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CUB Says Illinois Phone Customers Wasting Money

Illinois consumers could save hundreds of dollars each year if they had telephone billing plans more suited to their use.

That's the conclusion reached by consumer watchdog group the Citizens' Utility Board. CUB Director David Kolata says the group analyzed more than 32,000 local, long distance and cell phone bills over the last two years and found that customers could save up to \$600 a year by eliminating features on their plans they don't need. The *total* potential savings for all Illinois residents by picking plans best suited for what they actually need could be \$1.5-billion.

Kolata says CUB's report analyzing state residential phone bills has good news and bad news.

"The bad news is that most of us are overpaying for phone service. The good news is that just by making simple changes, the vast majority of Illinois consumers could save over \$575 a year on phone service alone."

Kolata says the problem is customers are paying for features they don't need or want or for minutes they don't use. He says phone companies have bare-bones, inexpensive plans, but they don't promote them. Kolata says they instead try to steer customers to the more expensive plans.

CUB offers individual phone bill analysis to determine whether you are spending too much and how to get the best deals. Go to www.citizensutilityboard.org to find out more.

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