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## CUB: Online tool saves 5.5% on electricity bills

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June 14, 2011 | By Julie Wernau | Tribune staff reporter

Consumers using an online tool by Citizens Utility Board designed to help people realize [energy efficiencies](#) in their homes, have saved an average of 5.5 percent in electricity costs in the year since the tool was launched, according to a report released today by CUB.

CUB [Energy Saver](#) customers, who signed up for the free online tool during the past years saved an average of \$55 per year by taking care of what CUB called "simple inefficiencies" suggested by the tool -- such as using out-of-date light bulbs and leaving the coffee maker on.

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"We're getting clobbered by kilowatt-hours we don't need -- to the tune of nearly \$200 million a year," said CUB Executive Director David Kolata, calculating how much could be saved if applied across ComEd 3.4 million residential customers. "But we can change that."

In the City of Evanston, efforts to heavily market the tool, which rewards consumers with [discounts](#) at local stores for saving energy and allows them to compare their progress with against their neighbors, amounted to more than 100,000 kilowatt hours saved, said Catherine Hurley, sustainable programs coordinator for Evanston. That amount saved, she said, is akin to taking 14 passenger vehicles off the road.

The city is launching a push to triple the number of people registered for the [program](#) by offering up seven teams -- attached to the city's largest employers at <https://www.cubenergysaver.com/evanston> -- consumers can join to compete for the most energy savings and the chance to win a year of free electricity. The contest is open to everyone, not just Evanston residents.

Jack Darin, director of the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club, said when it comes replacing coal-fired electricity, energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective methods to help clear the air.

"With energy efficiency, there is no tradeoff," he said.

According to CUB, most consumers saved on energy by replacing lights with compact fluorescent bulbs for a savings of \$54 per year, by using blinds on summer days for a savings of \$19 per year, washing larger loads of dishes to save \$35 per year, turning off the coffee maker after brewing for \$29 off a year and using "smart strips" to plugs to save \$26 per year.

CUB Energy Saver is available at [www.CUBEnergySaver.com](#).

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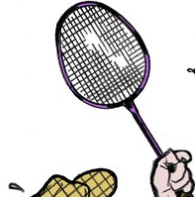
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