



Electric Competition in Illinois

A guide for Ameren customers

FACT SHEET

January 2021

Ameren Supply Price October 2020 through May 2021

0 to 800 kWh: **4.553** cents per kWh*

Above 800 kWh: **4.4** cents per kWh*

(**Note:** On your bill it's 0.04553 or 0.044)

**Note: Ameren price includes the Electricity Supply Charge and the Transmission Services Charge, both under the "Supply" section of bills. The price does not include the Purchased Electricity Adjustment (PEA). The PEA can change monthly and is a credit or a debit of up to 0.5 cents per kWh.*

What are my choices in the electricity market?

In Illinois, you have four choices for electric supply:

- 1) Ameren, the regulated supplier;
- 2) An unregulated alternative supplier (also known as an "alternative retail electric supplier," or "ARES");
- 3) An unregulated supplier chosen by your local government ("municipal aggregation");
- 4) Power Smart Pricing, a special Ameren pricing plan.

This guide covers the second choice, unregulated alternative suppliers. These companies sell their offers door-to-door, over the phone, via mail, and at community events.

CUB gets a lot of reports about misleading marketing and bad deals that charged consumers double, triple or even worse for their electricity. Such problems led Illinois to pass the HEAT Act, one of the nation's toughest consumer-protection laws.

How does competition work?

Ameren typically charges you for the power you use and the cost of delivering it to you. But you can choose another company to supply the power.

If you choose another supplier, you will continue to get a bill from Ameren for delivery, and you still call the utility in case of a power outage. But a different company and its price will be listed on the "supply" section of your bill.

Remember, Ameren's supply price is often the lowest option. It is illegal for Ameren to make a profit off of what it charges you for supply. Alternative suppliers, on the other hand, can charge whatever they want.

Ameren's electricity price changes in June and October of each year as part of an electricity purchasing process overseen by the Illinois Power Agency.

WARNING:

In the current market, the regulated utility (Ameren is probably your best choice.

Will I save money with another supplier?

In recent years, Illinois consumers have **lost more than \$800 million** from alternative electric suppliers. So in the current electricity market, it's likely that the regulated utility is your best bet. If you are considering an electricity offer, be careful to ask good questions and read the fine print before signing up.

What consumer protections do I have?

Because of numerous problems in the market, Illinois passed the Home Energy Affordability and Transparency (HEAT) Act in 2019. Among other things, the new law:

- Ends termination fees.



How to avoid electricity scams

1) People may knock on your door or call you to say they're from the "electric company" and can lower your bill. Don't give out your electric bill or account number unless you're sure you want to sign up for an offer. A dishonest sales representative can use your account number to sign you up without permission.

2) Find out what the company is charging and how that compares with the utility's price. Is it a fixed rate (and if so, for how long) or a variable rate that changes monthly?

3) Ask if the rate is an introductory rate, how long it will last, and what the new rate will be. Your low price may disappear after a few months, causing your bill to skyrocket.

4) Ask if the plan charges a monthly fee. A \$10 monthly fee means you pay more than \$100 a year—without using any power.

- Stops suppliers from automatically renewing a contract from a fixed rate to a variable rate (a rate that changes monthly), and then increasing the price.
- Requires supplier marketing materials, and utility bills, to clearly state the utility's current price.
- Makes it harder for suppliers to overcharge customers who get assistance through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- Requires telemarketing and in-person marketing to be conducted in a language the customer understands.

There are many more protections in the HEAT Act. If you have questions, please call CUB, 1-800-669-5556.

What is a community power deal?

Under Illinois law, a city, village, town or county can negotiate electricity prices with an alternative supplier on behalf of its residents. This is called "municipal aggregation," or a community power deal.

With aggregation, the switch to a supplier is automatic, as long as residents in your community passed a referendum in favor of it—but you can opt out of participating in the program.

Aggregation allows local leaders to use the collective buying power of a community's residents to try to negotiate a better price with a supplier. But there's no guarantee that a town's price will beat the utility rate.

How do I know if I'm with an alternative supplier?

BEWARE: Even if you're with an alternative supplier, you will continue to get a bill from your regulated utility. People on a bad deal often tell CUB they had no idea they were with another company until their bill went up. Check your bill each month to see if an alternative supplier is listed.

- Look for another company listed on the "Supply" section of your Ameren bill. You should be able to see the per kilowatt-hour price you're paying with that supplier.
- Call the alternative supplier to end an offer. The name and number of the company should be listed on your electric bill. If you think you were fraudulently signed up, tell the supplier you want a refund.
- If you don't like the supplier's response, file a complaint with CUB, at 1-800-669-5556.


Details From Your Electric Supplier

XYZ IL Power Supplier
www.XYZXYZXYZ.com
555-555-5555

Refer to supply contract for details.

For more information about your electric supply choices, visit www.pluginillinois.org.

Electric Supply	Total Energy Charge (\$/kWh)
Homefield Energy	
Municipal Aggregation	
Traditional	



AmerenIllinois.com
Customer Service 1.800.755.5000

Statement Issued 06/10/2016
Amount Due \$96.74
Due Date Jul 1, 2016

Account Number
Customer Name
Service Address

Payment Details

DATE	AMOUNT
May 12, 2016	\$101.85

Electric Service Residential Billing Detail - Rate Zone III 05/09/2016 - 06/08/2016 (30 days)

Electric Meter Read for 05/09/2016 - 06/08/2016 (30 days)

READ TYPE	METER NUMBER	CURRENT METER READ	PREVIOUS METER READ	READ DIFFERENCE	MULTIPLIER	USAGE
Total kWh	14910.0000	Actual	14494.0000	Actual	416.0000	1.0000
						416.0000

Usage Summary

Total kWh	416.0000	Summer kWh	111.0000
Non-Summer kWh	305.0000	PTR Usage	0.0000

CHARGE DESCRIPTION	USAGE UNIT	RATE	CHARGE
Electric Delivery			
Ameren Illinois			\$12.74
Customer Charge			\$5.00
Meter Charge			\$5.25
DS-1 Residential Delivery	111.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.04727000	\$8.45
Distribution Delivery Charge Summer	305.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.02770000	\$8.45
Distribution Delivery Charge Non-Summer	416.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.02807400	\$11.08
Electric Environmental Adjustment	416.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.00426000	\$1.77
Energy Efficiency Demand Response			\$0.00
Peak Time Rewards Credit			\$0.00
Electric Delivery			\$34.29

Electric Supply	Total Energy Charge (\$/kWh)	416.00 kWh	@ \$ 0.05749000	\$23.92
XYZ IL Power Supplier				
Electric Supply				\$23.92

Taxes and Other Fees

Hillsboro Municipal Tax	\$2.16
Illinois State Electricity Excise Tax	\$1.37
EDT Cost Recovery	\$0.57
Total Tax Related Fees	\$4.10

Total Electric Charges	\$62.31
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Page 3 of 4