



# CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

## Fighting for Illinois Consumers

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

**CONTACT: Jim Chilsen**

(c) 312-513-1784, [jchilsen@citizensutilityboard.org](mailto:jchilsen@citizensutilityboard.org)

### **AMID 45% INCREASE IN COM ED'S POWER PRICE, CUB CALLS ON UTILITY TO WORK WITH CUSTOMERS TO KEEP THEM SAFE, COOL, CONNECTED THIS SUMMER**

**CHICAGO**—With Commonwealth Edison customers facing a 45 percent increase in the price of power, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) on Wednesday called on Illinois' largest electric utility to work with people struggling to afford their bills this summer so they can keep their electricity on and protect themselves from dangerous heat.

"This will be a difficult summer for far too many customers, and we urge ComEd to do everything possible to work with people so they stay safe, cool and connected this summer," CUB Executive Director Sarah Moskowitz said. She called for ComEd to offer consumer-friendly payment plans that give customers a longer time to pay off their debt.

ComEd's summer "price to compare"—the rate customers should compare with alternative supplier offers—is: **10.028 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh) from June through September.**

**Note:** This rate includes the supply price and a transmission charge. The increase impacts the supply section, which makes up about a half to two-thirds of ComEd bills. ComEd does not profit off supply—they pass those costs onto customers with no markup. A new, non-summer supply rate, which has yet to be announced, will take effect Oct. 1. The price of electricity is expected to be elevated at least through next May.

ComEd has estimated the increase will cost customers an average of 10 to 15 percent, or \$10.60 more per month, over the next year. The spike is connected to an increase in the price for reserve power, also called "capacity." CUB argues that capacity costs have skyrocketed largely because of policy problems with the power grid operator for northern Illinois, PJM Interconnection, which runs an auction that determines the price of capacity.

CUB has tips to help Illinois consumers get through the expensive summer at [CUBHelpCenter.com](https://cubhelpcenter.com), including:

- **Use energy efficiency to soften the blow of the price spike.** Simple actions can help, such as weatherizing windows and doors and turning off unnecessary lights. Don't take risks that keep your home too hot—efficiency is about eliminating waste but staying safe and cool this summer.
- **Stay in contact with your utility.** Consumers who are struggling should contact their utilities to inquire about payment plans and learn about energy efficiency programs.
- **Consider programs to help ease costs.** ComEd's [Peak Time Savings](#) program gives customers the opportunity to earn bill credits by reducing electricity usage during high-demand periods, typically summer afternoons. Also, Illinois' community solar program offers customers the benefits of solar power without having to install panels on their homes. All offers currently guarantee savings compared to ComEd's supply price. CUB's resource, [SolarInTheCommunity.com](https://solarinthecommunity.com), can help you carefully shop for offers.
- **Beware of rip-offs.** Since 2015, Illinois consumers have lost about \$1.8 billion to alternative electricity suppliers. These suppliers are impacted by the same market conditions that are causing utility prices to increase, so it's likely, even in this expensive market, that ComEd is your best bet. **One exception:** If your

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

community has negotiated a power deal with a supplier, it's possible the price is lower than ComEd's supply rate. Confirm the price and find out when the offer expires.

While the price spike is bad news, the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) is providing some relief. Illinois' landmark energy law requires a line item on ComEd bills called the Carbon Free Energy Resource Adjustment (CFERA) to subsidize energy generated by nuclear power plants in Illinois. But consumer advocates pushed for a provision that changes the charge to a credit when energy prices go above a certain level. The credit can change each month, but it's expected to be on bills for the next year. In June it's a 1.7 cents per kWh credit.

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*For more than 40 years the **Citizens Utility Board (CUB)** has been 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 helped save consumers more than \$20 billion by blocking rate hikes and securing refunds. For more information, call CUB's Consumer Hotline, at 1-800-669-5556, or visit CUB's website, [www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org](http://www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org).*