



# Citizens Utility Board

309 W. Washington St., Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606 **Phone** (312) 263-4282 **Toll Free** 800-669-5556 **Fax** (312) 263-4329

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
June 1, 2009

**CONTACT:** Jim Chilsen  
(o) 312-263-4282  
(c) 312-513-1784

## **CUB, BRADLEY REMIND AMEREN CUSTOMERS OF NEW RIGHTS**

Ameren customers could be eligible for compensation if they suffer long power outages, under a new state law that took effect on the same day that electric rates went down, State Rep. John Bradley and the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) said Monday.

SB 1987, which was signed into law in January, was best known for opening the door for a study that will measure the feasibility of a “clean coal” plant in Taylorville. However, on Monday, June 1, another provision finally closed a gap between service-quality standards for ComEd customers and those protecting Ameren customers.

As a result, Ameren customers now could be eligible for compensation for damages caused by power outages that affect more than 30,000 customers, last at least four hours, and are the fault of the power company (not weather related). Under the new law, the expense of giving customers compensation in these instances cannot be recovered through rates.

“This new law gives people in Southern Illinois the same rights with regards to power outages as folks in Chicago,” Rep. Bradley said. “If there is an outage that is not related to bad weather, then the law may provide Southern Illinoisans with much-needed relief.”

“Obviously more needs to be done to make sure electric customers across Illinois are properly protected from bad service,” CUB Executive Director David Kolata added. “However, this is a step forward in the long fight for fair rates and quality service in Illinois’ power industry. Customers should know their rights.”

*-more-*

Ameren has been the source of consumer frustration in recent years. The company sent bills skyrocketing with a new power-pricing plan called the “reverse auction” in 2007. Later that year, the auction was abolished, consumers were given \$1 billion in refunds, and a new state office, the Illinois Power Agency (IPA), was created to buy power for the utilities.

On the same day that the new service-quality standards took effect, lower Ameren electric rates also were implemented, as a result of the IPA’s first purchase of power for the next year.

CUB has prepared a fact sheet, at [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org), for customers who suffer outages and have questions about whether they are eligible for compensation. Those without Internet access should call CUB’s Consumer Hotline, 1-800-669-5556, for a copy of the fact sheet.

People also can call their utility for more information: AmerenCILCO, 1-888-672-5252; AmerenCIPS, 1-888-789-2477; AmerenIP, 1-800-755-5000; or ComEd, 1-800-334-7661.

CUB is Illinois’ leading nonprofit utility watchdog organization. It was created by the Illinois legislature in 1983 and opened its doors in 1984 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)**.

###