

Abstract #: 402

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**Abstract Title: Hispanics and Energy: An Insight into Beliefs and Behaviors**

Abstract Text:

According to the 2012 U.S. Census, residents of Hispanic origin in the U.S. now total 52.04 million representing 16.3% of the U.S. population. Hispanics are also the fastest growing population group in the country. Recognizing the opportunity that this consumer group represents, several industries have focused efforts on understanding and engaging Hispanics in a more effective way. In the demand-side management industry, Hispanics tend to have low levels of participation in programs and are considered by some program administrators as a hard-to-reach customer class. As energy targets established by regulatory agencies become harder to meet, program administrators will have to focus their attention on customers that have traditionally not been engaged in energy programs – perhaps one of the largest opportunities will come from engaging the Hispanic population. This presentation will highlight findings from research conducted to gain a better understanding of this cultural group (and subgroups) and their behaviors and beliefs as they relate to energy in general, and also energy efficiency. The presentation will cover how Hispanics make energy-technology purchase decisions and choices, and the social and demographic factors that surround diverse energy-using behaviors in their homes and businesses. As takeaways, the presentation will highlight the energy “myths” that exist in the Hispanic community and suggest effective consumer education strategies tailored to countermand these beliefs. Finally, the presentation will share marketing and engagement strategies that prove effective with this customer group.