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Westar Energy Granted Rate Increase

(AP) Kansas regulators have granted Westar Energy a \$50 million rate increase that will add an average of \$3.54 a month to residential customers' bills.

Topeka-based Westar is the state's biggest electric utility. The increase was contained in a multiparty agreement approved Wednesday by the Kansas Corporation Commission.

The agreement allows Westar shareholders to earn a 10 percent profit on their investments. Westar said the extra revenue also will help it maintain customer services, including tree pruning.

Westar originally sought a rate increase of \$91 million, while the corporation commission staff recommended a hike of \$33 million.