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ComEd customers can expect rates to fall about 7.5%

New wholesale power contracts take effect in June

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Electricity bills for Commonwealth Edison customers should fall by about 7.5 percent in the wake of the first power purchase completed this week by a state agency.

The average residential customer's monthly electricity bill will decline by about \$6.36 beginning in June, when new wholesale power contracts take effect, ComEd said Friday.

"We think this is very good news for consumers," said David Kolata, executive director of the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer watchdog group.

Bill McNeil, ComEd's vice president for energy acquisition, credited the rate reduction to a significant decline in wholesale electricity costs over the past year. "It's really a function of the depressed price in the wholesale market," he said.

Kolata said he sees the rate reduction as an "encouraging" sign that the Illinois Power Agency is working as planned.

The agency was created in 2007 to buy electricity on behalf of the state's consumers. Through competitive bidding, it purchases electricity from such generators as Exelon Corp. That power is then distributed for a fee through utilities like ComEd.

The arrangement was intended to remove any possible conflict of interest posed by the fact that Exelon owns ComEd, Kolata said. This week, the agency completed its first purchase, which will apply to about 30 percent of ComEd's power needs for the next year.

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