



For Immediate Release

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WHAT WE DON'T KNOW CAN COST US

Survey Reveals Homeowners Want to Save Energy This Summer, But Don't Know How

WILKESBORO, N.C. – With rolling blackouts, high winter energy bills and sky rocketing gas prices affecting Americans across the country, energy efficiency is a top priority for homeowners this summer. According to a survey by Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse, 93 percent of Americans believe that saving energy is important both for the environment and their pocket books, but many of them don't know where to start.

"The survey shows that people know the basics about saving energy in the home," said Ron Hazelton, Home Improvement Expert. "Most Americans know that they should use their air conditioning less and turn lights off when they aren't in use. However, there are several other easy actions people aren't taking that can really help them save money on their monthly energy bills."

The Star of Energy Savings

One of the easiest and most effective ways to save money this summer is to use energy-efficient appliances, but according to Lowe's survey, less than 20 percent of Americans say that all their current appliances are energy-efficient. However, 58 percent say that when purchasing an appliance, energy-efficiency is very important. In fact, it is more important than cost, brand or color.

Most Americans don't know that Energy Star certified appliances – everything from washers, refrigerators and dishwashers to VCR's and dehumidifiers – use up to 50 percent less energy than other appliances. While the Department of Energy (DOE) found that the average annual home energy bill in the U.S. is \$1,300, the typical household can cut that bill by about 30 percent by choosing an appliance labeled with an Energy Star certification when replacing old equipment.

"The cost of running an Energy Star refrigerator is less than the cost of running a 75 watt light bulb," said Barbara Sisson, associate deputy assistant secretary in the DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. "In fact, if every household in New York state replaced their 10 year old refrigerator with a new Energy Star qualifying refrigerator, the total savings on electric bills would be around \$400 million."

According to the survey, less than half of Americans own Energy Star qualifying appliances. When told about the Energy Star program, sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency and the DOE, more than 90 percent of Americans said they would look for the Energy Star label on future purchases.

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Putting a Light on the Subject

Another important way to save energy is through your choices in lighting. The survey shows that the majority of Americans (53 percent) know that compact fluorescent light bulbs save more energy than regular incandescent bulbs, yet more than 90 percent of consumers still use incandescent lights.

“Switching from incandescent lights to compact fluorescents can help consumers save a significant amount of money on their monthly energy bills,” said Hazelton. “Compact fluorescent bulbs last 10 times longer than incandescent bulbs and use about 75 percent less electricity. In four years, one fluorescent bulb can save up to \$40 in energy costs.”

According to the survey, when told how much money homeowners can save by switching to fluorescent bulbs, 84 percent admitted they would pay more for them in order to save energy.

Taking Energy Savings One Step Further

In addition to the suggestions above, Lowe's also offers the following information to help consumers save energy:

- Add insulation to keep cool air from leaking outside. Just five percent of those surveyed said they planned to re-insulate or weatherstrip around windows, yet, according to the DOE, adding a layer of insulation is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to save energy – in winter or summer.
- Draw the blinds so the sun's warm rays don't heat up the home; only four percent of consumers surveyed said they plan to do this
- Run the dishwasher or do laundry at night to save energy; less than five percent of consumers (4.6 percent) know to do this
- Keep doors and windows shut while running the air conditioner
- Manually change thermostat or use an Energy Star programmable thermostat to raise temperature at night or when away from the house

Additional Lowe's Energy Survey Facts:

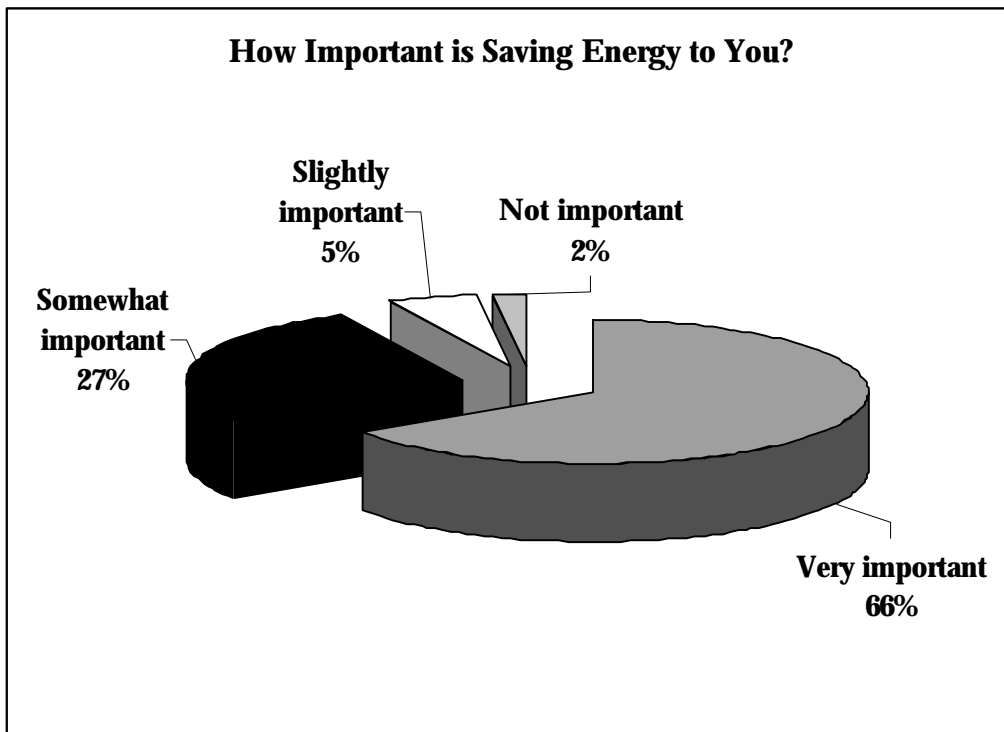
- More women say having energy-efficient appliances is important (93 percent) than men (88 percent)
- Strangely enough, the number of homeowners living in the West who rate energy efficiency as very important (60 percent) isn't much different from those living in the Midwest (62 percent), East (58 percent) and South (54 percent)
- Older Americans are the most concerned about saving energy, yet are least likely to have Energy Star or other energy-efficient appliances
- Forty-three percent of consumers say they will save energy by using their air conditioning less
- One-third of Americans plans to save energy by turning off lights when they aren't in use
- Ten percent say they'll use a car less this summer to conserve energy
- Seven percent of consumers plan to use less water this summer

With 2000 sales of \$18.8 billion, Lowe's Companies, Inc. is the world's second largest home improvement retailer. Headquartered in Wilkesboro, N.C., Lowe's is the 15th largest retailer in the U.S. as well as the 34th largest retailer worldwide. Lowe's and its 100,000 employees are *Improving Home Improvement* for nearly five million do-it-yourself retail and commercial business customers each week at more than 680 stores in 40 states. For more information, visit or shop at lowes.com.

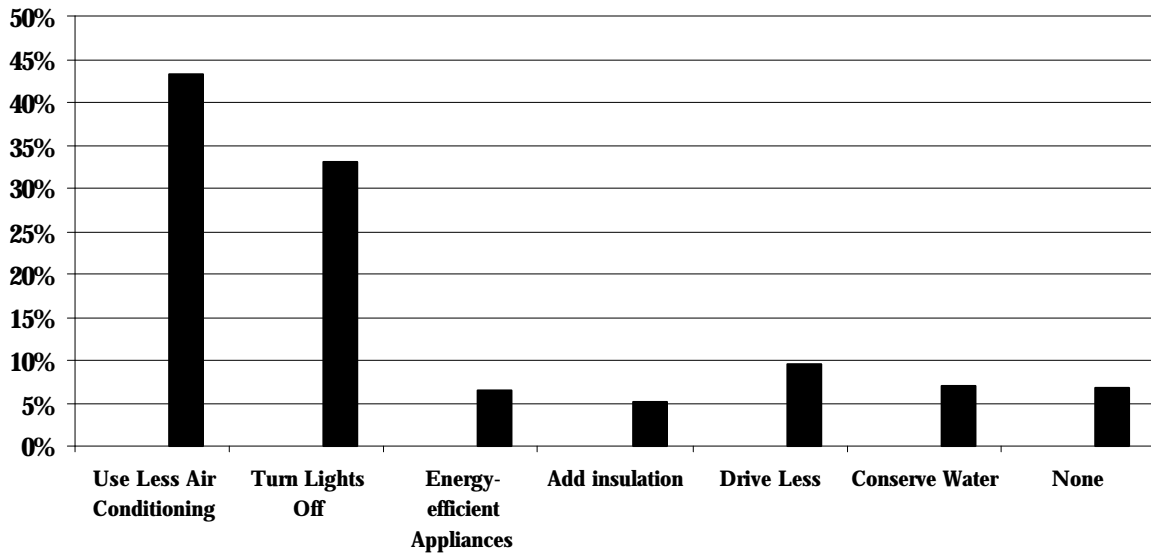


**Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse
Summer Energy-Efficiency Survey
May 9, 2001**

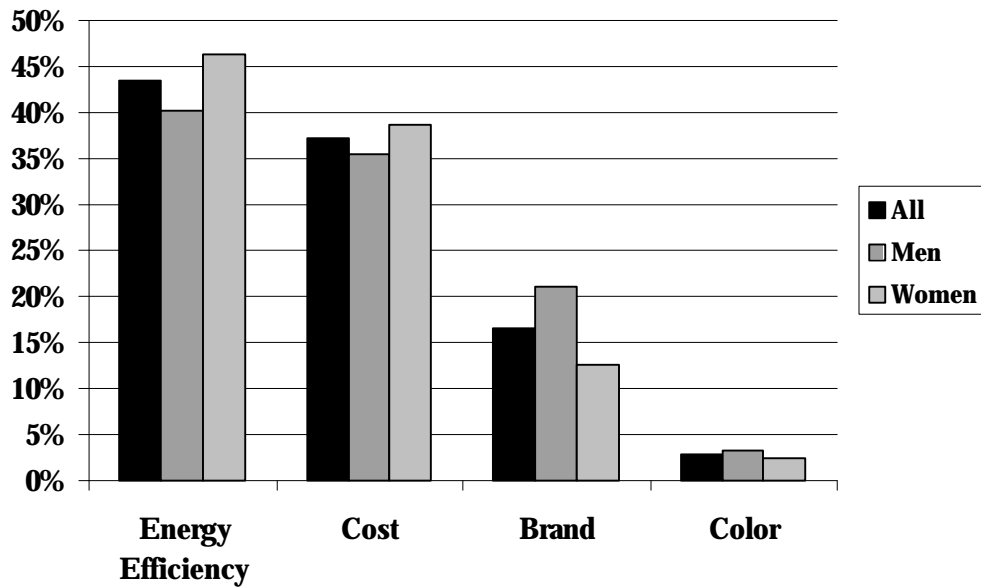
Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse surveyed 1000 people age 18 and older across the country, April 20-22, regarding energy-efficiency practices and knowledge. The results of this random telephone survey, conducted by Ipsos Reid, follow:



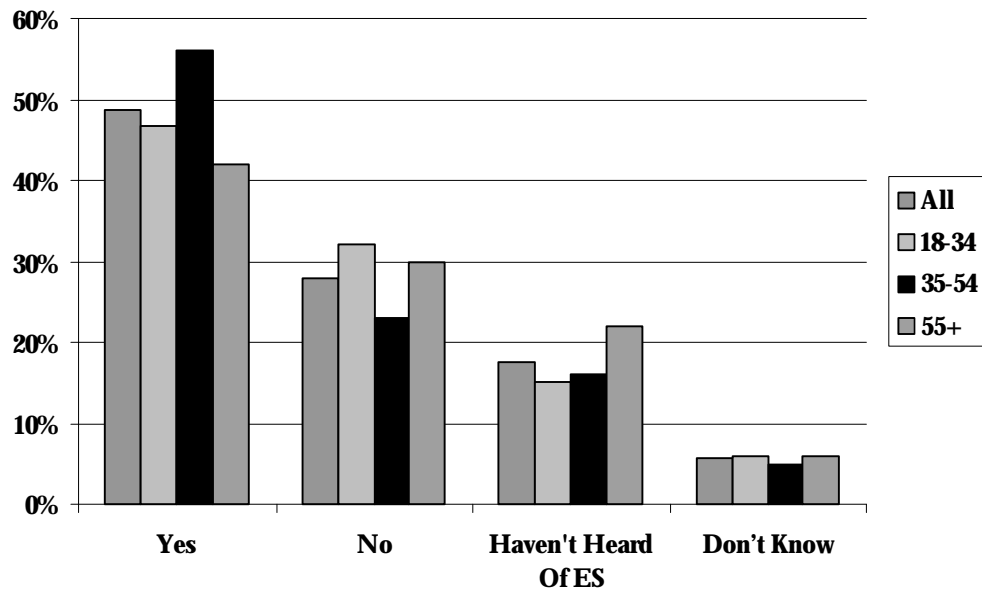
Ways People Plan to Save Energy this Summer



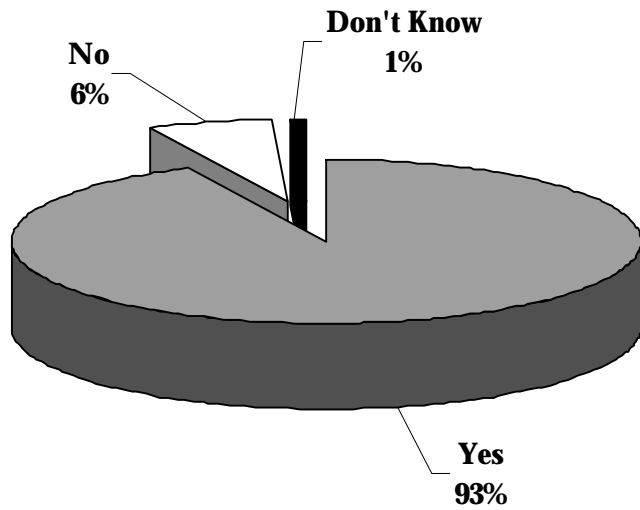
Which is Most Important When Buying an Appliance?



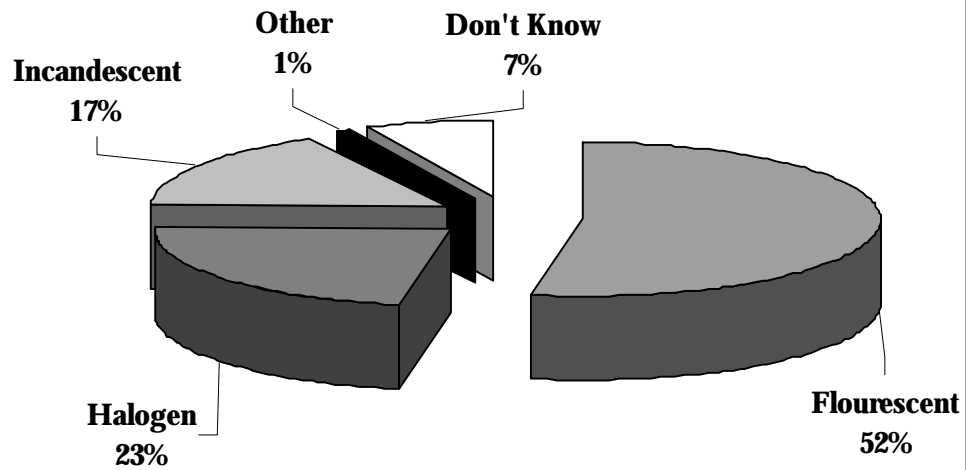
Do You Have any Energy Star Appliances?



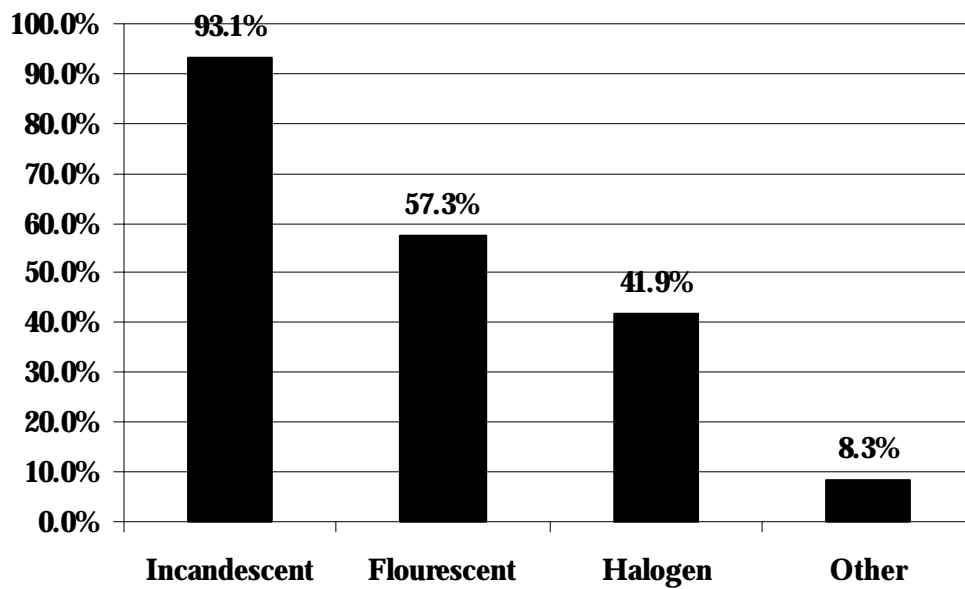
After Hearing About Energy Star Certification, Will You Look for Energy Star Labeled Appliances in the Future?



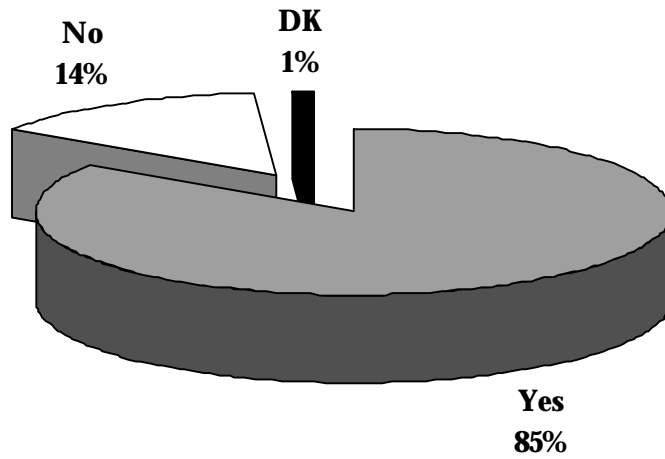
What Type of Lighting is Most Energy-Efficient?



What Types of Lighting Do You Have in Your House?



**Would You Pay More for Energy-Efficient Light Bulbs If
You Knew They'd Save Energy and Last Longer?**



For more information, contact Chris Ahearn at 336.658.7387 or Cris Wittkowski at 312.729.4203 or visit Lowe's Web site at www.lowes.com.

The survey results have a statistical deviation of ± 5 percent.