

KNOW BEFORE YOU SWITCH ELECTRICAL & GAS SUPPLIERS

Some electric and gas supply companies unlawfully mislead residents about cheaper rates and scam customers out of money.

HOW THEY SCAM YOU

- These sales agents pretend to be from your authorized utility company. They go door-to-door, mail advertisements and make cold calls promising lower costs without changing your utility service provider.
- Some agents request to see your current bill to help you compare rates. What they are really looking for is your utility account number to switch you to their alternative supplier without your knowledge. Under Illinois law, your service cannot be switched without your express permission even if they use your current company for delivery and billing.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Don't let a high pressure sales pitch rush you into switching on the spot. Ask if their rate is variable or fixed. A variable rate will jump to a higher one after the introductory period ends. Initially, your bill may be lower but will later spike. If you do not wish to switch suppliers, hang up the phone or close the door.
- The easiest way to compare prices is to visit www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org which includes a comprehensive list of electricity & gas offers. Also, CUBPowerCalculator.com is a tool that allows you to compare the current utility price with any alternative electricity supplier.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- It is your right to cancel a utility contract any time within 10 business days. By law, the supplier is forbidden from charging an early termination fee during this time. For all suppliers and utilities, the maximum termination penalty they can charge is \$50. Act fast if you have been switched
- Under Illinois law, you have the right to choose which company supplies your electricity or gas. Keep in mind that in the vast majority of cases, switching utility companies will cost you more in the long run.

**Call 1-800-524-0795 to file a complaint
with the Illinois Commerce Commission.**

**Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection
City Hall, 121 North LaSalle Street, Room 805, Chicago, IL**

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