



# CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

**For Immediate Release**  
Oct. 3, 2022

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

## **CONSUMER ALERT: AMEREN IL'S NEW POWER PRICE UP 126% FROM LAST YEAR**

As of Oct. 1, Ameren Illinois' price for electricity is up to 126 percent higher from a year ago, as Illinois prepares for what could be one of the most expensive winters in state history, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) said in a consumer alert issued Monday.

As of Oct. 1, the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) reports that Ameren's non-summer per-kilowatt-hour (kWh) "price to compare"—the rate customers should compare with alternative supplier offers—is: **12.236¢ per kWh for 0-800 kWh; and 9.777¢ per kWh for usage over 800 kWh**

**Note:** The rate for the first 800 kWh of usage represents a 126 percent increase over the price last October. The "price to compare" includes the supply price, a transmission charge and a supply cost adjustment. Ameren does not profit off the price of electricity—they pass those costs onto customers with no markup. This rate is in effect through May 31, 2023.

This past June, Ameren Illinois estimated that the higher prices will cost customers an average of about \$50 a month extra. Adding to the pain is the fact that Ameren's natural gas price, which changes on a monthly basis, also has skyrocketed: **89.078¢ per therm (up 33.5 percent from last October).**

**Note:** Ameren's gas price changes monthly. Ameren does not profit off supply prices.

CUB Executive Director David Kolata urged consumers to stay safe and visit [CUBHelpCenter.com](http://CUBHelpCenter.com), an online resource that features information about the high prices; tips on energy efficiency; and details about energy assistance. "This winter, nobody should take risks to lower their utility bills," Kolata said. "The safest, most reliable way to fight these price spikes is through energy efficiency. Efficiency is about keeping your home safe and your bills more affordable. We're asking all Illinois consumers to look out for each other and make sure friends, family and neighbors are staying safe and warm."

The energy price increases are due to a perfect storm of problems affecting consumers from coast to coast. Natural gas prices go through periodic spikes, and that volatility, which began in February of 2021, has kept winter prices at their highest levels since the winter of 2008-09. Other events, such as the Russian invasion of Ukraine and Hurricane Ida in 2021, have helped to make a bad situation worse. Gas, which is often used to generate electricity, has helped push power prices to extreme levels across the nation. Plus, Central and Southern Illinois are dealing with constraints in reserve, or "capacity," power.



# CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

## Fighting for Illinois Consumers

CUB listed several key points for energy customers this winter:

**See if you qualify for energy assistance.** The application process for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) has reopened through May 31, 2023, or until funds are exhausted. Households at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for LIHEAP funding. To apply or learn more, visit [www.helpillinoisfamilies.com](http://www.helpillinoisfamilies.com) or call the Help Illinois Families Assistance Line at **1-833-711-0374**.

**Stay in contact with your utility.** Consumers who are struggling should contact their utilities to see if they qualify for other energy assistance, inquire about payment plans to pay off debt and learn about energy efficiency programs. Keep the lines of communication open if you're having trouble this winter.

**Beware of alternative supplier rip-offs.** Alternative electricity suppliers are impacted by the same market conditions that are causing utility prices to increase, so be careful about getting lured into bad deals. Be wary of low introductory rates that will skyrocket after a short period, and read the fine print for add-on fees that can raise the cost of the plan. Since 2015, Illinois consumers have lost more than \$1 billion to alternative power suppliers.

If your community has negotiated a power deal with a supplier, it's possible the price is lower than Ameren's supply rate. Contact your community and inquire whether it has a community power deal. If so, find out how the price compares with Ameren's supply price, and when the offer expires.

**Energy efficiency can help soften the blow of high prices.** Energy efficiency is always important, and it's especially key at times like this. Weatherize your windows and doors to keep warm air in and cold air out. Set your thermostat at a safe level: 68 degrees when you're awake and home, and bump it down a few degrees when you're away or asleep. [CUBHelpCenter.com](http://CUBHelpCenter.com) has more tips.

**Consider a community solar deal to help ease costs.** Community solar deals right now guarantee savings compared to Ameren's supply price. But be a careful shopper: Get more information at our special website, [SolarInTheCommunity.com](http://SolarInTheCommunity.com). (**Note:** Several of the offers have a waitlist, so check with the companies.)

*CUB is Illinois' leading nonprofit utility watchdog group. Created by the Illinois Legislature, CUB opened its doors in 1984 to represent the interests of residential and small-business utility customers. Since then, CUB has saved consumers more than \$20 billion by helping to block rate hikes and secure refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline at 1-800-669-5556 or visit CUB's award-winning website, [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org).*

###