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Presentation Title: Green Roles At Home: Exploring The Effect Of Household Dynamics On Consumption At The Food-energy-water Nexus

Abstract: Responsible for 60% of direct and indirect global greenhouse gas emissions, household consumption plays a key role in mitigating climate change (Ivanova et al., 2016). Carefully studying social drivers of consumption facilitates efforts towards household behavior change. We contribute to this body of research by exploring how social dynamics within the household influence food, energy, and water consumption. Recent critiques of household consumption research point to a level-of-analysis problem where consumption behavior is measured at the household level but theorized in terms of individual environmental behavior (Jorgensen et al., 2020). To bridge this conceptual gap, we focus on understanding household behavior as embedded within residential life and shaped by social dynamics. We surveyed 256 households in Lake County, Illinois as part of a larger study measuring food, energy, and water consumption over a 12-month period. While other existing research on household dynamics primarily collects qualitative data to capture detailed snapshots of household life, we look quantitatively at prevalence of specific social dynamic processes in a larger sample of households. We measure the household processes of preferring, norming, enhancing, and constraining resource consumption behavior (characterized by Lytle et al., forthcoming) as they relate to household practices that require food, energy, and water use. Our analysis will measure the impact of these household dynamics on frequency of self-reported resource consumption behaviors. By measuring the influence of household social dynamics on consumption, we hope to inform future interventions that seek to curb household emissions.