

Abstract #: 327

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Abstract Title: Tenant Engagement in Rental Housing: Evaluating a Mixed Methods Approach to Behavior-Driven Energy Efficiency

Abstract Text:

In 2014, ACEEE launched a pilot program that consisted of implementing several behavioral interventions aimed at saving energy in a set of multifamily buildings located in Takoma Park, Maryland. Behavioral interventions varied across buildings to test the effects of multiple channels, mediums, messages, and messengers. While all buildings received program-specific messaging pieces, a subset also received energy-saving devices, an invitation to participate in a building-wide energy savings challenge, and greater in-person presence of program staff. The research was designed to test the hypothesis that behavioral interventions can consistently achieve cost-effective energy savings in multifamily buildings and to lay the groundwork for broad adoption of similar behavior-oriented multifamily programs by utilities in Maryland and beyond. In summer of 2015, we will conduct statistical analysis of utility bills to assess energy savings in these buildings. Preliminary findings, however, offer insights on the limitations of tenant engagement and the importance of engaged building owners or operators. This presentation will speak to both sets of findings.