



# Citizens Utility Board

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**STATEMENT BY CUB COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR JIM CHILSEN  
ON THE PEOPLES GAS RATE HIKE**

The Citizens Utility Board (CUB) plans to appeal an Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) vote Thursday granting Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas an unjustified \$83.6 million rate hike as well as a special charge, or rider, on bills that Peoples will slap on customers beginning in 2011.

While the companies got less than what they asked for, they still got more than what they need or deserve. It's the worst possible time for a rate hike, as Chicago-area consumers struggle to make ends meet in an ailing economy. The companies should tighten their belts just as their customers have been forced to. We look forward to fighting the rate hikes on appeal.

The ICC granted Peoples Gas a \$69.8 million rate hike, while North Shore Gas got \$13.8 million. That translates into \$50 to \$70 more a year for the average customer. The increases affect the rates they charge to cover the expense of delivering gas to homes—plus a profit. These delivery costs take up about a third of a customer's gas bill. The rest covers the cost of the actual natural gas, which the companies are supposed to pass on to customers, with no mark up.

CUB is Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog organization. Created by the Illinois Legislature in 1983, CUB opened its doors a year later to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then it has saved consumers more than \$10 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure consumer refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline, at 1-800-669-5556 or visit [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org).

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