

# METRO

# 50,000 join ComEd lawsuit

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## Wrigleyville losses are included

As many as 50,000 residents and businesses in Wrigleyville were added Friday to a class action suit that seeks millions of dollars in damages from Commonwealth Edison for power failures this summer.

"It all adds up," attorney Thomas Zimmerman said. "We're estimating \$50 million in damages from Wrigleyville alone when you include everything we would be entitled to." Technically, the amended lawsuit only adds the Niko hair salon at Belmont and Lake Shore, which was blacked out in the late July Wrigleyville power failure. But in doing so, the class action suit can now represent anyone

who suffered damages from the Wrigleyville outages, Zimmerman explained.

"We're assuming there are 50,000 people affected in the Wrigleyville area," he said.

The suit originally included residents and businesses from the South Loop, a swath west of the Chicago River and the Near North Side, which all lost power Aug. 12.

The original suit represented about \$100 million in damage, Zimmerman said. "That estimate came from the Building Owners and Managers Association," he said. "They said the downtown area does a billion

dollars a day in commerce."

Another class action suit has been filed on behalf of a Greektown restaurant.

ComEd had no immediate comment on the new legal action. But when Zimmerman filed his original suit, the utility released a statement noting that state law "specifically spells out that in order for a business or residential customer to recover damages, there must be an outage of four hours or more affecting at least 30,000 customers."

Meanwhile, the problem-plagued utility, which has suffered from failures of under-

ground cables and overhead wires, was hit Friday by a new source of damage: errant trucks. They caused two of the four blackouts Friday.

At 10:50 a.m., a cement truck collided with a power pole at 105th and Spaulding, knocking out service to 88 customers until 12:30 p.m.

And at 2:56 p.m., another truck knocked over a power pole at Thatcher and Walnut in Downers Grove, cutting off power to 317 customers until 4 p.m.

In other incidents, 407 customers lost power from 11:36 a.m. to 1:40 p.m. after a line failure in Oak Brook. And 187 customers in Lemont were blacked out from 1-2 p.m. because of a downed overhead wire.