

Westar customers may see rates drop

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) — A settlement between Kansas agencies and Westar Energy may lead to utility customers seeing rate drops instead of previously expected increases.

The Wichita Eagle reports that the settlement reached Monday would reverse Westar's request for a \$17 million rate increase and turn it into a \$66 million rate cut. The settlement also drops Westar's effort to raise the basic per-month service charge.

The Kansas Corporation Commission must still approve the settlement, which could end what's been a hotly contested fight over rates that brought hundreds of angry customers and Kansas lawmakers to recent public hearings.

David Nickel represents the Citizens' Utility Ratepayer Board, the small state agency for residential and small-business customers. He says regular electric customers would see a rate decrease of about \$4 a month under the agreement.

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