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Illinois OKs \$270M rate hike for Exelon's ComEd

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NEW YORK, Sept 11 (Reuters) - Illinois' utility regulator approved of a \$270 million power delivery rate hike for Exelon Corp's (EXC.N: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) Commonwealth Edison unit that will cover the cost of modernizing and maintaining the system, the power company said in a release late Wednesday.

That was about \$90 million less than ComEd's original \$361 million rate increase request.

The new rates are only related to distribution costs - not energy supplies - and will raise the average residential customer's bill by about \$4.50 on an average \$81 monthly bill, according to figures by the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC).

Delivery charges make up about a third of a customer's power bill, while energy supply costs make up about two-thirds. The new charges are scheduled to take effect on Sept. 14.

The state's utility watchdog, Citizens Utility Board (CUB), meanwhile said it would appeal the ICC decision, arguing ComEd overstated its expenses and asked for an exorbitant profit rate for stockholders.

CUB noted ComEd, whose parent company, Exelon, made \$2.9 billion in profits last year, asked for a \$346 million increase in 2006, and was granted roughly a quarter of that. This time, ComEd asked for an additional \$361 million increase. CUB and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's office had recommended that it be cut by about 90 percent.

Exelon, of Chicago, owns and operates more than 38,000 MW of generating capacity, markets energy commodities, and transmits and distributes electricity to 5.4 million customers and natural gas to 480,000 customers in Illinois and Pennsylvania. (Reporting by Scott DiSavino; Editing by John Picinich)

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