HOW WRONG CAN YOU BE ABOUT WHAT CAUSES PARTICIPANT SPILLOVER?

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Background

- California statewide residential participant spillover study conducted by Opinion Dynamics for the California Public Utilities Commission
- Typically, program administrators account for spillover in claimed savings
- CPUC currently uses a deemed 5% spillover rate in lieu of applying specific primary research
Evaluation Challenges

- **Problem:** Assessing spillover is really challenging because it is hard to find!
Solution: We used a four-member panel of raters to develop a propensity rating for each program through a systematic review and rating process.

- **Middle Income Direct Install**
- **T-Stat Rebate**
- **Whole Home Upgrade**

**Rating Propensity**
Research Design

- Implemented stratified, two-stage approach using propensity ratings to use evaluation resources most effectively
Beware... Don’t Jump to Conclusions

- Checking in halfway through, it looked like participants in programs we rated as **low propensity** were *more likely* to have spillover

- **Key Takeaway #1:**
  Spillover is very hard to assess accurately without extremely large samples
In the End... Hypothesis Confirmed

- Based on a total of 1,600 surveys, our results aligned with our propensity ratings

- Key Takeaway #2:
  Ex ante categorization of programs is helpful and can inform sampling
Thank You!

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