



SEE Action
STATE & LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY ACTION NETWORK

Customer Information and Behavior

Energy use information can help consumers use less energy and manage household energy costs. This information, combined with tools that use behavioral science research, can unlock a vast new source of energy and cost savings. Insights from behavioral science research can be incorporated into energy efficiency program design to help program administrators and state and local governments achieve energy efficiency goals. The Customer Information and Behavior Working Group of the State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network (SEE Action) focuses on ways to use behavioral science for energy efficiency.

What is the Opportunity?

Energy efficiency represents one of our nation's largest untapped energy resources. Investing in efficiency creates jobs and strengthens economic competitiveness by lowering the cost of living and doing business. It also can help reduce demand, improve system reliability, eliminate or delay the need for new transmission and distribution investments, reduce fossil fuel use, and provide significant public health and environmental benefits. Numerous studies have shown that investing in cost-effective energy efficiency improvements could save hundreds of billions of dollars nationally over the next 10–15 years.^{1,2}

Behavior-based energy efficiency strategies use economic and non-economic incentives, education, and feedback programs to change how people use energy. For example, some behavior-based energy efficiency programs use in-home displays, smart phone applications, or other devices to give consumers real-time energy use information, allowing them to adjust consumption and manage energy costs. These and other behavior-based approaches typically include education, peer comparisons, competition, rewards, and/or feedback elements.

How SEE Action Helps

SEE Action addresses barriers to the greater use of behavioral energy efficiency programs. The Customer Information and Behavior Working Group offers information resources to support state policymakers, utilities, regulators, and other decision makers deploying customer energy information and feedback strategies to improve residential energy consumption behavior and achieve deeper energy savings:

- **Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification of Residential Behavior-Based Energy Efficiency Programs: Issues and Recommendations.** Provides technically valid methods to estimate the energy savings from residential behavior-based energy efficiency programs. Following these methods will give regulators, program administrators, and stakeholders a high degree of confidence in the validity of energy savings estimates from behavior-based programs.
- **A Regulator's Privacy Guide to Third-Party Data Access for Energy Efficiency.** Informs state regulators about current state approaches, issues, and policy options related to providing access to energy efficiency services providers to customer energy use information held by utilities. This information can be used to support and enhance the provision of energy efficiency services to benefit customers and achieve state targets while protecting customer privacy.

Key Points

- Behavior-based energy efficiency strategies use economic and non-economic incentives, education, and feedback programs to change how people use energy.
- Customer access to their energy use information, coupled with behavior-based program strategies, can lead to significant energy and cost savings.
- The Customer Information and Behavior Working Group offers information resources that help state policymakers, utilities, regulators, and others overcome barriers to deploying customer energy information and feedback strategies.

About SEE Action

The State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network (SEE Action) is a state and local effort facilitated by the federal government that helps states, utilities, and other local stakeholders take energy efficiency to scale and achieve all cost-effective energy efficiency by 2020.

About the Working Group

The working group is composed of representatives from a diverse set of stakeholders; its members are provided at www.seeaction.energy.gov.

SEE Action's Customer Information and Behavior Working Group

The Customer Information and Behavior Working Group provides tools and resources for regulators and policymakers about data access and privacy issues associated with energy efficiency. Additionally, it supports the development of uniform methods to measure energy savings from energy efficiency programs targeting behavior change. Chaired by state policymakers, the working group represents diverse stakeholders, including representatives from utilities, state utility commissions, academia, and expert practitioners in the fields of energy efficiency services and data management, among others.

Working Group Goal

The Working Group's long-term goal is to reduce residential electricity consumption by 4% by 2020 through increased customer awareness of energy use and the adoption of behavior-based energy efficiency programs by state and local policymakers. Achieving this goal would result in electricity savings of approximately 5 billion kWh—more than \$500 million—in 2020.³

Working Group Strategy

The Working Group has identified three key pathways to increase energy efficiency savings through behavior-based strategies:

- **Data Access.** Utilities and program administrators share energy use information with customers, while maintaining data security and privacy.
- **Program Design.** Program administrators use behavior-based programs to supplement traditional energy efficiency programs, and consumers reduce energy consumption through access to timely, useful, and actionable information.
- **Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification (EM&V).** Policymakers have access to fact-based, policy-neutral information on best practices and policy options for evaluating feedback programs; feedback savings are evaluated, measured, and verified in an accurate, timely, consistent, and affordable way.

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