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Consumer group shows how to cut phone bills

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Sun staff

The Citizens Utility Board's "Right Call Campaign" is coming to Bolingbrook to help consumers beat the bad economy by showing them how to cut their calling costs by hundreds of dollars a year.

CUB's campaign was launched after the consumer group released a report showing that Illinois callers are overpaying by about \$1.5 billion a year. However, most consumers can enjoy significant savings by following a few simple steps.

CUB's free "phone-bill clinics" have been showing consumer how to cut their local and long-distance bills by an average of more than \$200 a year. The next clinic is at 7 p.m. May 6 at Fountaindale Public Library, 300 W. Briarcliff Road in Bolingbrook.

Space is limited. If you wish to attend, register with the library at 630-759-2102.

Consumers frequently complain that they can't get reliable information from the phone company, which often just throws them a sales pitch for a more expensive plan, according to CUB. At CUB's clinics, however, citizens will receive helpful tips about:

- The CUB Cellphone Saver, a state-of-the art online tool that automatically analyzes individual wireless bills. The Cellphone Saver has been showing consumers how to cut their cell-phone bills by an average of \$300 a year.
- The CUB-designed Consumer's Choice local-calling plans that AT&T is forced to offer under a legal settlement. Unlike AT&T's other plans, these plans are designed to save most consumers money.
- Illinois' best long-distance plans, including how to get an automatic \$20 credit CUB negotiated. That amounts to nearly 11 hours of free calls.
- Line-Backer, a costly -- and optional -- AT&T service that most people don't need.

Attendees should bring their phone bills so CUB experts can analyze them and give tips on how to cut them.

For information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 800-669-5556 or visit citizensutilityboard.org.