



CITIZENS UTILITY BOARD

Fighting for Illinois Consumers

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CUB RELEASES FREE ONLINE GUIDE TO HELP ILLINOIS CONSUMERS ADVOCATE FOR THEMSELVES AGAINST BIG GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANIES

As a public service to the people of Illinois, the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) on Tuesday released a free online guide that clearly explains the rules that govern gas and electric companies, so consumers can advocate for themselves against the big utilities, avoid scams, and save money on their energy bills.

CUB's *Gas and Electric Guide: A handbook for residential utility customers in Illinois* can be ordered at CitizensUtilityBoard.org. It was researched and written by CUB experts who tackle thousands of complaints and questions from Illinois utility customers each year.

"There is no other place in Illinois where you can get a detailed, easy-to-understand outline of your rights as a gas and electric customer, as well as helpful tips," CUB Executive Director David Kolata said. "If you want to avoid scams and advocate for yourself against the big utilities, you have to educate yourself, and that's why this handy guide should be required reading."

The guide was completed after months of research and writing by CUB's consumer advocates, based on their knowledge of complex state regulations and utility tariffs, as well as their experience assisting Illinois consumers. CUB's toll-free Consumer Hotline, **1-800-669-5556**, takes thousands of calls each year, and the utility watchdog's outreach team has staffed 500 events across the state in 2018.

The 19-page guide is filled with helpful facts and tips, including:

- When a utility CAN and CANNOT disconnect service;
- When a payment is considered late;
- How to file a complaint about your utility with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC);
- Where to look on your gas and electric bills to spot alternative supplier rip-offs;
- Special electricity pricing plans that might save you money; and
- How to complain to your utility.

"This guide is meant to be a utility customer's best friend," Kolata said. "Nobody should feel powerless facing the big utilities."

CUB's *Gas and Electric Guide* is free at CitizensUtilityBoard.org.

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

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