

Public Abstract

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Title:Factors influencing homeowners' decisions to seek residential energy efficiency knowledge

Knowledge on methods to improve residential energy efficiency has been available for decades; however energy consumption is still increasing. In 2000, the United States consumed more energy than any other country. Educational campaigns can teach more homeowners how to reduce their energy consumption if they know what attitudes homeowners have towards energy conservation.

This study answers the question: What attitudes about energy conservation are prevalent to homeowners?

This study replicates a 1979 survey by Clive Seligman in which homeowners responded to statements about energy consumption. Seligman found four attitudes: comfort and health concerns, effort to conserve and monetary savings, role of the individual, and legitimacy of the energy crisis. This same survey was given to homeowners who attended an Energy Conservation workshop held by MU Extension, or asked for further information on home energy at an Earth Day event.

The results showed that Seligman's four factors are still important to homeowners in 2007, however in different order of priorities. Too little cost savings for the conservation effort was the most frequent attitude in this study. A new factor, the role of technology and government regulation on conservation efforts, did not exist in the 1979 study and will be of use to policy makers. Homeowners that answered the attitude questions similarly were grouped into patterns. The demographics of the different patterns were then analyzed to see if they were also similar people.

This study can help energy campaigns advertise more successfully, which would result in more homeowners practicing energy conservation.