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## Shed unwanted energy costs

(<http://www.southtownstar.com/business/1980616,011010kolata.article>)

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By David Kolata, CUB executive director

CUB Energy Saver, [www.CUBEnergySaver.com](http://www.CUBEnergySaver.com), is just like having a 24-hour on-call auditor who helps you slash your energy costs - and gives you a free money-saving light bulb to boot.

CUB's cutting-edge tool has hundreds of money-saving actions that are customized exactly for your home. Tell CUB Energy Saver how much money you want to save and in seconds, up pops the perfect plan. Provide your ComEd billing data, and that plan becomes all the more perfect.

CUB's tool even uses smiley (and frowney) faces to show how energy-efficient you are compared with the rest of your neighborhood. And if you like Facebook, you can use similar features in CUB Energy Saver to send friends messages, organize events, and even start a blog.

This is not your standard online "calculator" with the same old tired "tips" about screwing in a light bulb. In fact, CUB Energy Saver has at least 10 actions to cut your lighting costs - from the old standby that our parents used to tell us, "use fewer lights at home," to advice on solar-powered holiday lights, efficient night lights, and even managing your blinds to take advantage of the sun.

"I thought that I was pretty energy-conscious," one user wrote. "I can save almost \$190 per year by just doing some simple things. This -- was quite an eye-opener."

Unlike any other online energy-efficiency service in the nation, CUB Energy Saver builds a "smart" plan based on thousands of sources of publicly available data, including your ZIP code's energy-use statistics, federal pricing data, county records on your building, U.S. Census data, U.S. weather station data, etc. Even better, ComEd customers who provide their billing information (address, account number, meter number) will get super-accurate results tracking their energy and money savings.

In 2010, CUB Energy Saver is holding statewide contests among groups, communities and colleges. At the end of the year, those who saved the most energy will win up to 10,000 compact fluorescent light bulbs. But for now, everyone wins. While supplies last, we're giving a free CFL to all Illinois consumers who use CUB Energy Saver.

Just visit [www.CUBEnergySaver.com](http://www.CUBEnergySaver.com), click on "Sign Up For Free," and fill out the form, including your address. (You'll get an e-mail confirming your registration.) To create a plan, all we need is your ZIP code, but the more information you give - about your home and energy bills - the better the plan.

Ultimately, how much money you save depends on how well you follow the plan that CUB Energy Saver builds for you. So add it to your list of resolutions in 2010. While you shed those extra pounds, let CUB Energy Saver shed those extra costs .

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