



2024 CONSUMER SYMPOSIUM

Co-located with DISTRIBUTECH International The Consumer Voice in the Energy Movement

MON, FEB 26 | ORLANDO, FLA



## **Customer Satisfaction and the Smart Grid**

**#SECC2024** 

# **Customer Satisfaction and the Smart Grid**

2024 Consumer Symposium February 26, 2024

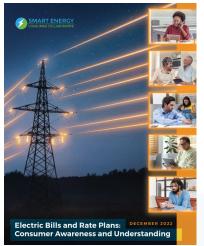


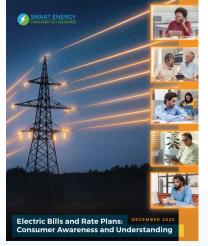
## Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives Inc.

- Membership organization of locally owned cooperatives in 46 states
- Cooperatives are not-for-profit, endorse core values of integrity, commitment to community, accountability, and innovation and put members first
- Provides resources and leverages partnerships to help member cooperatives better engage and serve their member-owners

## **Touchstone Energy® Research**

Touchstone Energy works with several organizations (e.g., SECC, Advanced Energy, Cooperative Insights) to conduct research concerning consumer attitudes and opinions, beneficial electrification, electric vehicles, smart devices, and more.

























### Background & Methodology



The Smart Energy Consumer Collaborate recognizes the updates and upgrades electricity providers have made to the electric grid over the past 15 years to improve customers' experiences. However, it is not well-known what improvement and experience customers have seen during this time.

To understand the consumer experience, the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative (SECC) commissioned Maru/Matchbox to answer the following **central questions**:

- Do consumers see the benefits of the smart grid and detailed energy data?
- What information or programs are available to consumers?
- What is consumers' current satisfaction and trust of their energy utility provider?
- Is the information provided to customers from energy use data improving customer satisfaction or overwhelming them?
- How interested are consumers in demand response opportunities and who/what would motivate them to take part?

WHAT?

To answer these questions, Maru/Matchbox conducted a 15-minute online survey among the sample groups below.

WHEN?

The survey was fielded from November 28th to December 5th, 2023.

WHO?

The survey included the following sample groups:

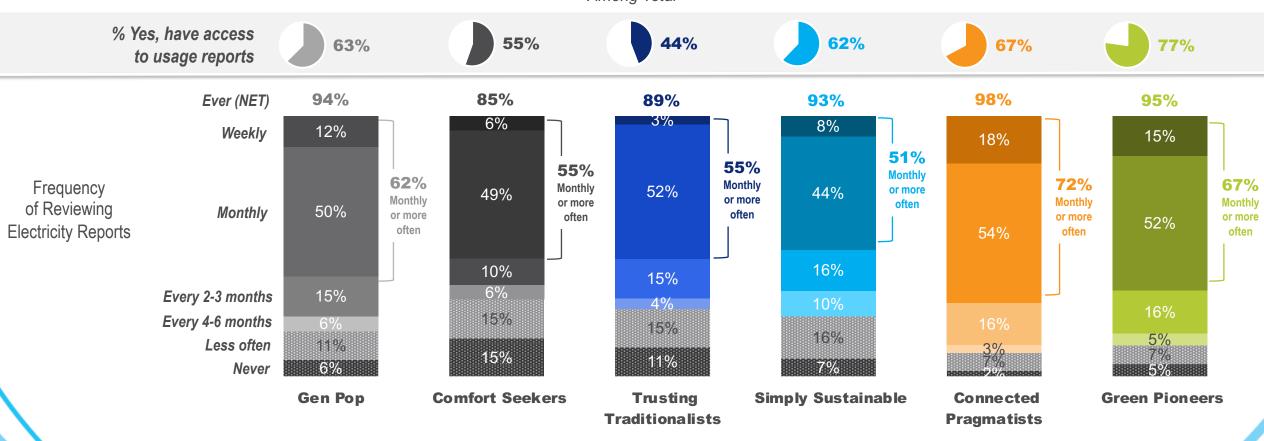
n=1500 Americans household energy decision-makers, aged 18+

The general population data was weighted to age, gender, region, and income to census data.

### Accessing Home Electricity Reports



### Access to and Frequency of Reviewing Electricity Usage Reports Among Total



Base: All Respondents – Gen Pop (n=1,500); Simply Sustainable (n=371), Connected Pragmatists (n=346), Green Pioneers (n=323), Trusting Traditionalists (n=292), Comfort Seekers (n=158) QELECTRICREPORTS. Do you have access to electricity usage reports or detailed online information from your electricity provider?

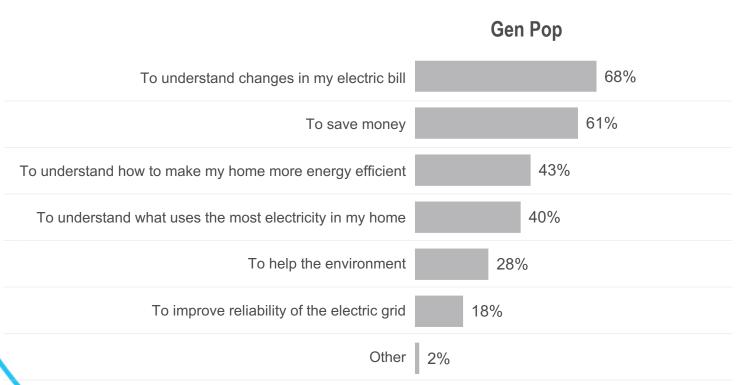
Base: Yes' @ QELECTRICREPORTS – Gen Pop (n=933); Simply Sustainable (n=230), Connected Pragmatists (n=230), Green Pioneers (n=249), Trusting Traditionalists (n=129), Comfort Seekers (n=88) QREPORTREVIEW. How often, if ever, do you review these electricity usage reports or detailed online information from your electricity provider?

### **Electricity Report Motivations**



#### Reasons for Reviewing Energy Usage Reports from Electricity Provider

Among those who Review Energy Usage Reports



Comfort Seekers	Trusting Traditionalists	Simply Sustainable	Connected Pragmatists	Green Pioneers
66%	76%	74%	55%	73%
57%	65%	72%	58%	55%
25%	30%	49%	43%	51%
29%	34%	33%	41%	50%
1%	22%	23%	34%	35%
6%	5%	12%	31%	20%
3%	4%	2%	1%	1%

\*Caution small base sizes (n<50)
Base: 'Reviewed Reports' @ QREPORTREVIEW – Gen Pop (n=873); Simply Sustainable (n=214), Connected Pragmatists (n=225), Green Pioneers (n=237), Trusting Traditionalists (n=115), Comfort Seekers (n=75) QREASONSREVIEW. Which of the following reasons describe why you review your electricity usage reports or detailed online information?

### Ideal Channel for Electricity Reports



#### Best Channel for Accessing Electricity Usage Reports

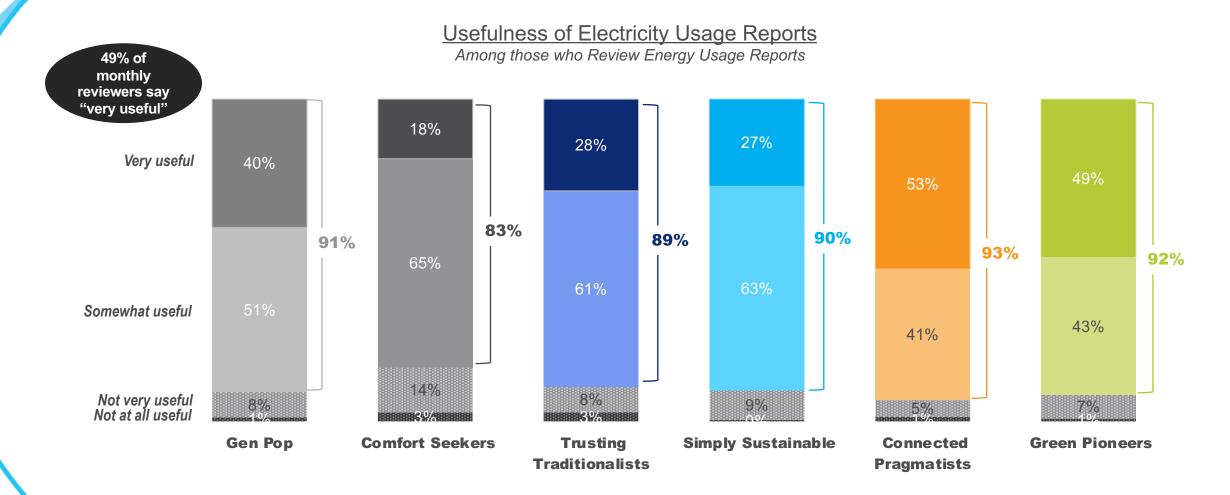
Among those who are likely to review Energy Usage Reports if they have access to them

Gen Pop
32%
20%
18%
15%
14%

Comfort Seekers*	Trusting Traditionalists	Simply Sustainable	Connected Pragmatists	Green Pioneers
40%	33%	35%	19%	37%
13%	20%	20%	25%	17%
20%	8%	14%	31%	24%
9%	20%	16%	13%	12%
18%	18%	15%	13%	9%

### **Electricity Report Usability**





Base: 'Reviewed Reports' @ QREPORTREVIEW – Gen Pop (n=873); Simply Sustainable (n=214), Connected Pragmatists (n=225), Green Pioneers (n=237), Trusting Traditionalists (n=115), Comfort Seekers (n=75)QUSEFUL. Overall, how useful are your electricity usage reports or detailed online information?

### **Electricity Report Information**



### Information in Energy Usage Reports from Electricity Provider

Among those who Review Energy Usage Reports

	Gen F	Рор	Comfort Seekers	Trusting Traditionalists	Simply Sustainable	Connected Pragmatists	Green Pioneers
Comparisons of your usage over time		59%	53%	64%	68%	41%	68%
Comparisons of your usage to the same time last year		59%	66%	67%	69%	38%	64%
Tips to save electricity in your home		49%	37%	51%	55%	43%	50%
Recommendations on how to make your home more energy efficient	3	8%	34%	38%	41%	34%	42%
Electricity usage for each hour of the day or daily usage	36	%	24%	28%	35%	38%	41%
Comparisons between your usage and others in your area	35	%	27%	34%	36%	34%	39%
Offers for energy efficiency programs	35	%	11%	33%	42%	32%	40%
Recommendations on when to use certain appliances	20%		13%	15%	18%	24%	23%
How much electricity each appliance uses	18%		7%	4%	11%	25%	25%
Recommendations on which appliances to use less	17%		7%	9%	11%	22%	22%
Other	0%		-	1%	-	-	0%
Can't recall	2%		6%	4%	3%	2%	-

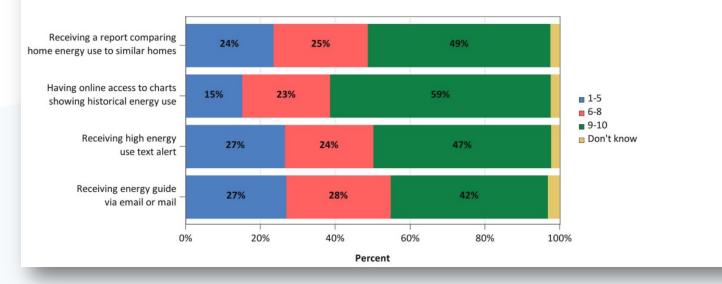
### **Energy Usage Information**

Based on survey among 8,900 memberowners of Touchstone Energy® electric cooperatives across the country, 59 percent of respondents are extremely interested in having online access to charts showing historical energy use, followed by strong interest in receiving a report comparing home energy use to similar homes.

### **Energy Efficiency Education Opportunities (CONTINUED)**

On a scale from 1 to 10, how interested would you be in your co-op offering these opportunities to help educate its members on how to improve energy efficiency of their homes?

(1 = not at all interested, 10 = extremely interested)\



Source: 2023 National Survey on the Cooperative Difference

### Application of Electricity Report Information



#### Changes Made since Reviewing Energy Usage Reports from Electricity Provider

Among those who Review Energy Usage Reports

	Gen Pop	Comfort Seekers	Trusting Traditionalists	Simply Sustainable	Connected Pragmatists	Green Pioneers
Made changes to my daily routine (e.g., turning off or unplugging unused appliances, etc.)	47%	30%	42%	48%	48%	54%
Heated or cooled my home less	39%	23%	37%	45%	36%	41%
Installed energy efficient appliances	25%	8%	15%	20%	29%	35%
Improved weather stripping/insulation of my home	24%	20%	14%	17%	27%	32%
Installed smart home devices (e.g., lights, thermostats, home monitoring system, etc.)	20%	11%	3%	13%	29%	29%
Adjusted my electricity on my own for an incentive	19%	8%	15%	17%	25%	21%
Installed energy efficient windows	16%	14%	13%	12%	20%	18%
Allowed my electricity provider to adjust my electricity usage for an incentive	15%	4%	8%	9%	24%	19%
Changed my rate plan	13%	7%	5%	12%	21%	12%
Other	1%	1%	2%	2%	-	1%
I have not made any changes	18%	44%	30%	20%	9%	13%

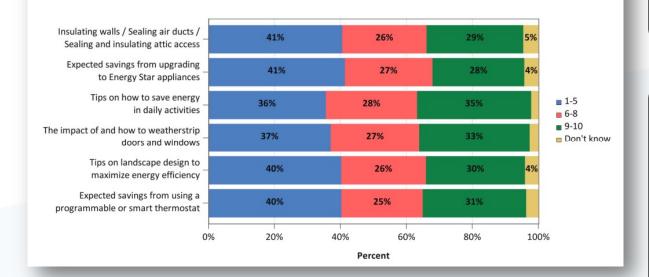
\*Caution small base sizes (n<50)
Base: 'Reviewed Reports' @ QREPORTREVIEW – Gen Pop (n=873); Simply Sustainable (n=214), Connected Pragmatists (n=225), Green Pioneers (n=237), Trusting Traditionalists (n=115), Comfort Seekers (n=75) QCHANGES. What changes have you made since reviewing your electricity usage reports or detailed online information?

### **Consumer Behavior**

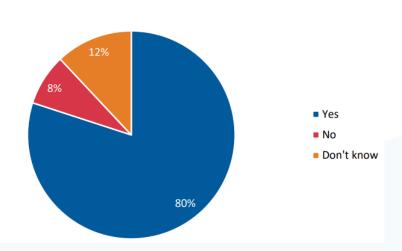
### **Interest in Energy Saving Actions**

On a scale from 1 to 10, how interested would you be in learning about ...?

(1 = not at all interested, 10 = extremely interested)

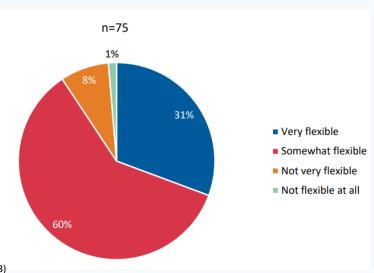


Would you be interested in receiving alerts from your coop when demand for energy is highest so you can reduce use of energy-intensive appliances?



n=75

How flexible
would you say
are you to
using
appliances at a
different time
if you knew
you could save
energy?



Source: 2023 National Survey on the Cooperative Difference

Source: Energy Use and Understanding (FPF 2023)

### Importance of Grid Modernization

4%

4%

**Trusting** 

**Traditionalists** 

11% |5%|

11%

**Comfort Seekers** 

Not very important

Not at all important Not sure 6%

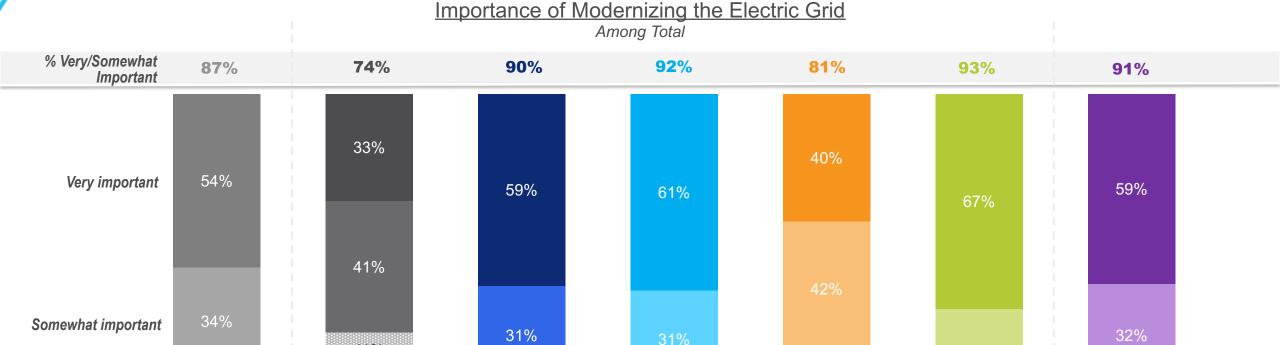
**Gen Pop** 



4%

**Reviewed Reports** 

**Green Pioneers** 



10%

3% 6%

Connected

**Pragmatists** 

Base: All Respondents – Gen Pop (n=1,500); Simply Sustainable (n=371), Connected Pragmatists (n=346), Green Pioneers (n=323), Trusting Traditionalists (n=292), Comfort Seekers (n=158); Reviewed Reports (n=873) QGRIDIMPORTANCE. Overall, how important to you is it that your electricity provider takes steps to modernize the electric grid?

Simply

**Sustainable** 

### Benefits of a Modern Electric Grid



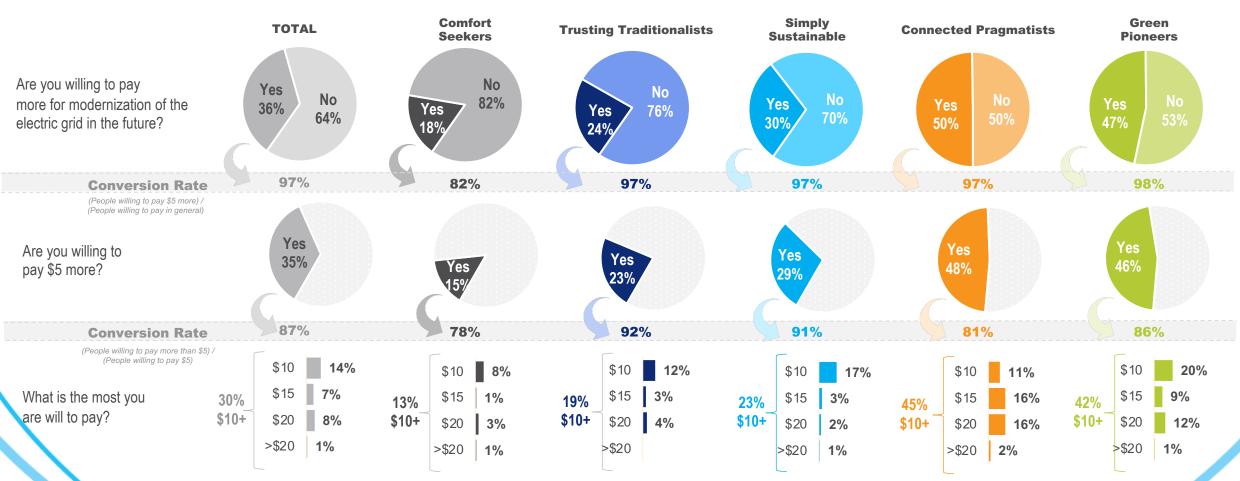
### Benefits of Investing in Modernization of the Electric Grid Among Gen Pop

	Gen Pop	Comfort Seekers	Trusting Traditionalists	Simply Sustainable	Connected Pragmatists	Green Pioneers	Reviewed Reports
More reliable electricity	57%	54%	63%	65%	41%	62%	58%
Helps the grid withstand severe weather events	50%	40%	63%	65%	29%	49%	50%
Stable electricity costs	46%	39%	51%	53%	33%	51%	45%
Cheaper electricity costs	44%	39%	45%	49%	35%	48%	42%
Better outage response time	42%	31%	45%	51%	30%	47%	43%
More ways to save on electric bills	41%	31%	42%	47%	33%	45%	41%
More renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind)	37%	19%	38%	48%	26%	42%	37%
Better cyber security of grid	34%	26%	36%	37%	26%	41%	35%
Ensures that clean energy is accessible to everyone	31%	16%	35%	36%	25%	35%	31%
nsures that people have the power needed as use of electric vehicles and electric products increases	31%	15%	36%	37%	25%	32%	31%
More insight into my energy usage and electric bills	24%	15%	22%	23%	24%	30%	26%
Helps improve air quality	23%	5%	23%	30%	21%	27%	25%
Fewer wildfires	19%	8%	20%	21%	19%	21%	21%
Other	0%	1%	0%	1%	-	-	0%
I do not expect any benefits	6%	15%	8%	4%	5%	3%	3%

Base: All Respondents – Gen Pop (n=1,500); Simply Sustainable (n=371), Connected Pragmatists (n=346), Green Pioneers (n=323), Trusting Traditionalists (n=292), Comfort Seekers (n=158); Reviewed Reports (n=873) QBENEFITSGRID. What benefits do you expect from your utility investing in modernizing the electric grid?

## Paying More for Grid Modernization among General Population & Segments





Base: All Respondents – Gen Pop (n=1,500); Simply Sustainable (n=371), Connected Pragmatists (n=346), Green Pioneers (n=323), Trusting Traditionalists (n=292), Comfort Seekers (n=158) Q PAYGRID. And would you be willing to pay slightly more each month on your electricity bill for your provider to invest in modernizing the grid for the future?

Base: 'Yes' @QPAYGRID – Gen Pop (n=531); Simply Sustainable (n=109), Connected Pragmatists (n=169), Green Pioneers (n=149), Trusting Traditionalists (n=69), Comfort Seekers (n=28\*) Q PAYMENT5. Would you be willing to pay \$5 more?

Q\_PAYMENT5. Would you be willing to pay \$5 more?

Base: 'Yes' @QPAYMENT5 – Gen Pop (n=513); Simply Sustainable (n=106), Connected Pragmatists (n=164), Green Pioneers (n=146), Trusting Traditionalists (n=67), Comfort Seekers (n=23\*)

Q\_PAYMENTANY. What is the most you would be willing to pay on top of your electricity bill each month for your provider to invest in modernizing the grid for the future?

### Takeaways & Next Steps



Increasing access and awareness to detailed electricity usage reports is key to engaging consumers in energy efficiency.



Consumers are interested in electricity reports, even if they don't have access. With four-in-ten not having access or not aware of having access, there is an opportunity to for electricity providers to increase engagement among consumers. Ensuring that consumers know reports are available to them and how to access them is key, as interest is strong among those not currently viewing reports.

Knowing what uses the most electricity in their household is what makes electricity usage reports useful to consumers.



Among electricity report viewers, regular electricity report reviewers cite higher rates of knowing what uses the most electricity in their household and rate their reports as more useful. To motivate consumers to continue viewing reports, electricity providers need to ensure they are educating consumers by letting them know what uses the most electricity and what changes they can make to save money on their bill.

Modernizing the grid is important, but consumers need to be more aware of what their electricity provider is doing to help.



Consumers understand the importance of modernizing the grid and the benefits it can provide them and their community. However, half do not know if their electricity provider is doing anything to help. Clearly communicating steps electricity providers have taken to modernize the grid is important to show the value they are providing consumers and ensuring reliability for the future.

Consumers that directly benefit from grid modernization (e.g., electric vehicle owners and renewable receivers) should be targeted for programs aimed at grid modernization.



Although consumers value modernizing the grid, most are not willing to monetarily contribute. Rather, interest is mainly from those who would currently directly benefit from grid modernizations. This is primarily consumers who receive renewable energy and those with electric vehicles. These two groups should be targeted for any programs or offers focusing on grid modernization.





Cooperatives

## Questions?

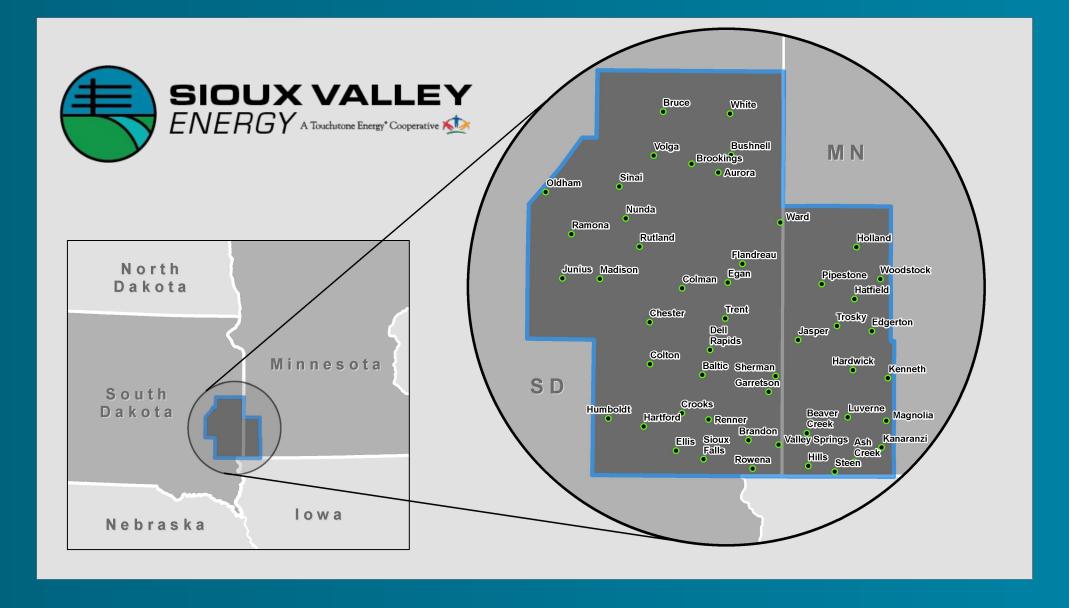
Angelika.Hoelger@nreca.coop

Phone: 571-289-0609

Office: 703-907-5581

## Smart Grid – Consumer Benefits Ben Pierson, PE, MBA Manager of Beneficial Electrification





Members: 27k

**Employees: 107** 



Power Suppliers: East River Electric (SD), L&O Power (MN)

### **AMI History**

- Turtle TS-1 AMR until 2009
- SVE Awarded \$4M Smart Grid grant from DOE, replaced system over 3 years (2010-2012) for \$7.2M with TWACS AMI
- Currently starting next generation meter changeout, will accomplish over many years (Cellular meters)
  - Eliminate substation equipment cost
  - Easier to pull data from it
  - Can get down to 5 minute interval data, more accurate and consistent meter reads



### **AMI** Benefits

- Outage Management
- Member Interface
- Voltage and Blink Info
- Prepaid Metering
- Remote Disconnect
- Rate Flexibility
- Extras



### **Outage Management**

- After 1 call system pings meters to identify outage extent
- Most of the time we send notification of an outage prior to member calling
- Next generation will send notification before member calls
- Overall improved outage response time and member satisfaction



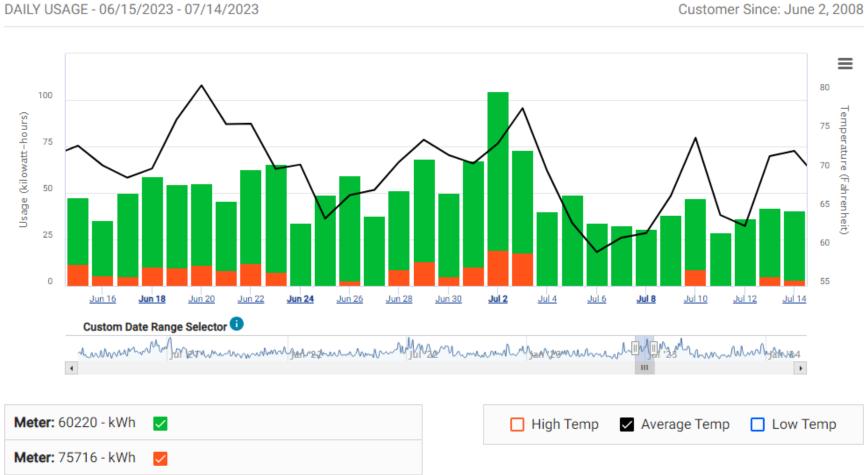
### **Member Interface**

- High bill complaints
  - Old garage fridge
  - Sump pumps and recirculation pumps
- Information
- Curiosity



### **Member Interface**

DAILY USAGE - 06/15/2023 - 07/14/2023

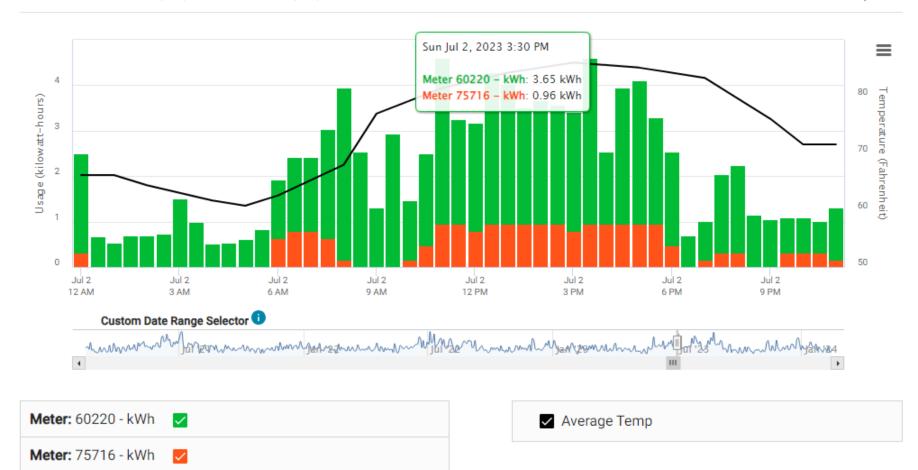




### **Member Interface**

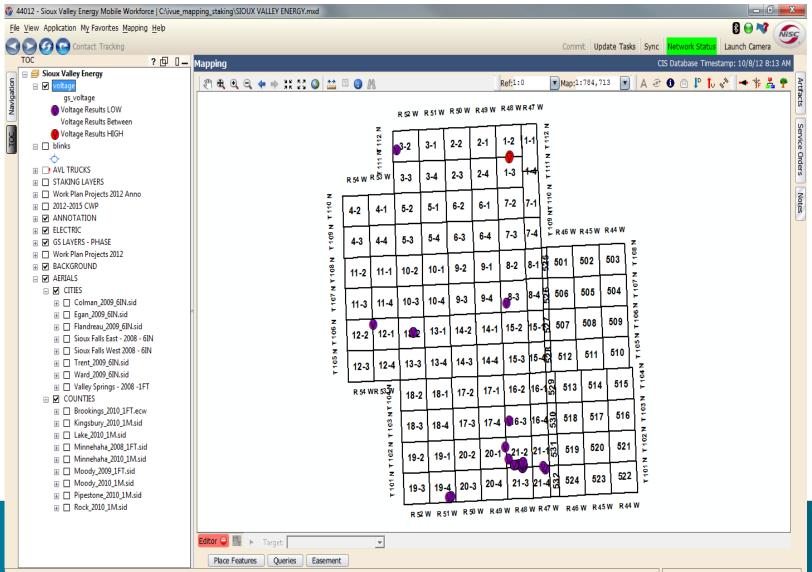
INTERVAL USAGE - 07/02/2023 12 AM - 07/02/2023 11 PM

Customer Since: June 2, 2008



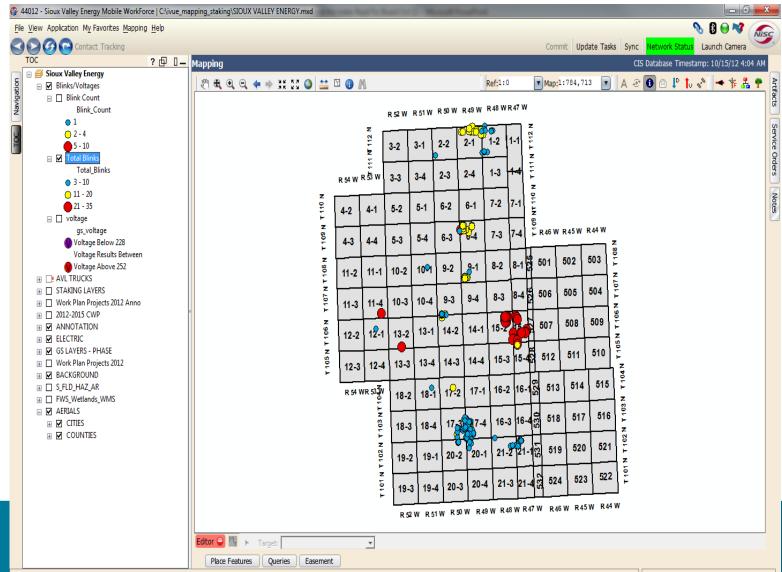


### Voltage and blink Info





### Voltage and blink Info





### **Prepaid Metering – Member Benefits**

- No deposit or collection fees
- No late fees or due dates
- Easy way to budget for electricity
- Promotes energy efficiency and conservation



### **Prepaid Metering – Cooperative Benefits**

- Reduce collections and write-offs
- Easier for Member Service Representatives
- Increased member satisfaction
- 1033 participants (3.8% of members)
- Decreased postpaid disconnects (20 per month, down from 35 per month)



### Remote Disconnect/Reconnect – Member Benefits

- No disconnect/reconnect fees
- Power comes back on instantly



## Remote Disconnect/Reconnect – Cooperative Benefits

- Reduce write-offs
- No disconnect/reconnect truck roll
- Easier for Member Service Representatives
- Increased member satisfaction



### **Rate Flexiblity**

- Regular Residential Rate: 10.26 cents/kWh any time of the day
- Time of Use Rate
- 5.84 cents/kWh off-peak rate (10 a.m.-4 p.m. and 9 p.m.-7a.m.)
- 16.15 cents/kWh on-peak rate (7-10 a.m. and 4-9 p.m.)



### **Rate Flexiblity**

- Regular Residential Rate: 10.26 cents/kWh any time of the day
- Electric Vehicle Charging Rate
- 5.84 cents/kWh off-peak rate (10 a.m.-4 p.m. and 9 p.m.-7a.m.)
- 58.4 cents/kWh on-peak rate (7-10 a.m. and 4-9 p.m.)



### **Rate Flexiblity**

- Regular Residential Rate: 10.26 cents/kWh any time of the day
- Coincident Peak Rate Pilot
- 6.42 cents/kWh any time of the day
- \$19.25/kW during peak half hour



#### **Extras**

- DG 1 meter instead of 2
- Engineering Model input
- Troubleshooting meter reads and load controls
- Have communications to substations and electronic devices everywhere, starting to get communications downline, could improve outage response even further



### **Questions?**

# **Thank You!**





#### **Hydro One – Overview**



- Hydro One is Ontario's largest electricity transmission and distribution service provider.
- Hydro One is a publicly traded corporation and regulated by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB).
- Hydro One's transmission system includes 30,000 km of transmission lines and serves 98% of electricity customers in Ontario.
- Hydro One's local distribution system covers approximately 75% of the geographic area of Ontario.
- Hydro One's 1.4 million customers are predominantly rural customers.



#### **Engaging Customers in the Energy Transition**

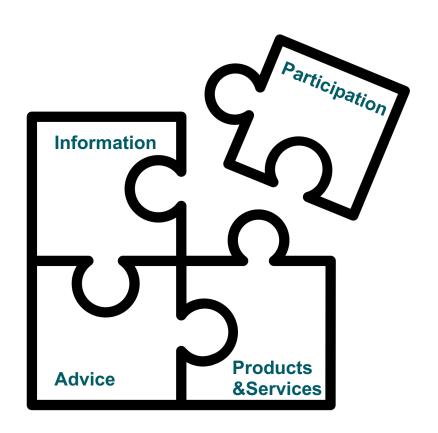


The energy transition presents an opportunity to...

- improve the value of our brand
- change the nature of the relationship with our customers
- build trust and loyalty to be their energy solutions provider of choice
- unlock a new value proposition.

Utilities like Hydro One will need to...

- modernize and optimize networks to mitigate rates
- **engage customers** in programs that aggregate the true value of their consumption decisions
- reward customers for their actions and investments in smart devices.



#### **Hydro One myEnergy Rewards**

hydro G

- Goal: To enroll residential customers to address local distribution system needs.
- Using AMI Data: We used hourly AMI data and load disaggregation to identify 13,000 EV owners.
- Targeted Campaign: We deployed a highly targeted email to these customers to enroll their chargers or vehicles in a demand response program.
- Successful Engagement: Within 24 hours, >300 customer enrolled in the program.



#### Up to \$110 in new rewards available

Do you drive an electric vehicle (EV)? If so, your choice is already helping to reduce emissions.

You can now make an even greater impact on the environment when you sign up your EV or level 2 home charger to <u>myEnergy Rewards</u> – with up to \$110 in rewards available.

Together, we can enable a greener and more sustainable Ontario.

Learn more

Make a difference when energy demand is at its highest.

Just a few times a year, you'll allow Hydro One to slightly shift your charging hours when demand for energy is at its highest. That way, your energy consumption happens when the grid has more carbon-free power available.

Notifications are sent in advance, and you always maintain the flexibility to opt out of these peak demand events at any time.



# It's weekly engagement for the win

Customer satisfaction and the smart grid

#### **Paul McDonald**

Senior Director, Opower Product Strategy Oracle Energy and Water February 26, 2024

#### **Weekly Energy Update**



Acct # \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*00e2

#### Your weekly energy update

Sep 18, 2017-Sep 24, 2017



#### Compared to last week





Your bill is projected to be \$445.

Days until your next bill: 1. This is an estimate\*.



#### **Weekly Energy Update**

# Here's your weekly energy update See how your most recent bill breaks down

#### **UtilityCo**

Melia Andersen Acct \*\*\*\*1234 1234 Main St.

# Here's how your most recent bill breaks down

Oct 1, 2020-Nov 1, 2020





#### These top categories made up \$132 of your energy cost this bill

Heating \$77	Water Heating \$34	Laundry
™ <u>x</u>		





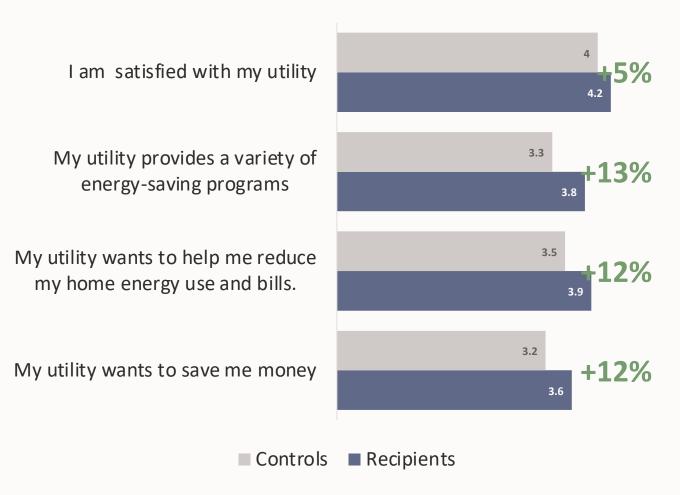
#### Weekly Energy Updates significantly improve consumer satisfaction

Midwest utility case study

97%

Positive or neutral impact on overall satisfaction

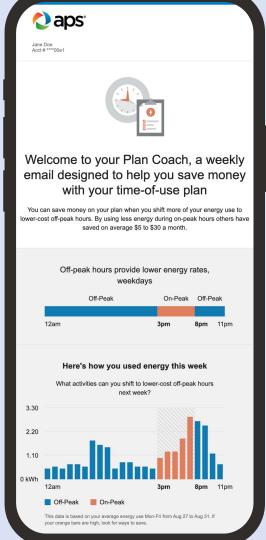
(58% neutral, 39% positive)

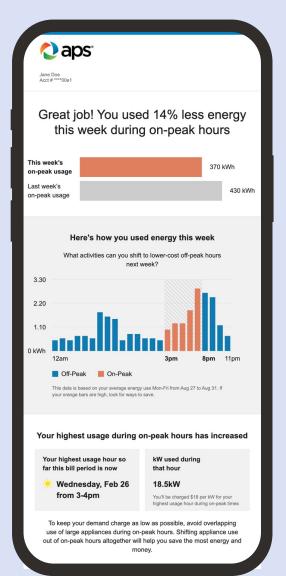


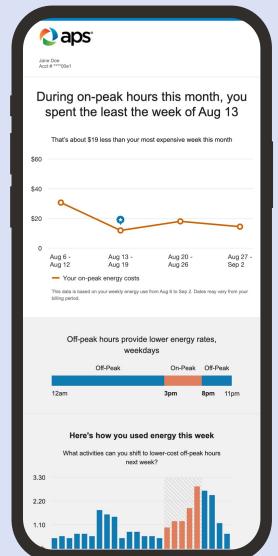


#### **APS sends Plan Coach emails to TOU customers every week**

#### a.k.a. Opower Behavioral Load Shaping















The experience shifted demand and made customers feel happier with **Arizona Public Service** 

**33%** lower **13%** higher

Overall dissatisfaction with APS

Overall satisfaction with APS

**1.1** MW

Of daily load shift from just 40,000 customers

"I honestly can't think of a way to improve this essential service. This is the first time a utility company has done this that I know of.

We all want to save money and use fewer precious resources!"

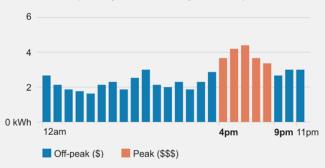


Sarah, APS TOU customer



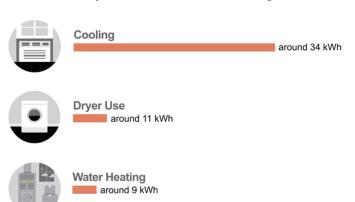
#### Here's how you used electricity this week

What parts of your routine could you do at off-peak times?



This data is based on your average weekday electricity use from July 9-13.

#### Wondering what you were doing during on-peak hours? Around 60% of your use came from these categories



How do we know how you use energy?

Thanks to data from your smart meter, we can identify patterns in your electricity use that give us an idea of what appliances are using electricity in your home. We

# Enhancing the TOU experience with appliance-level peak usage insights

But what was I **doing** in those hours?"



Sam, user testing participant

Appliance-level usage makes it actionable. Weekly focus on the top 3 keeps it simple.



## Take a look at your on-peak electricity use for your most recent bill

Oct. 1 - Nov. 1, 2022

#### You spent \$16 more on electricity during on-peak hours compared to your last bill



On-peak hours are from 4pm-9pm. Electricity is 1.5x more expensive during this time.

#### Wondering what you were doing from 4pm-9pm? We've estimated some of your top uses.



# Enhancing the TOU experience with appliance-level peak usage insights

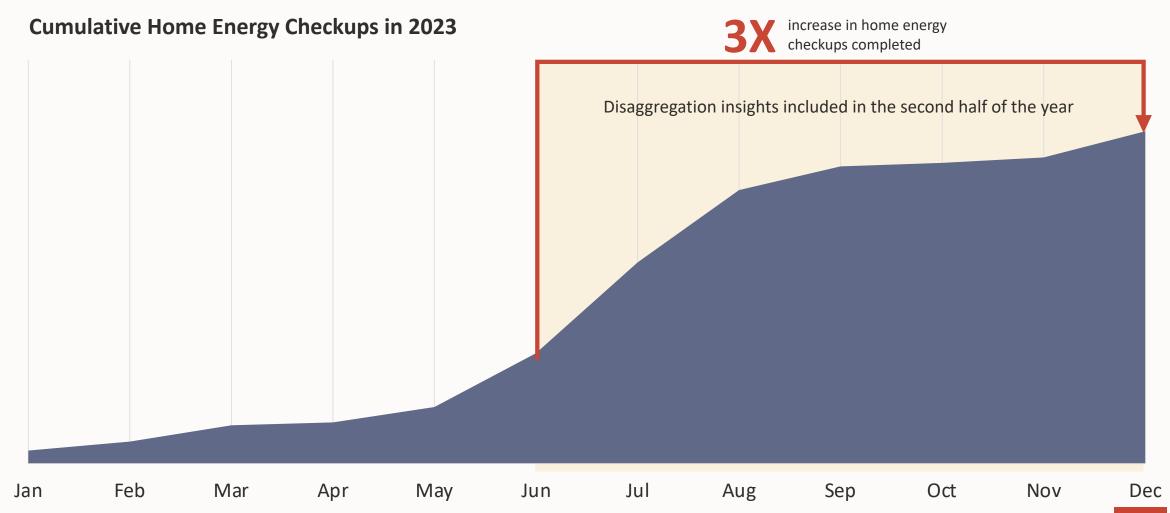
At the end of each bill period, customers get a breakdown of appliance-level peak period spending





#### Home energy checkups grew by 3X after launching the new experience

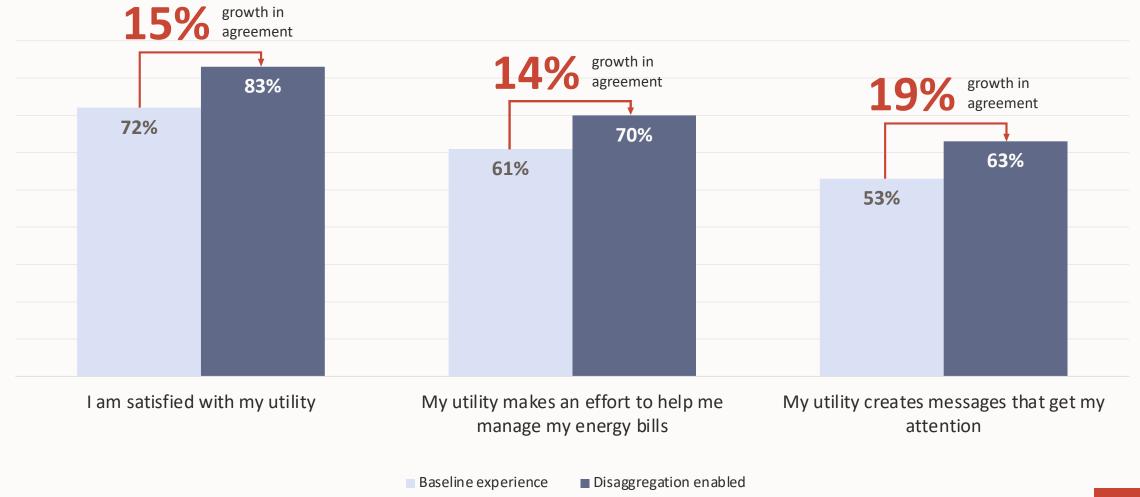
Southwest utility case study





#### The new experience delivered additional gains in customer satisfaction

Southwest utility case study









2024 CONSUMER SYMPOSIUM

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