



## Natural Gas Prices Increase

COLUMBIA - Homeowners who use natural gas to heat their homes will see a change in their winter bills.

Natural gas customers in Missouri and Illinois can expect to see a big increase in their heating bills this winter.

Moray Kiehl is just one of 127,000 Ameren UE customers who use natural gas to heat their homes.

"It seems like everything is going up, and we have to keep warm in the winter so it makes it difficult," Kiehl said. "It's kind of sad to think the gas prices are going up, too."

Because there is a higher demand for energy, heating the home could cost customers 30 percent more this winter than it did last winter.

"I'll have to figure out where I could cut some corners somewhere else if I have to pay more to heat my home," Kiehl said.

Ameren offers some tips to help keep natural gas bills low. Customers can enroll in the budget billing plan. This plan allows customers to pay the same amount each month for a year.

Customers can reduce their hot water usage by washing clothes in cold or warm water. Also customers should set their water heater temperature to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to reduce energy costs by three to five percent.

Although the heating season is a few months away, Ameren UE suggests natural gas users start taking steps to reduce their heating bills now. A few suggested methods are:

- installing a programmable thermostat to automatically adjust temperature settings
- replacing older thermostats with newer, more efficient models
- regularly changing or washing furnace filters

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