

Abstract #: 285

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Abstract Title: What Makes a Difference? Getting the Most from an On-line Audit & Feedback Program

Abstract Text:

Utility companies across the US have launched programs that use on-line audit tools to provide customers with feedback on their energy use and customized recommendations to reduce their use. But what makes the difference between an okay and a highly effective program? Examining the energy use and fielding a survey of customers who participated in Oklahoma Gas & Electric's residential Custom Energy Reports service, we looked at the differences in program operation across the years and those participants' engagement, actions, and savings. Overall, we found that participants reduced their electricity usage by a little more than 1% in the year they received reports, quite consistent with findings for other similar programs. Digging deeper though, the results include insights about the effects and effectiveness of active marketing campaigns on participation and savings; identification of specific actions taken by participants—both no-cost, in-home adjustments and efficiency purchases; and recommendations to maximize the program's effectiveness. This paper is timely. It will present new work we conducted for an opt-in behavior program that uses a combination of behavior change intervention strategies. The work is fully completed, has never been presented before, and has immediate applicability for staff planning to implement or needing to improve customer acceptance of programs that utilize an on-line audit tool and customized feedback reports.