

# Energy Efficiency and Natural Gas Utilities

## Focus on energy-intensive low income neighborhoods

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### PECO'S NATURAL GAS LOW INCOME USAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM

PECO is a dual commodity company and has designed a usage reduction program which targets its low income residential customers with defined high energy usage. The program maximum income eligibility is 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level Guidelines. Other program eligibility requirements include household usage thresholds. The program is provided to eligible customers at no cost. Both tenants and homeowners are considered for the program. PECO's Natural Gas Low Income Residential Usage Reduction Program defines a high user as a household with monthly average usage at or above 50 CCF (or 5,000 cubic feet) of natural gas.

The selection of installed gas usage reduction measures are identified through an in-home audit. During this process, the customer becomes educated on the impacts of their energy-related behavior on the household's gas monthly usage. The education component informs the customers of the estimated usage profile of each appliance and how the customer may reduce their usage. Usage information is provided in dollar as well as energy unit measurement.

At the end of the education session, the customer is given a monthly usage reduction (MAU) goal which the household is expected to reach once all identified measures are installed. The household's usage is monitored for twelve months in the "post treatment" period. Each month the customer receives written correspondence that informs them whether or not they successfully reached their usage goal. If the customer is challenged by the MAU goal, direct contact is made with the customer to help them determine the cause of their difficulty and develop an implementation plan to achieve their usage reduction goal.

In addition to installing traditional usage reduction measures, a health and safety component is also applied. This is a required component of the audit process, wherein the home is tested for carbon monoxide, and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are installed.

Throughout the program year, new technology is reviewed by PECO and/or piloted prior to implementation. Through this process, PECO was able to identify that more savings are obtained through the use of digital thermostats rather than with programmable thermostats. Furthermore, customers were found to be in more control and less likely to tamper with the digital thermostat.

The average annual participation level in the PECO LIURP- Gas program is approximately 1,600 households with an average usage savings of 7.5 percent of the pre-treatment usage level. The program is evaluated by a third party on an annual basis.

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