gas are simple: one company each for most of the county. Water and sewer are different. Depending on your address, your water and sewer may come from your city or village, from **Portage County Water Resources**, or from your own private well and septic system.

How to tell which one you have

1. Find your most recent water or sewer bill.
2. Look at the name at the top. That's your provider.
3. Look for its website and phone number on the bill. Write them in the table in Chapter 40, *Your Utilities Cheat-Sheet*.
4. If you get no water bill at all, you likely have a private well. Your water is your own responsibility, and outages usually mean a pump or power problem.

GOOD TO KNOW

Why this guide doesn't list every city

City and village water departments each run their own billing systems, and they change them from time to time. Rather than print details that may go out of date, I've stuck to what I could confirm on official websites in November 2026: Portage County Water Resources, in Chapter 25, *Portage County Water Resources Online*.

TIP

Water outages and boil advisories

For a main break, low pressure or a boil advisory, your water provider is the one to call, not Ohio Edison or Enbridge. Their number is on your water bill. Local news and your city's website usually carry boil advisories too.

HEADS UP

Well owners and power outages

If you're on a well, your pump needs electricity. During a long power outage you may have no running water. Keep some bottled water on hand, especially in storm season.

CHAPTER 25

Portage County Water Resources Online

If your water or sewer bill comes from Portage County Water Resources, the county offers online bill viewing and payment through its website, **portagecounty-oh.gov**.

What the county's online payment portal offers

- Online access around the clock, 24/7.
- Up to two years of payment history.
- **AutoPay**, for automatic monthly payments.
- **Pay by Text**, for paying from your phone by text message.

To get started

1. Type **portagecounty-oh.gov** into your browser.
2. Find **Water Resources**, then the **Water / Sewer Billing** or **Online Bill Viewing** page.
3. Follow the link to the payment portal and register with the details on your bill.
4. Choose paperless, AutoPay or Pay by Text if you'd like them.

GOOD TO KNOW

Mail still works

The county also accepts payment by mail. Online is a choice, not a requirement.

SCAM ALERT

Water shutoff threats

Treat a call or text threatening to shut off your water today exactly like a power shutoff threat: hang up and call the number on your bill. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

PART 6

Help Paying the Bills

Ohio has real programs that help with heating and electric bills: HEAP, the Winter Crisis Program and PIPP Plus. Here's what each one does and how to apply in Portage County.

CHAPTER 26

HEAP: Help With Heating Bills

The Home Energy Assistance Program, or **HEAP**, is a federally funded program, run by the State of Ohio, that helps income-eligible households with heating costs. Regular HEAP is a once-a-year credit on your energy bill. You don't need a shutoff notice to apply.

What you need	Details
Apply online	**energyhelp.ohio.gov**
Phone	**1-800-282-0880** (Ohio's energy assistance line)
In Portage County	Community Action Council of Portage County, 1036 West Main Street, Ravenna. Main line (330) 297-1456. Website **cacportage.net**.
2026 to 2027 program year	The HEAP program year runs from July 1, 2026 to May 2027.
Income guideline	Up to 175% of the federal poverty guidelines. The exact dollar limits change each year; check energyhelp.ohio.gov for the current table.

GOOD TO KNOW

Who runs it now

For years, Ohio's HEAP programs were run by the Ohio Department of Development, and older papers still say so. In 2026 the programs moved to the **Ohio Department of Job and Family Services**. The website and phone number above still work, and the way you apply didn't change.

What to gather before you apply

- Proof of income for everyone in the household.
- Your most recent electric and gas bills (or your fuel supplier information if you heat with propane or oil).
- Identification and Social Security numbers for household members, as the application asks.

SCAM ALERT

Applying is free

No one may charge you to apply for HEAP. Anyone who wants a fee to "get you approved" is a scam. Apply only at energyhelp.ohio.gov, by phone at 1-800-282-0880, or through the Community Action Council.

CHAPTER 27

The Winter Crisis Program

The **Winter Crisis Program**, also called Emergency HEAP or E-HEAP, is for households facing a real emergency: a shutoff notice, service already disconnected, or very little heating fuel left. It helps once per heating season.

Question	Answer
Season	November 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027.
Who it's for	Income-eligible households that have been disconnected, have a disconnection notice, or are running out of bulk fuel.
How to apply	You can start online, but you must complete the application in an appointment with your local Community Action agency. In Portage County, that's the Community Action Council.
Shutoff protection	State-regulated utilities delay disconnection until five days after a confirmed Winter Crisis appointment.
Funding	First come, first served. Funds can run out before the season ends, so don't wait.

To get an appointment in Portage County

1. Call the Community Action Council of Portage County at **(330) 297-1456**, or visit **cacportage.net** to see its current appointment options.
2. Have your shutoff notice or latest bills, proof of income, and identification ready.
3. Write down your appointment date and time. Tell your utility you have a confirmed appointment.

TIP

Call early in the day

Crisis programs get busy in cold snaps. Call as soon as you get a shutoff notice rather than waiting until the shutoff date.

HEADS UP

After the Winter Crisis help

Households on a PUCO-regulated utility must sign up for PIPP Plus or another payment plan if there's still a balance after assistance. See Chapter 28, *PIPP Plus: Paying a Share of Your Income*.

CHAPTER 28

PIPP Plus: Paying a Share of Your Income

PIPP Plus, the Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus, is a year-round payment plan. Instead of paying the full bill, an eligible household pays a set percentage of its income to its regulated gas or electric company each month.

Good to know before you enroll

- You apply for PIPP Plus through the same energy assistance system as HEAP: energyhelp.ohio.gov, 1-800-282-0880, or the Community Action Council.
- It works with Ohio Edison and Enbridge Gas Ohio, which are regulated by the PUCO.
- Households on both HEAP and PIPP Plus receive a reduced HEAP benefit.
- PIPP Plus customers aren't eligible to shop for a different energy supplier. See Chapter 30, *What Energy Choice Means*.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why it can help

A predictable payment tied to your income can make the difference between keeping the heat on and falling further behind, especially on a fixed income.

TIP

Ask the Community Action Council to compare

PIPP Plus isn't right for every household. Ask the Community Action Council to explain whether PIPP Plus, a budget plan or a payment arrangement would cost you less.

GOOD TO KNOW

Program rules change

Income limits and percentages are set by the state and can change each year. Check energyhelp.ohio.gov for the current rules before you decide.

CHAPTER 29

Talking to Your Utility When Money Is Tight

If you can't pay a bill in full, the worst thing to do is nothing. Utilities generally have more options for you before a bill goes far past due than after.

1. Call the billing number on your bill: Ohio Edison **1-800-633-4766**; Enbridge Gas Ohio **1-800-362-7557**.
2. Say plainly that you're having trouble paying and ask what payment arrangements are available.
3. Ask about budget billing and about referrals to HEAP and PIPP Plus.
4. Write down the date, the person's first name, and exactly what you agreed to.

Pages worth reading online

- FirstEnergy: **Payment Assistance**, linked from the bottom of firstenergycorp.com.
- Enbridge Gas Ohio: **Billing > Help paying your energy bill**.

TIP

Get help with the phone call

If phone menus frustrate you, ask a family member to sit with you on speakerphone. You can give the utility permission to speak with them while you're on the line.

SCAM ALERT

Real help never comes with a deadline in minutes

A real utility talks through options with you. A caller who insists you pay right now, by gift card or payment app, "or a truck is on its way," is a scammer. See Chapter 34, *Utility Scams to Know*.

PART 7

Comparing Electric and Gas Suppliers

Ohio lets you choose who supplies your electricity and natural gas. Here's how to compare offers on the state's own chart, how town aggregation works, and what to ask before you sign anything.

CHAPTER 30

What Energy Choice Means

In Ohio, you can buy the electricity or natural gas itself from a **supplier** other than Ohio Edison or Enbridge Gas Ohio. Your utility still delivers it, reads the meter, sends the bill and fixes outages. Only the supply part of the bill changes.

What the state wants you to know

- **You don't have to choose.** Energy choice is an opportunity, not a requirement. If you do nothing, your service continues as before.
- **There's no deadline** to choose a supplier.
- **Savings aren't guaranteed.** Some people switch to save money, some for a fixed rate, some for renewable energy.
- **Outages don't change.** Even with a new supplier, you call Ohio Edison or Enbridge Gas Ohio for outages and gas problems, and you get the same service.
- **If a supplier fails**, your utility keeps your service going as the "provider of last resort" and notifies you in writing.
- **Not everyone can shop.** Customers of co-ops and municipal power systems, and households on PIPP Plus, aren't eligible.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why it's worth understanding

Knowing these few facts protects you. A salesperson who says you "have to switch," or that your power will be cut off if you don't, is simply wrong.

TIP

Check who supplies you now

Look at your bill for a supplier name. If you see one you don't recognize, you may have been switched through aggregation (Chapter 32, *Aggregation: When Your Town Shops for You*) or, less happily, by a salesperson (Chapter 35, *Door-to-Door and Phone Supplier Sales*).

CHAPTER 31

Using the Apples to Apples Chart

The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio publishes **Apples to Apples** charts at **energychoice.ohio.gov**. They list current electric and natural gas offers side by side, with prices and contract terms. The PUCO says these are the only comparisons in the state where suppliers are required to give accurate, up-to-date information about their latest offers.

To compare electric offers

1. Find the **Price to Compare** on your Ohio Edison bill.
2. Go to **energychoice.ohio.gov** and choose **Compare Offers**, then **Compare Electric Offers**.
3. Choose your utility, Ohio Edison.
4. Compare each offer's price with your Price to Compare. Then read the term length, whether the rate is fixed or variable, any monthly fee, and any early termination fee.

To compare gas offers

1. Find your current gas rate per Mcf or Ccf on your Enbridge Gas Ohio bill.
2. On energychoice.ohio.gov, choose **Compare Natural Gas Offers**, then Enbridge Gas Ohio.
3. Compare prices and the same contract details.

HEADS UP

Offers change often

The PUCO notes that companies update offers regularly, so today's offers may not be there later. Check the chart on the day you decide.

TIP

A low teaser rate

A variable rate that starts low can rise later. A fixed rate for a set term is easier to plan around. Always look at what happens when the term ends.

CHAPTER 32

Aggregation: When Your Town Shops for You

In **aggregation**, a city, village, township or county buys electricity or gas for its residents as a group. If your community has a program, you may get a letter about it and see the program's supplier on your bill.

What to know

- If you get a letter about a program, it explains whether you'll be enrolled and how to **opt out**, with a deadline. Read it rather than tossing it.
- Read the letter: it should name the supplier, the price and the term.
- Compare the program's price with your Price to Compare and the Apples to Apples chart.
- Several Portage County townships are members of NOPEC, a large Northeast Ohio aggregation group. Your township or city office can tell you whether yours has a program.

TIP

Not sure? Ask your local office

Call your city, village or township office and ask, "Do we have an electric or gas aggregation program, and who is the supplier?" It's a common question and they'll know.

SCAM ALERT

"I'm with the town program"

Some salespeople pretend to be part of your community's program. Real aggregation programs send letters; you don't have to give anyone at the door your account number to stay in one.

CHAPTER 33

Questions to Ask Before You Sign

Whether an offer comes by mail, phone, a website or a knock at the door, these questions protect you. The PUCO has its own "What to Ask Suppliers" pages on energychoice.ohio.gov, too.

1. Is your company certified by the PUCO? (Check the PUCO's list of certified suppliers yourself.)
2. Is the price fixed or variable? For how long?
3. Is there a monthly fee on top of the price?
4. Is there an early termination fee? How much?
5. What happens when the contract ends: does it renew automatically, and at what price?
6. How does this price compare with my Price to Compare and the Apples to Apples chart?

TIP

Get it in writing, then decide

Ask for the offer in writing, take it home, and compare it at the kitchen table. A good offer will still be good tomorrow. Pressure to sign today is a warning sign.

HEADS UP

Early termination fees

If you later want out of a contract, there may be a fee. The PUCO advises reading and understanding the contract before signing up.

If something goes wrong

The PUCO takes complaints about utilities and suppliers. Call **(800) 686-PUCO** (that's 1-800-686-7826), use 7-1-1 for TTY, or use **Consumer Complaints** on energychoice.ohio.gov.

PART 8

Scams, Family & Getting Help

The utility scams that target Portage County homes, what to do if you already paid, helping a parent with their utilities, and how to reach me.

CHAPTER 34

Utility Scams to Know

Utility scams work because they use fear: of the heat going off in January, of the power being cut today. Both FirstEnergy and Enbridge Gas Ohio keep scam warning pages because these calls are so common. Once you know the patterns, they're easy to spot.

The line you'll hear	What's really going on
"Your power will be shut off in an hour"	A caller says you're behind and a crew is on the way unless you pay right now.
"Pay with gift cards, a Bitcoin machine or a payment app"	No utility takes payment that way. This alone tells you it's a scam.
"You're owed a refund"	The caller needs your card or bank number to "send" it.
"Your meter needs replacing, for a fee"	A visitor or caller demands payment for equipment.
"Verify your account" texts and emails	A link leads to a fake sign-in page that steals your password or card.
Fake caller ID	The phone shows the utility's name or number. Caller ID can be faked.

The one rule that beats them all

Hang up and call the number printed on your bill. Ohio Edison: 1-800-633-4766. Enbridge Gas Ohio: 1-800-362-7557. Your water provider: the number on your water bill. If there's a real problem, the person who answers will see it on your account.

SCAM ALERT

Look at your own bill

Before you believe anyone, look at your latest bill or sign in to your online account. If the account shows no overdue balance, a caller claiming you're behind is lying.

TIP

Let it go to voicemail

You never have to answer an unknown number. A real utility can leave a message, mail a notice, and show it in your online account.

CHAPTER 35

Door-to-Door and Phone Supplier Sales

Energy suppliers are allowed to sell door to door and by phone in Ohio, and some are honest. But this is where many people end up in a contract they didn't understand, often at a higher price than they paid before.

Warning signs at the door or on the phone

- They say they're **"from Ohio Edison"** or **"from the gas company."** Utilities don't send salespeople to switch your supplier.
- They ask to **see your bill** or want your account number. That's what they need to switch you.
- They say you **must** switch, or your rates are about to jump unless you sign today.
- They won't leave anything in writing, or rush you past the contract terms.
- They promise savings but can't say how the price compares with your Price to Compare.

What to say

"Thank you, I don't make decisions at the door. Please leave your information." Then close the door. If the offer is good, it'll be good when you compare it on **energychoice.ohio.gov**. See Chapter 31, *Using the Apples to Apples Chart*.

SCAM ALERT

Never show your bill to a stranger

Your account number is what a supplier uses to enroll you. Keep it to yourself unless *you* called the company and decided to switch.

TIP

Is the company even certified?

All energy suppliers selling in Ohio must be certified by the PUCO. The Energy Choice Ohio FAQs link to the PUCO's list of certified suppliers. If a company isn't on it, that's your answer.

CHAPTER 36

If You Already Paid or Signed

If you've already paid a caller, given out an account number, or signed something at the door, please don't be embarrassed. These people are professionals at pressure. What matters now is acting quickly.

If you paid a scammer

1. If you paid with a gift card, call the number on the back of the card right away and tell them it was a scam. Keep the card and receipt.
2. If you paid with a bank card, bank transfer or payment app, call your bank or the app's support through its official app or the number on your card.
3. Call your utility at the number on your bill and tell them what happened, so they can note your account.
4. Report it to the Federal Trade Commission at **ReportFraud.ftc.gov**.
5. Call me at (330) 200-8042 if you'd like help with any of these steps.

If you were switched to a supplier you didn't want

1. Look at your bill for the supplier's name.
2. Call the supplier and say you want to cancel. Ask whether there's an early termination fee.
3. If you didn't agree to the switch, or you can't sort it out, call the PUCO at **(800) 686-PUCO** (1-800-686-7826) or use **Consumer Complaints** on energychoice.ohio.gov.

HEADS UP

Clicked a link or typed your password?

If you signed in on a page you reached from a text or email, change that utility's password right away on the real website, and change it anywhere else you used the same password.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You're not alone

Acting the same day gives you the best chance of stopping a payment or a switch. A quick call is never a bother.

CHAPTER 37

Helping a Parent With Their Utilities

Many families quietly take over a parent's bills. Done respectfully, it keeps the heat on and the scammers out. Done carelessly, it can leave a parent feeling shut out. Here's a middle path.

A respectful setup

1. Sit down together with your parent's latest bills.
2. Create the online accounts in your parent's name, with their permission, using an email address they or you can check.
3. Turn on outage texts on your parent's phone (text REG to 544487), and on yours if you'd like to know about their outages too.
4. Ask each utility how to add you as an authorized contact on the account.
5. Write all the numbers in the cheat-sheet at the end of this guide, and leave a copy by their phone.

TIP

Pay without taking over

FirstEnergy's **Pay as a Guest** lets you make a one-time payment on a parent's Ohio Edison bill without signing in to their account.

HEADS UP

Medical equipment at a parent's home

If your parent relies on oxygen or other electric medical equipment, help them get on FirstEnergy's Critical Care list. See Chapter 16, *Medical Equipment and the Critical Care List*.

SCAM ALERT

Agree on a family rule

Agree together: "We never pay a utility over the phone when they called us. We hang up and call the bill number, or we call each other first." A simple rule like this stops most scams cold.

CHAPTER 38

Words to Know

Utility bills and websites use some words you don't hear every day. Here they are in plain English.

Word	What it means
Utility (distribution company)	The company that owns the wires or pipes: Ohio Edison or Enbridge Gas Ohio. Call them for outages and leaks.
Supplier	A company that sells the energy itself. Optional in Ohio.
Price to Compare	The number on your electric bill you compare with supplier offers.
Mcf / Ccf	Units of natural gas on your gas bill.
Aggregation	Your community buying energy for residents as a group.
Apples to Apples	The PUCO's official chart of supplier offers.
PUCO	The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, which oversees utilities and suppliers.
HEAP	The Home Energy Assistance Program: yearly help with heating costs.
Winter Crisis Program	Emergency heating help once per winter season, also called E-HEAP.
PIPP Plus	A plan where eligible households pay a percentage of income for gas or electric.
Estimated restoration time	The utility's best guess for when power will be back.
Critical Care list	FirstEnergy's list of customers who rely on electric medical equipment.
811	The call-before-you-dig number for marking underground lines.

TIP

No need to memorize

Come back here whenever a word trips you up. Knowing the words also makes it harder for a salesperson to use jargon to rush you.

GOOD TO KNOW

Names change

Utilities rename and merge, as Dominion did when it became Enbridge Gas Ohio. If a name here doesn't match your bill, trust your bill.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Confidence on the phone

Using the right word, like "Price to Compare" or "payment arrangement," helps you get the right answer faster when you call.

CHAPTER 39

When to Call Bill

This guide is meant to help you handle your utility accounts calmly and on your own terms. But some things are easier with a friendly person beside you.

Good reasons to call

- You'd like someone to sit with you and set up your FirstEnergy, Enbridge Gas Ohio and water accounts from start to finish.
- You want outage texts set up on your phone, and a parent's phone, and want to practice once.
- You're comparing a supplier offer or an aggregation letter and want a second pair of eyes on the chart.
- A caller or visitor pressured you about your bill and you want a calm second opinion.
- You clicked a link in a "utility" text or email and aren't sure what to do next.
- You'd like your phone set up as a storm-ready flashlight, radio and outage tracker.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Device Training

This guide pairs with my **Device Training** service: an unhurried, one-on-one session where we set up your utility accounts, alerts and outage texts on your own phone and computer, and practice until they feel natural.

SCAM ALERT

A quick check beats regret

If anyone pressures you to pay, to show your bill, or to sign today, stop and call me first at **(330) 200-8042**. I'd much rather spend two minutes reassuring you.

How to reach me

I'm Bill, and Bill's Home Tech serves **Portage County, Ohio**. Call or text **(330) 200-8042**, or book online at **billshometech.com/book**. If you reach my assistant **Sophie** on the main line, she can answer simple questions and get you on my schedule. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. With 30+ years of professional experience, I promise there's no question too basic.

STAY SAFE

In an emergency, call 911 or the utility, not me

If you smell gas, see a downed wire, or someone is in danger, call 911 and the utility's emergency line. I'm here for setup, questions and peace of mind, not emergencies.

— Bill

CHAPTER 40

Your Utilities Cheat-Sheet

The whole guide, boiled down to what you'll reach for most.

Emergencies and outages

If…	Do this
Smell gas	Leave the house. From outside, call **911** and Enbridge Gas Ohio **1-877-542-2630**.
Downed power line	Call **911**. Stay at least 30 feet away.
Power out (phone)	**1-888-LIGHTSS (1-888-544-4877)**
Power out (text)	Text **OUT** to **544487** (register first with **REG**)
Outage map	**firstenergycorp.com** > Outages > Outages Map
Before you dig	Call **811** or go to **oups.org**

Accounts and billing

I want to…	Go here
Ohio Edison account	**firstenergycorp.com** > Log In / Register. Customer service 1-800-633-4766.
Enbridge Gas Ohio account	**enbridgegas.com/ohio** > Sign in / Register. Billing 1-800-362-7557.
Portage County water/sewer	**portagecounty-oh.gov** > Water Resources
Compare suppliers	**energychoice.ohio.gov** > Compare Offers
Help paying	**energyhelp.ohio.gov** or 1-800-282-0880; Community Action Council of Portage County (330) 297-1456
Complaints	PUCO **(800) 686-PUCO** (1-800-686-7826)

Staying safe, the short list

1. Gas smell: get out first, call from outside.
2. Never go near a downed wire.
3. Hang up on shutoff threats and call the number on your bill.
4. No utility takes gift cards, Bitcoin machines or payment apps to a stranger.
5. Never show your bill to someone at the door.

6. Compare any offer on energychoice.ohio.gov before signing.

Keep this handy

Keep handy	Fill in
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FROM BILL

You're ready for the next storm

You now know who serves your home, how to report an outage in seconds, what to do if you smell gas, where to find help with a heating bill, and how to say no to a pushy salesperson. Go gently, and call me any time you'd like a hand. — Bill, (330) 200-8042