EFFICIENT NEIGHBORHOODS + INITIATIVE EVALUATION PROJECT

Highlights from 2014 Opinion Dynamics Final Report

Full Report http://wp.me/a5WT9H-pV
Highlights

Key Learnings
This evaluation report summarizes structure and outcomes of Massachusetts’ EN+ Initiative, implemented in 2013-2014. Elements of the initiative include:

- Three distinct models - EN+ Core initiative, Cape Light Compact (CLC) initiative and Fall River Neighborhood Energy Contest (FRNEC) in different locations
- EN+ Core highlights:
  - 8 communities of LMI around MA were targeted, rather than individual households
  - 927 program participants
  - Removing income verification barrier for participation was effective in increasing participation
  - In the target communities, all residents were eligible to participate, regardless of income, homeownership status, or structural characteristics of their residences
  - Individual incentives were offered
- FRNEC highlights:
  - Structured as competition among neighborhoods
  - No individual incentives offered, but winning neighborhoods received $5000 in community funds
  - Most participants were aware of free services before contest, yet contest appeared to more strongly motivate their use of services
  - Program reached more affluent homeowners
  - 212 participants out of 19,000+ eligible
- CLC highlights:
  - 251 participants
  - Offered to entire service territory and income screening to ensure eligibility and reaching target population in geographic with mixed incomes
  - Income verification to ensure only LMI participation
  - Larger uptake of program with newer homeowners - more likely to be conducting improvements
- Overall Findings:
  - Programs considered successful at reaching LMI homeowners, and less successful at reaching renters
  - Even with highly-targeted outreach, less than 22% of eligible customers polled after the program were aware of its availability.
  - Door-to-door outreach, phone and word of mouth were most effective outreach strategies as well as outreach to community leaders
  - Barriers to participation: cost to implement, lack of interest, perceived lack of need
  - Close to two-thirds of participants who made EE improvements (64%) would have been unlikely to make them without the incentives provided
  - Program expenses were largely incentives, as well as higher than average marketing costs
  - Recommendations: provide incentives for referrals and high-volume marketing to better reach target audience, ensure messaging is seasonal and speaks to audience concerns
Utility Structure
IOU

Program Funding Source
Massachusetts Joint Statewide Three-Year Electric and Gas Energy Efficiency Plan, New England Gas and National Grid

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