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METRO

Illinois Natural Gas Rate Increase Approved

The Illinois Commerce Commission has approved a rate increase for two major natural gas companies. Customers of Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas will see a five percent rate increase in their monthly bills starting in February. It's expected to raise \$83 million for the utilities.

Rod Sierra is a spokesman for Peoples Gas.

SIERRA: We filed for a rate increase about a year ago. It's an 11-month process. We have been operating on rates developed off of costs for running our system from 2006 and since 2006 a lot of things have changed and our costs to run our 6,000 mile natural gas delivery system have increased.

Sierra says the price increase will affect more than one million customers in Illinois. Citizen's Utility Board spokesman Jim Chilsen says the rate increase comes at a bad time for Illinois consumers. He says the utility watchdog group plans to appeal the ruling.