

## News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Mylar balloons give spark to more than parties**

*Decorations can cause dangerous power outages; 3,825 customers lose power Sunday night*

**CHICAGO, Ill.** (May 17, 2010) – With the spring graduation season upon us and outdoor summer parties being planned, ComEd reminds customers to keep Mylar balloons tethered at all times. This helps reduce the chance of metallic balloons making contact with electrical lines and causing power outages, fires and possible injuries.

In the last four years, metallic balloons have caused about 200 outages affecting more than 100,000 ComEd customers. This included about 28,000 customers in 2009. The most recent outage occurred Sunday night and left 3,825 customers without power for two hours after a Mylar balloon made contact with a power line near Laramie Avenue and Belden Street on Chicago's northwest side.

When Mylar balloons touch a power line or float into substation equipment, their metallic properties cause a surge of electricity. This can cause equipment to short circuit and lead to power outages, fires and possible injuries.

To reduce these outages and help keep customers' lights on, ComEd offers the following tips:

- Keep balloons tethered at all times and attached to a weight.
- When disposing of Mylar balloons, make sure to puncture them to ensure lingering helium doesn't cause them to float and blow around if the garbage container is overturned.
- If a balloon or another toy becomes entangled in an overhead power line, don't attempt to retrieve it. Instead, call ComEd at 800-EDISON-1 (800-334-7661).
- Always assume power lines are live, and keep yourself, your equipment and all other items at least 10 feet away from power lines.

For other safety tips, visit [www.ComEd.com](http://www.ComEd.com).

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*Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd) is a unit of Chicago-based Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), one of the nation's largest electric utilities with approximately 5.4 million customers. ComEd provides service to approximately 3.8 million customers across northern Illinois, or 70 percent of the state's population.*