

Consumer Behavior Study Oklahoma Gas & Electric *Smart Study TOGETHER*

Abstract

Oklahoma Gas & Electric's (OG&E) Smart Study TOGETHER is a consumer behavior study evaluating the impacts of different levels of enabling technologies combined with various time-based rate programs on energy consumption and peak demand.

Consumer Behavior Study Feature

Goals and objectives center on how customers respond to varying combinations of enabling technologies, providing end-use controls and information and time-based rates. The study is focused on reducing OG&E system peak load and assessing whether customers make use of enabling technologies to actively manage their consumption and bills.

Study design involves two phases: a study sample of approximately 5,250 residential and small commercial customers and a test period from June 2010 to September 2011. The study is conducted using a randomized control trial design; customers who opt-in to the study are randomly assigned to control and treatment groups among the various time-based rate and technology options. Study participants are provided with 100% bill protection in the first year to familiarize customers with the financial implications of time-based rate programs.

Rate treatments include the application of various time-based rate programs. OG&E is implementing a variable peak pricing (VPP) rate that utilizes a 5-hour on-peak period during the summer season (June to September). The VPP also includes a price overcall provision applicable year-round for events when OG&E requires a reduction in total system load. OG&E provides customers at least 2 hours notice of price overcall events and each event lasts no more than 8 hours. In addition to the VPP rate, OG&E is implementing a time-of-use (TOU) rate with a substantially higher critical peak price (CPP) overlay during a 5-hour weekday critical peak period in the summer (June to September). The CPP overlay is applied with a minimum 2-hour notice to participating customers when forecasted temperatures, system load, or system emergency conditions are anticipated to arise.

Control/information technology treatments include the deployment of in-home displays and programmable controllable thermostats. These devices, in conjunction with customer Web portal access, facilitate two-way information exchange and enable customers to better manage their electricity bills through improved understanding of electricity consumption patterns of appliances and equipment. Study control group customers may also have Web portal access.

At-A-Glance

Recipient: Oklahoma Gas & Electric

State: Oklahoma

Timing: June 2010 – September 2011

Interim Evaluation Reporting: January 2011

Final Evaluation Reporting: January 2012

Sample Frame: ~5,250 Residential and Small
Business Customers

Number of Treatments: 6

Experimental Design: Randomized Control Trial

Rate Treatments

- Variable Peak Pricing (opt-in)
 - Time-of-Use w/ Critical Peak Pricing Overlay (opt-in)
 - Bill Guarantee Applied for First 12 Months Only
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Control/Information Technology Treatments

- Programmable Communicating Thermostat
 - In-home Display
 - Web Portal
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Oklahoma Gas & Electric *(continued)*

Key Milestones

Key Milestones	Target Dates
OG&E Smart Study TOGETHER test period begins	June 2010
OG&E provides Interim Evaluation Report	January 2011
OG&E Smart Study TOGETHER test period ends	September 2011
OG&E provides Final Evaluation Report	January 2012

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