

Sandi Woy Hazeton, "The League Looks at Municipal Aggregation on November ballot: Aggregating can bolster buying power." *The Oxford Press*. 12 Sept. 2014: A4.

The League of Women Voters of Oxford has been working on energy issues for many years. Our most recent study and position, adopted in 2013, supported "locally initiated community-based collaborative projects for energy conservation." Thus, we support the city's aggregating the purchase of electricity for our community.

How would that work? The City would negotiate a contract with a Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) certified electric provider to achieve the most economical rates for City of Oxford customers. By aggregating demand, we--the City--have more buying power and can negotiate contract details that not only stress a good price, but also support environmentally sound suppliers who use renewable energy sources.

This method of purchasing electrical power for a municipality began in Northeast Ohio in 2001. It is now being adopted throughout our State because aggregation saves residents money as well as protects the environment. In the 2012 aggregation plan for Cincinnati, according to *The Columbus Dispatch* (15 May 2014), residents saved an estimated \$50.00 a year per family with 100% of their energy sources being renewable .

Oxford voters will be asked in November to approve the adoption of an opt-out program for the aggregated purchase of electricity in our community. That means that all residents would be automatically enrolled unless they individually opt-out (choose not to be included) in the program. If a majority of voters say "yes" in November to the aggregated purchase of electricity for Oxford, the City must follow with a proposed plan and hold two public meetings where citizens can voice questions and concerns about the plan. When the final plan is adopted, the City must notify all residents that they will be included unless they opt-out. Residents can thus choose to stay with their current electricity provider if they do not want to change.

City Manager Doug Elliot will discuss aggregation for Oxford in a public meeting, September 24 at 7:00 PM in the LCNB Community Room. He will clarify the issue as well as how it will appear on the November ballot. He will explain the expected benefits for the residents of the City of Oxford. The LWV of Oxford is sponsoring the event.

