

CUB 'phone bill clinics' set to save consumers money

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Canton Daily Ledger

Tue Jun 16, 2009, 09:07 AM CDT

CANTON -

The Citizens Utility Board's (CUB) "Right Call Campaign" is making back-to-back stops in Lewistown and Canton to help consumers cut calling costs by hundreds of dollars a year.

CUB's campaign was launched after the consumer group released a report showing 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 consumers how to cut their local and long-distance bills by an average of more than \$200 a year. The next clinics, sponsored by state Rep. Michael Smith (D-Canton), are:

-- 10 a.m., Thursday, June 25, at Spoon River Towers, 401 N. Illinois St., Lewistown.

-- 1 p.m. Thursday, June 25, YWCA of Canton, 111 N. Avenue A, Canton.

"Most people are paying too much for phone service," CUB Executive Director David Kolata said. "However, CUB has been showing consumers how to save an average of about \$240 a year on their local and long-distance bills. Plus, we have a new online tool that has been teaching consumers how to slash cell-phone bills by another \$300 a year, on average. You just can't get a free service like this anywhere else."

Consumers frequently complain they can't get reliable information from the phone company, which often just throws them a sales pitch for a more expensive plan. 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 but optional AT&T service 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. CUB is Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog organization. Created by the Illinois legislature in 1983, CUB opened its doors a year later to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Now celebrating its 25th anniversary, CUB has saved consumers more than \$10 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds over the years.

For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org <<http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org>>.

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