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Amenen Illinois headquarters at 300 Liberty St. in Downtown Peoria. MATT DAYHOFF/JOURNAL STAR

Judges: Ameren should lower gas rate hike request

JJ Bullock
Peoria Journal Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

PEORIA — Two regulatory judges in Illinois have recommended to a decision-making commission that Ameren Illinois lower its requested \$128.8 million gas rate increase by roughly \$44 million.

The two judges made their recommendation to the five-member Illinois Commerce Commission, which will make a final ruling on Ameren's rate hike request by Dec. 1, according to Jim Chilsen from the Citizens Utility Board.

Ameren's gas rate hike would be its fourth in the last seven years, "exacerbating a pattern that has caused its gas delivery rates to spiral by \$202 million, or 50 percent, during that period," CUB said in a statement.

Administrative law judges Nicole Roth and Matthew Locke made the recommendation that Ameren should slash its rate hike request, leaving the ultimate decision in the hands of the ICC, which can follow the recommendation or go a different direction, according to Chilsen.

"For the sake of Ameren's customers who have suffered through one gas rate hike after another, we urge the Illinois Commerce Commission to go far beyond the proposed the order and slash Ameren's money grab," Chilsen said in a news conference Thursday.

Chilsen said that Ameren's rate hikes have led to "big profits" for the company. In 2024 Ameren's earnings on natural gas were \$149 million, according to the company's 2024 financial report.

Ameren's Senior Director of Gas Operations and Technical Services Brad Kleoppel said in a statement to the Journal Star that the proposal "will maintain the safety, integrity and reliability of the natural gas distribution system and support an orderly and equitable transition to clean energy sources."

"The investments we have proposed in our reliability plan will enable us to meet strict federal pipeline safety requirements, reduce leaks, and provide reliable and affordable natural gas to our residential and business customers," Kleoppel said. "We evaluate all available methods to maintain

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SONYA MASSEY'S SHOOTING

'IT FELT LIKE WE COULD COME TOGETHER'



Rosa Harper-Davis of Springfield protests in support of Sonya Massey outside the Sangamon County complex on July 25. Former Sangamon County Sheriff's deputy Sean Grayson, accused of murdering Massey, had a status hearing before Circuit Court Judge Ryan Cadagin. THOMAS J. TURNEY/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

Springfield weighs in on Grayson trial as nation watches

Steven Spearie
Springfield State Journal-Register | USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD — Jordan Shaw admitted she felt "helpless" responding to shooting cases on a national scale, like Breonna Taylor, the 26-year-old Black woman killed when police officers made a forced entry into her Louisville, Kentucky, apartment in 2020.

Shaw said she was confined to making a social media post or talking about how wrong the situation was, but "it didn't feel that it was helping the community at large."

With the July 6, 2024, fatal shooting of Sonya Massey by a now former Sangamon County Sheriff's deputy in Shaw's hometown of Springfield, things changed.

"It felt like we could come together and be able to have our voices heard," Shaw said.

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Surrounded by mostly members of the family of Sonya Massey, civil rights attorney Ben Crump speaks during a press conference at the NAACP building in Springfield July 23, 2024. PHOTOS BY THOMAS J. TURNEY/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

An up-to-date timeline of the Sonya Massey case

Steven Spearie
Springfield State Journal-Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

With the trial of former Sangamon County Sheriff's deputy Sean Grayson, accused of murdering Sonya Massey, set to begin in Peoria on Oct. 20, The State Journal-Register has compiled a timeline of events, beginning with the fatal shooting on July 6, 2024.

Here is a look back.

2024

Around 12:50 a.m., July 6: Two Sangamon County Sheriff's deputies, including Grayson, are called to a home in the 2800 block of Hoover Avenue in an unincorporated part of Woodside Township for a possible intruder. They make contact with Massey, the 911 caller.

After searching for her ID card, Grayson directs her to remove a pot of water from the stove. When Massey tells Grayson, "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus," Grayson draws his gun and begins "aggressively yelling" at Massey to put down the pot.

According to documents, Massey put her hands in the air and says "I'm

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