

### Volume 336 May 14, 2013

Five years ago, Illinois passed legislation requiring electric suppliers to buy more renewable energy such as wind and solar power and then pass those costs on to customers.

The intent of the mandate was to have green electricity accounting for a quarter of the power flowing into residences and businesses by 2025 while fostering homegrown jobs and cleaner air.

But that was before customers of the state's two major electric utilities defected en masse to other suppliers that purchase power on the open market. With that move, the state is falling short of its green mandate, because money being collected from customers by these other energy suppliers isn't being used for green energy purchases.

Instead, the money is going into a fund that's sitting untapped because of obscure language in state law.

That \$15 million account is on track to balloon to nearly \$135 million by the end of 2014, according to the Illinois Power Agency, the state agency tasked with spending the funds.

Because of the language in the law, the agency can only use the money to buy renewable energy if the state's two utilities are out buying renewable energy at the same time. With only a fraction of their customer bases left, the utilities already have more renewable energy than they need and aren't buying more.

As a result, the money sits, although at one point the cash-strapped state borrowed the entire amount from the fund then repaid the money. Overall, about two-thirds of the state's electric customers are paying into a renewable-energy fund that isn't being used.

"It really doesn't make sense to have all this money being spent by consumers and then have them not getting anything for it," said David Kolata, executive director of the Citizens Utility Board, a consumer advocacy group. "We'd like to think that this can all be resolved."

In June, about 5 percent of the state's electricity will come from renewable sources, according to an Environmental Law and Policy Center analysis of publicly available state data. That's short of the 8 percent target mandated under the law, and amounts to about 4.7 million megawatt hours, enough to power half a million homes for one year.

Environmental groups are clamoring to tweak the law to free up those funds but face resistance from nuclear plant owner Chicago-based Exelon and its utility, Commonwealth Edison. They contend the law is working as intended.

### Electricity Pricing – May 14 2013 Com Ed LMP Electric Price

Time Period	Average per Kwh
May, 2012	\$.02816
June, 2012	\$.03089
July, 2012	\$.04303
Aug, 2012	\$.03112
Sep, 2012	\$.03034
Oct, 2012	\$.02829
Nov, 2012	\$.03327
Dec, 2012	\$.03081
Jan, 2013	\$.03111
Feb, 2013	\$.03219
Mar, 2013	\$.03665
April, 2013	\$.03821
May 1–May 2013	\$.03204

### Extended Temperature Forecast: Chicago Area

	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
High	84	80	78	75	76
Low	66	58	58	64	64

