



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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CUB ALERT: 'AN UNPRECEDENTED RATE-HIKE BARRAGE' *CUB SOUNDS THE ALARM ON UTILITIES' RECORD PUSH FOR RATE INCREASES*

In what will go down as one of the worst months ever for Illinois utility customers, five major utilities in January filed for a combined total of \$2.8 billion in rate hikes, according to the Citizens Utility Board (CUB), a consumer watchdog challenging the increases.

The two electric rate-hike requests—from ComEd and Ameren Illinois—and four gas requests—from Ameren Illinois, North Shore Gas, Nicor Gas and Peoples Gas—are unprecedented in number and amount, impacting millions of customers across Illinois. CUB urges consumers to visit [CUBHelpCenter.com](https://www.cubhelpcenter.com) to sign petitions against the increases and get tips on lowering utility bills.

Here's a breakdown of the rate-hike requests:

- ComEd, filed Jan. 17: \$1.47 billion over four years.
- Ameren Illinois (electric), filed Jan. 20: \$435.6 million over four years
- Peoples Gas, Jan. 6: \$402 million
- Nicor Gas, Jan. 4: \$321 million
- Ameren Illinois (gas), Jan. 6: \$160.4 million
- North Shore Gas, Jan. 6: \$18.5 million
- **Total: \$2.8 billion**

"During a time of sky-high fossil fuel prices, Illinois' major utilities threaten to make a bad situation worse by hitting their customers with an unprecedented rate-hike barrage. These increases would be a painful blow to consumers already struggling to pay for basic necessities like food and medicine," CUB Executive Director David Kolata said. "On the electric side, smart, cost-efficient utility investments in the power grid can help advance affordable clean energy and save money for customers in the long run, but too often utilities want a blank check. CUB will review these rate-hike filings to challenge any attempt by the electric and gas utilities to rake in excessive profit rates, and we will fight every penny the companies can't justify. We urge the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) to stop these increases and protect all customers."

The parent companies of these utilities raked in roughly \$7 billion in profits in just the first nine months of 2022. (Full-year profits are not yet available.)

The rate-hike requests will go through separate 11-month cases before the ICC. They will be ruled on to take effect by January 2024. These increases would impact delivery rates, which take up about a third to a half of electric and gas bills. It's what the utilities charge customers to cover the costs of delivering gas to homes—plus a profit.

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Three of the companies received rate hikes in 2021: North Shore Gas received a \$4 million increase; Ameren Illinois a \$76 million rate hike; and Nicor Gas a state-record \$240 million increase. Ameren Illinois has received a combined total of \$118 million in rate hikes and ComEd a combined total of \$244 million over the last two Januarys.

Gas prices have been elevated for nearly two years—causing Illinois consumers to pay higher bills to heat their homes. These high gas prices impact electricity prices as well, since gas is often used to generate power. CUB said the elevated fossil fuel prices should raise awareness of a promising opportunity for Illinois consumers. The group called on all state officials, including the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) and the General Assembly, to develop stronger policies to help Illinois consumers transition to cleaner and more affordable energy sources.

"Gas is expensive, unhealthy and unsustainable," Kolata said. "There are better ways to heat our homes—and Illinois has all the tools it needs to give consumers better access to these alternatives."

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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.

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