



Ameren utilities handed defeat in rate case

By Mike Riopell | Posted: Thursday, April 29, 2010 2:21 pm

SPRINGFIELD - State utility regulators Thursday awarded Ameren a delivery rate increase that amounts to just \$5 million, far short of the \$130 million the company asked for.

Customers, therefore, could see smaller increases to their electric and gas bills than originally proposed, if they see increases at all. Some might even see decreases. Details about the decision will be available later Thursday.

Almost a year ago, the company asked to raise what it charges for delivering electricity and natural gas by \$226 million. They had since lowered that request to \$130 million, and were awarded far less by the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Commission chair Manuel Flores Thursday said the ruling was a fair one that followed the rules.

"The duty of the commission is to set rates. It's not to raise rates or lower rates," Flores said. "I'm confident that what we've done here today is make the right decisions."

The decision came in a 3-2 vote. Lula Ford was one of the two "no" votes, saying she wanted more information about the specifics of the decision before voting.

"It's been very difficult for me to understand some of the issues that have come up with this," Ford said.

Ameren executives left the hearing room without commenting. But the company said an initial proposal to award the company \$56 million was too low. Ameren can appeal the decision.

The new rates will take effect soon, and how they would specifically affect customers isn't yet known.

This story will be updated.

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