



ENERGY OUTREACH  
*Colorado*

Helping Coloradans afford home energy

# Prepay Electricity Programs & the Low-income Consumer: A Preliminary Assessment

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# Overview

- Introduction
- Program Description
- Participating Utilities
- Program Statistics
- Cost and Usage Data
- Customer Survey Results
- Conclusion



# Introduction

- Why did we create this pilot program?
- What were our hopes for the program?



# Program Description

In order to facilitate enrollment of low-income customers in prepay programs, Energy Outreach:

- Establishes partnerships with utilities based on mutual agreement to protect interests of clients, including elimination of fees and the option to return to a traditional payment structure at any time.
- Reviews applications for eligibility and pays off back overdue for approved customers to enroll them in the program.
- Provides customers with initial credit in their accounts to get started.



# Participating Utilities



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

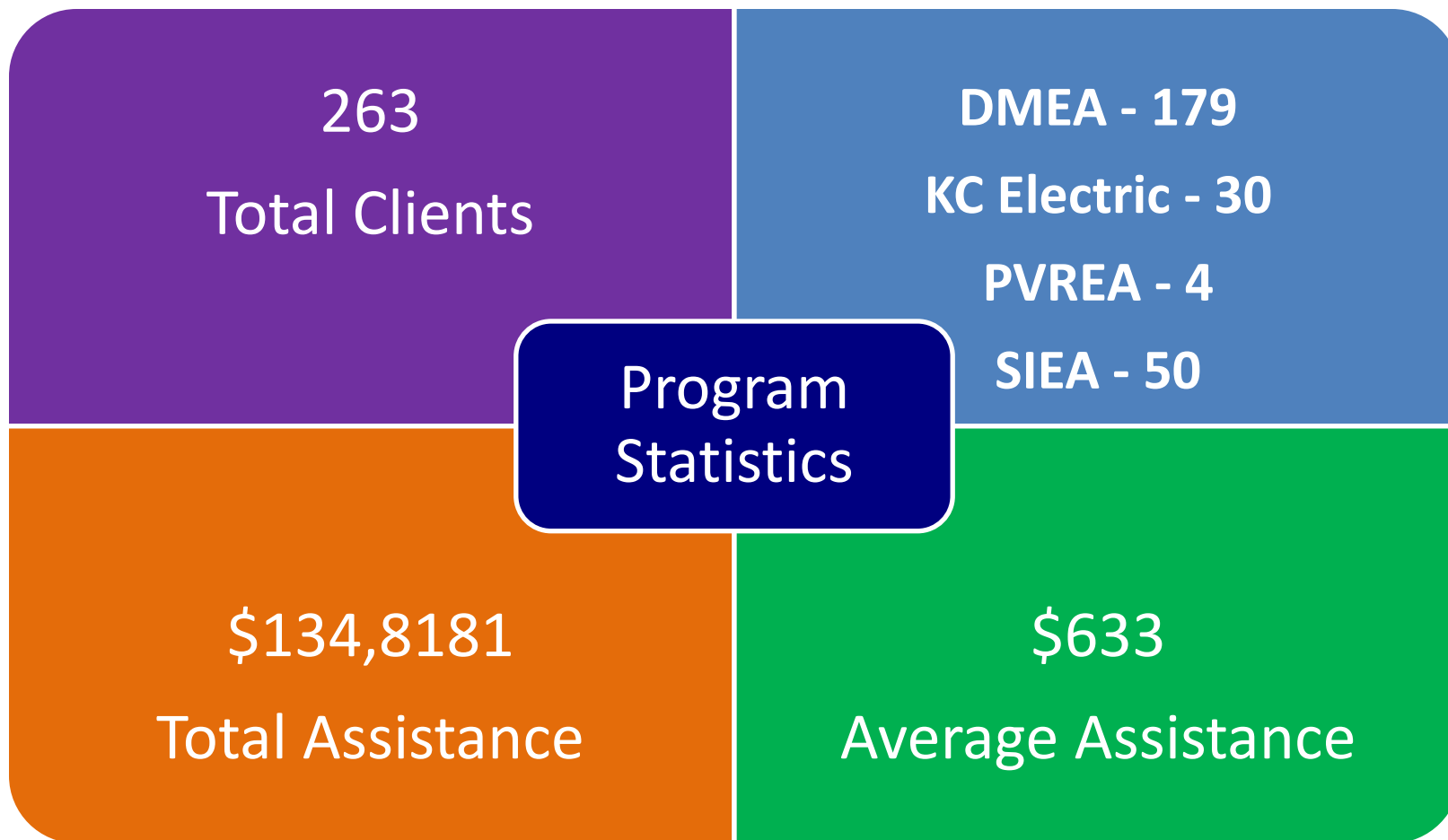


A Touchstone Energy™ Cooperative 

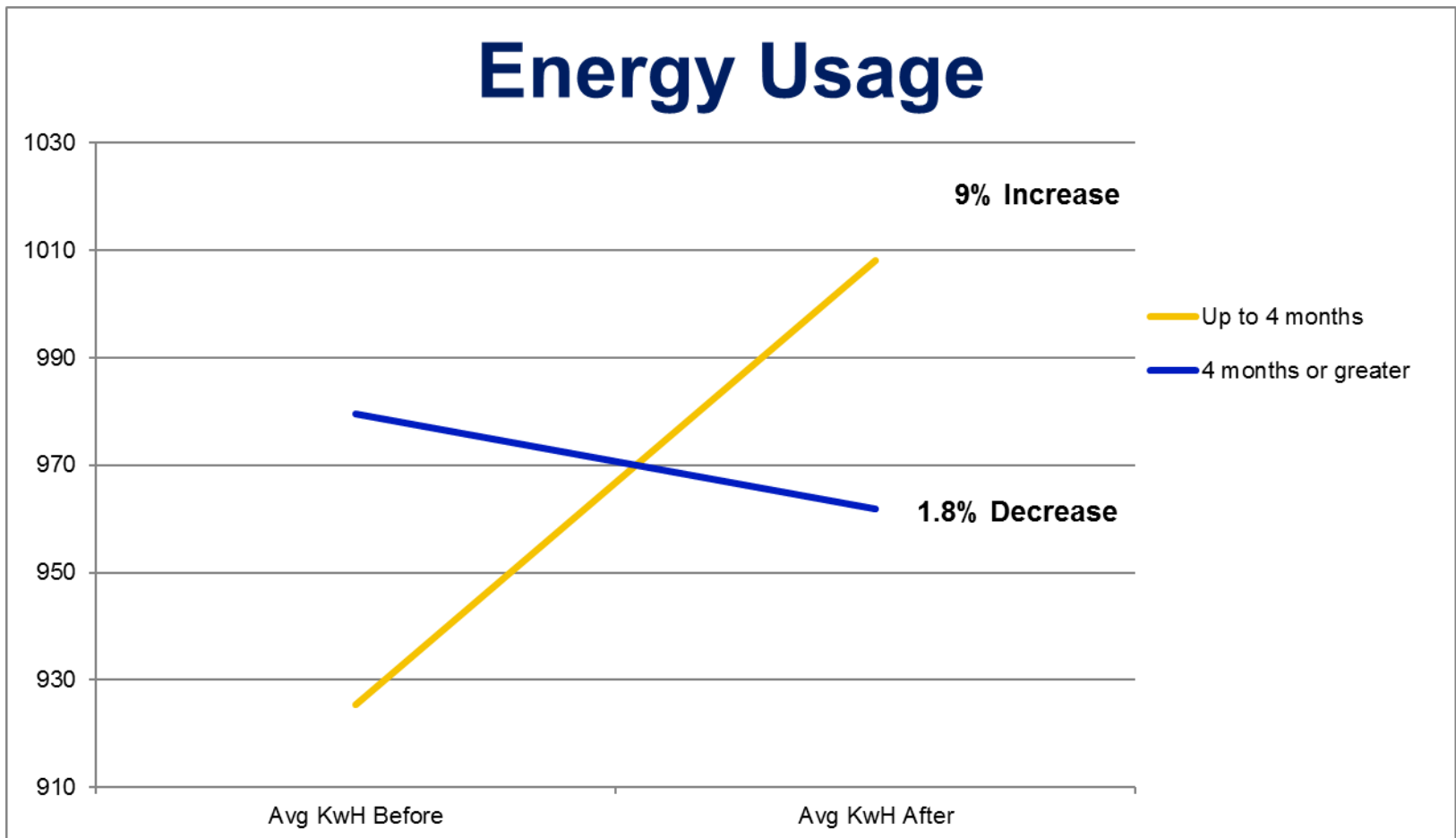


A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

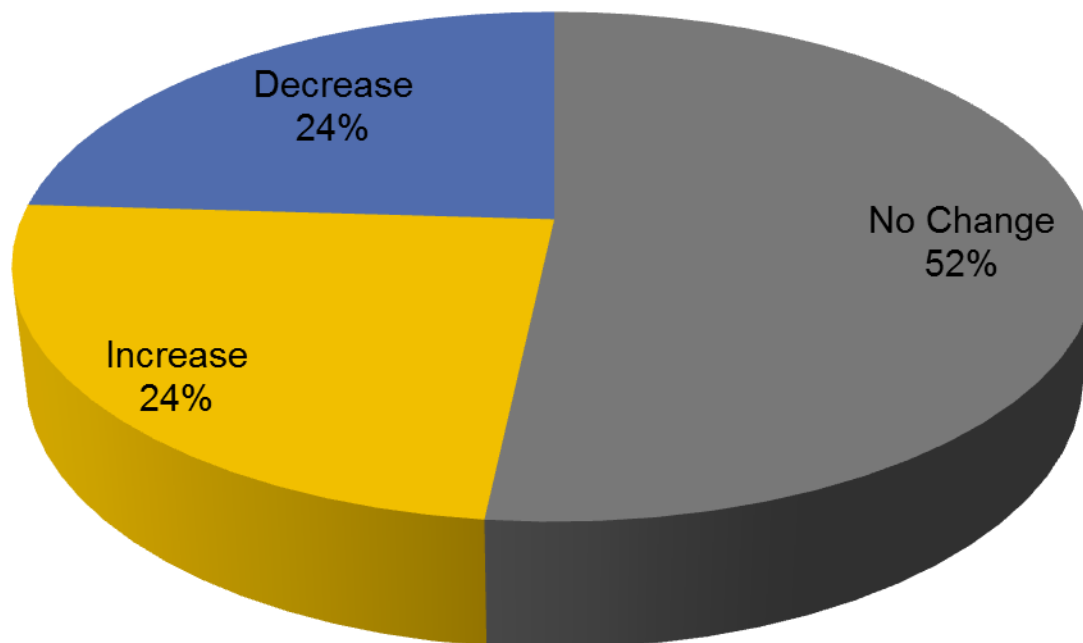




# Energy Usage



## Change in Disconnect Rate





# Prepay Customer Survey Results

## 19

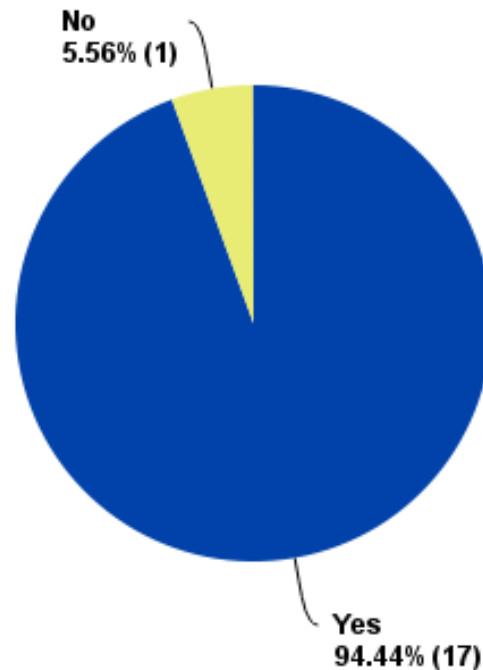
### Total Respondents

Not all respondents answered all questions.



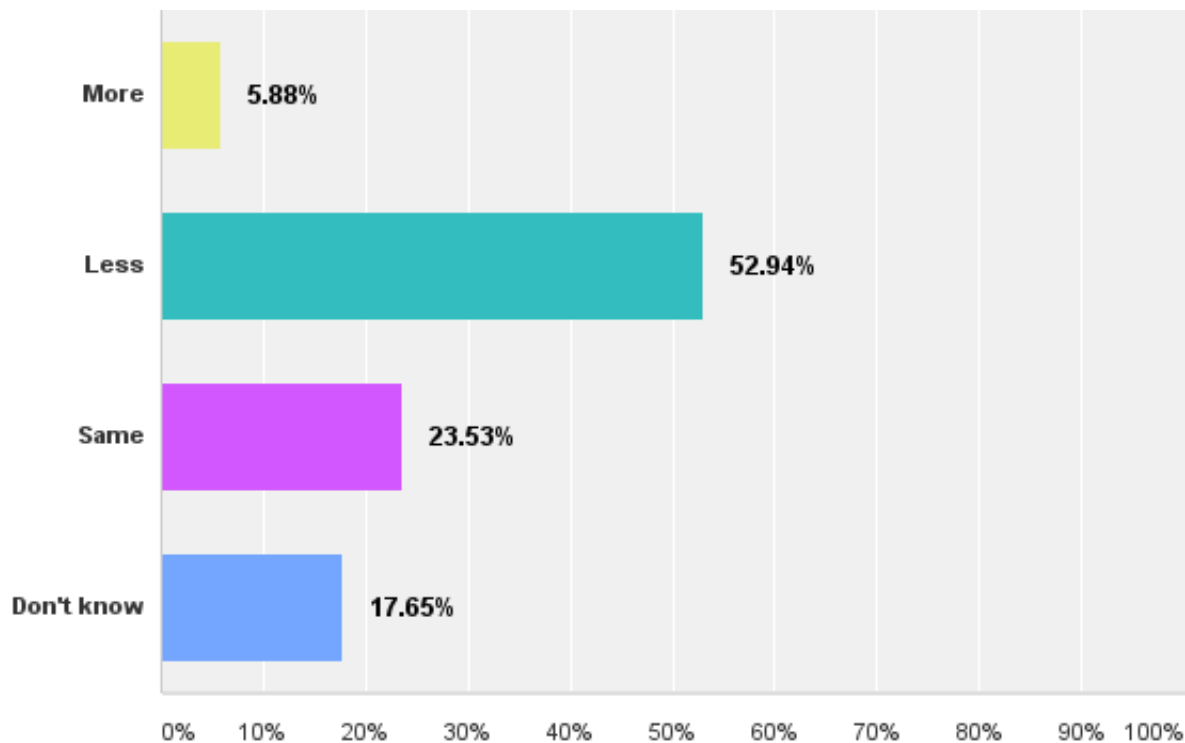
## Has your participation in the program made you more aware of your energy usage?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 1



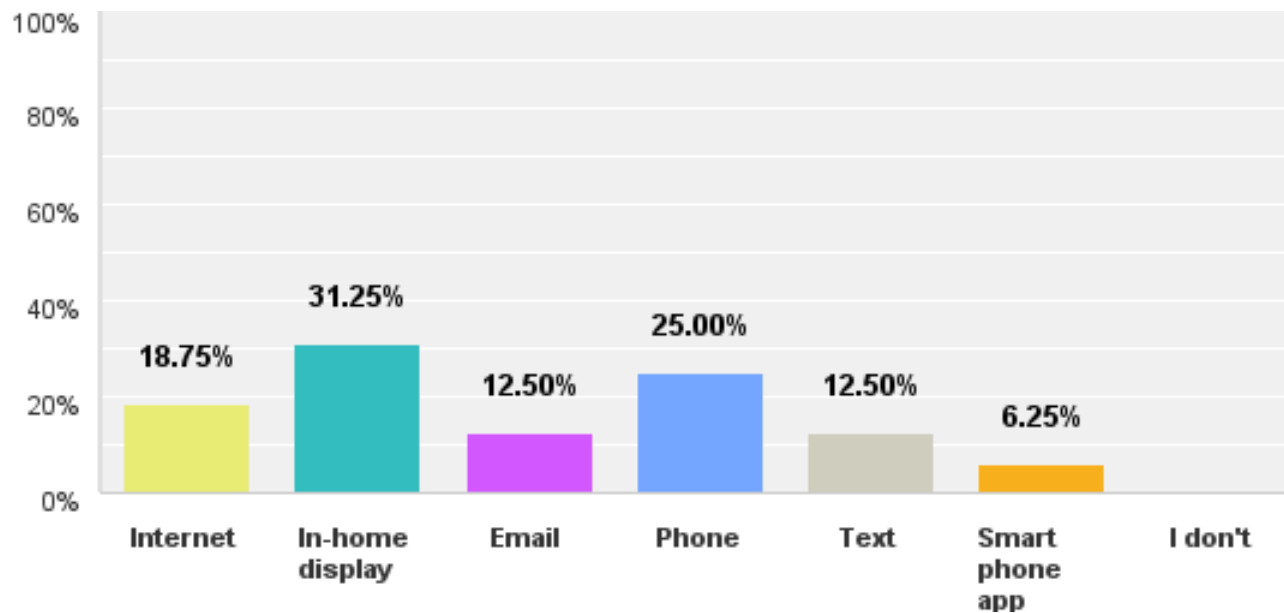
## Since joining the program, do you believe you have consumed more, less or the same amount of energy?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2



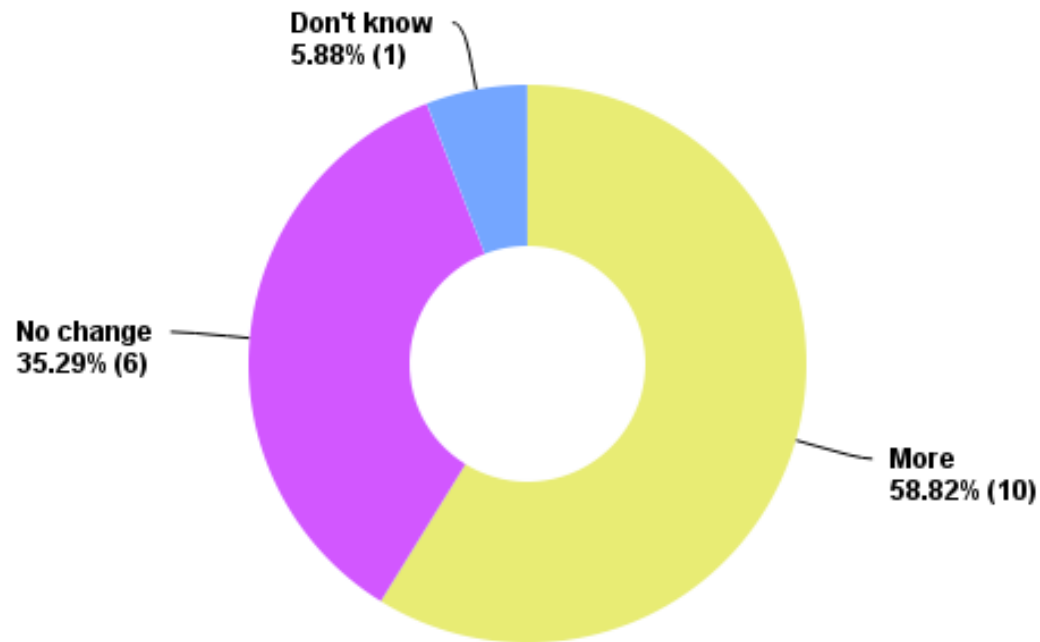
## How do you track your energy usage and account balance?

Answered: 16 Skipped: 3



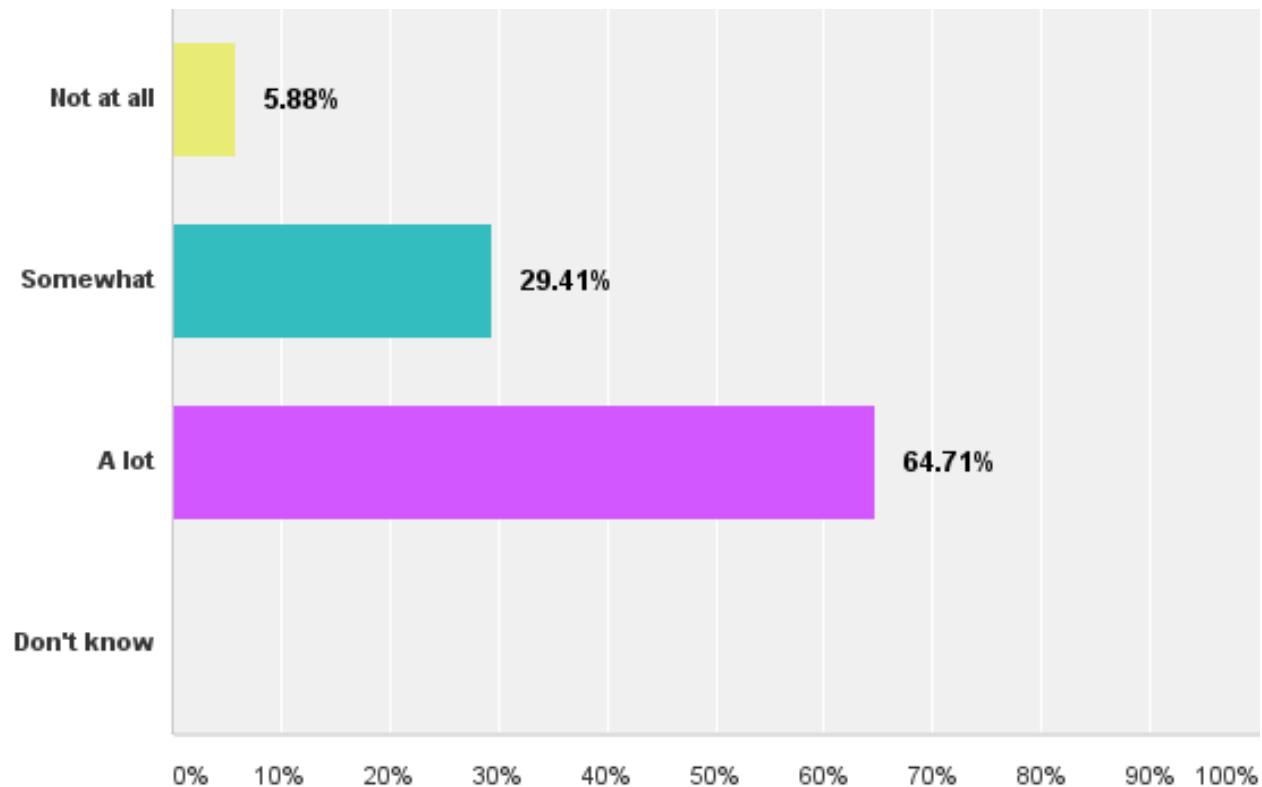
## Do you feel more or less in control of your electricity costs since entering the program?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2



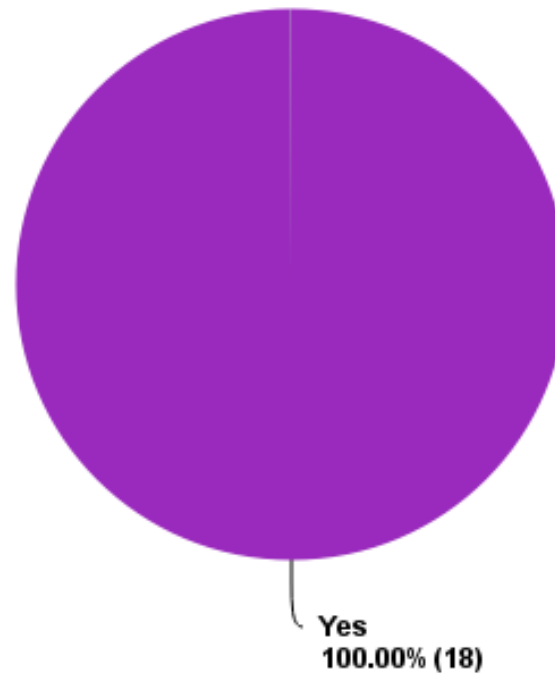
## Has the program made it easier for you to budget?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2



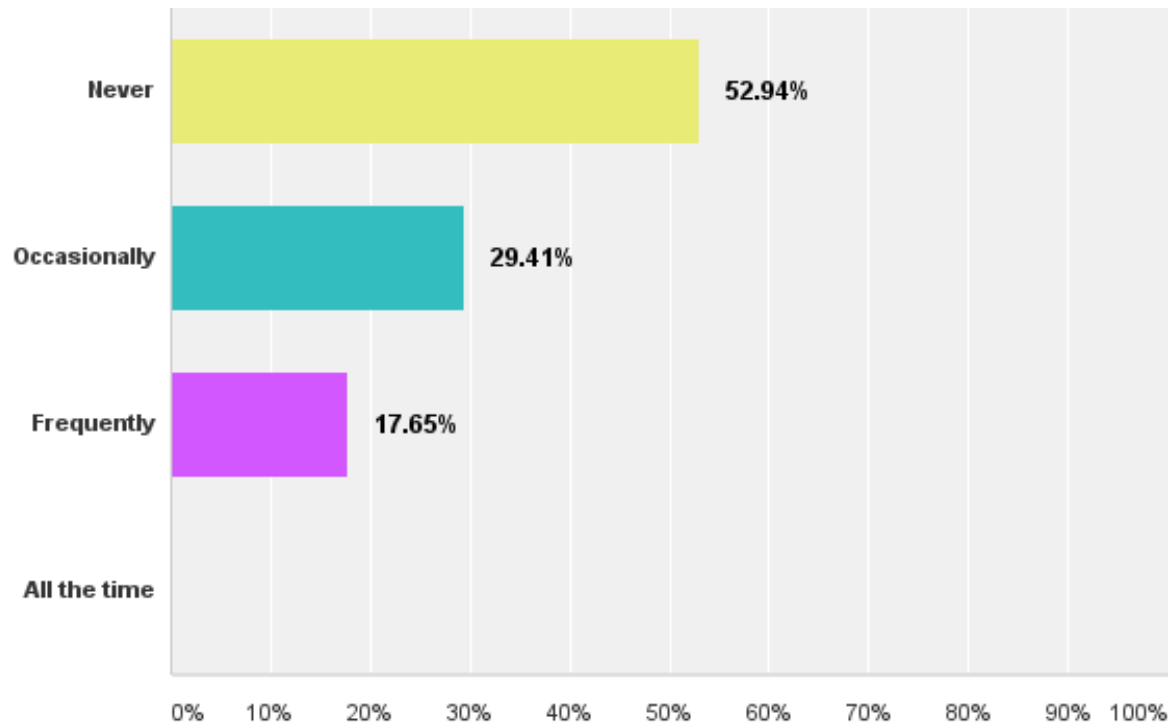
## Do you like the program?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 1



## Have you had trouble affording to put money in your account since joining the program?

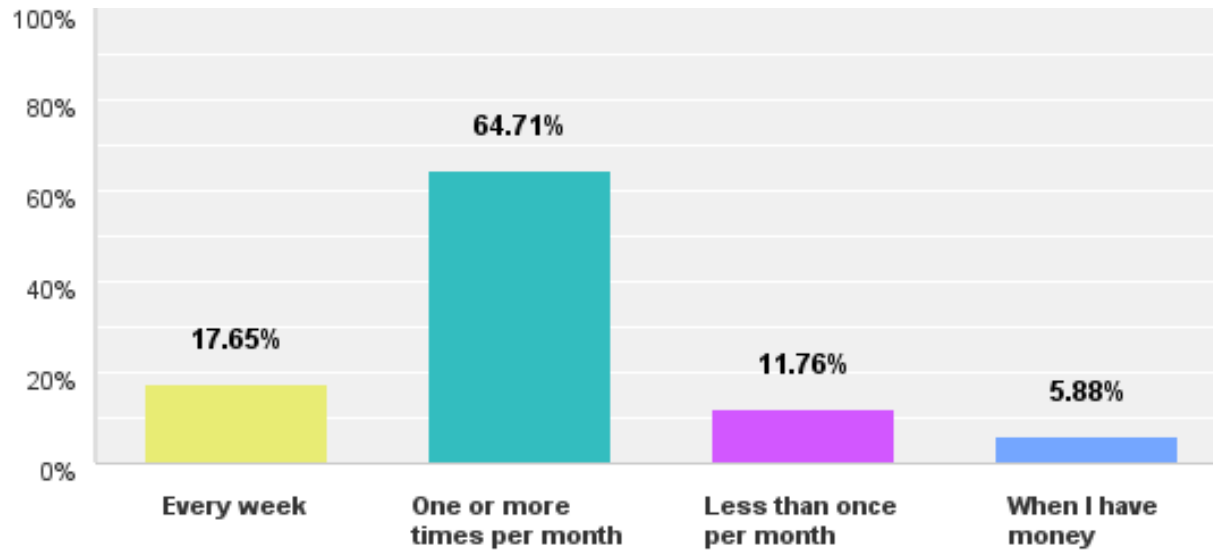
Answered: 17 Skipped: 2





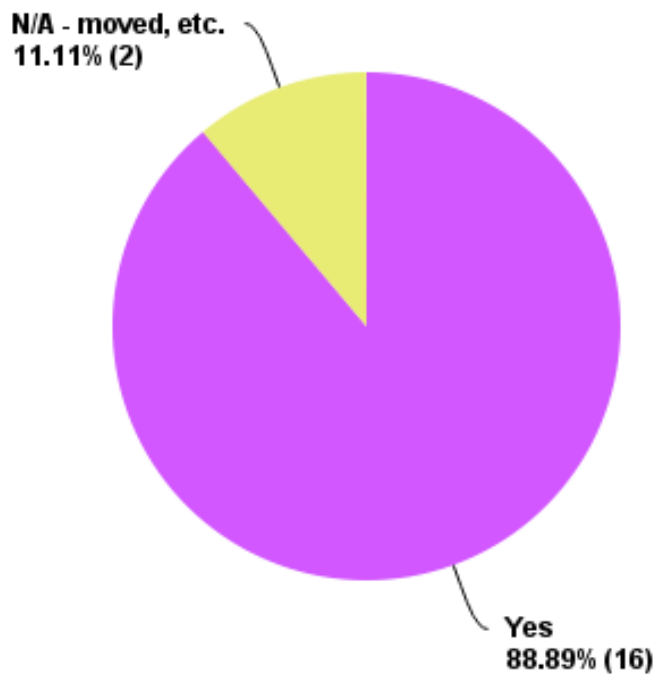
## How often do you put money in your account?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2



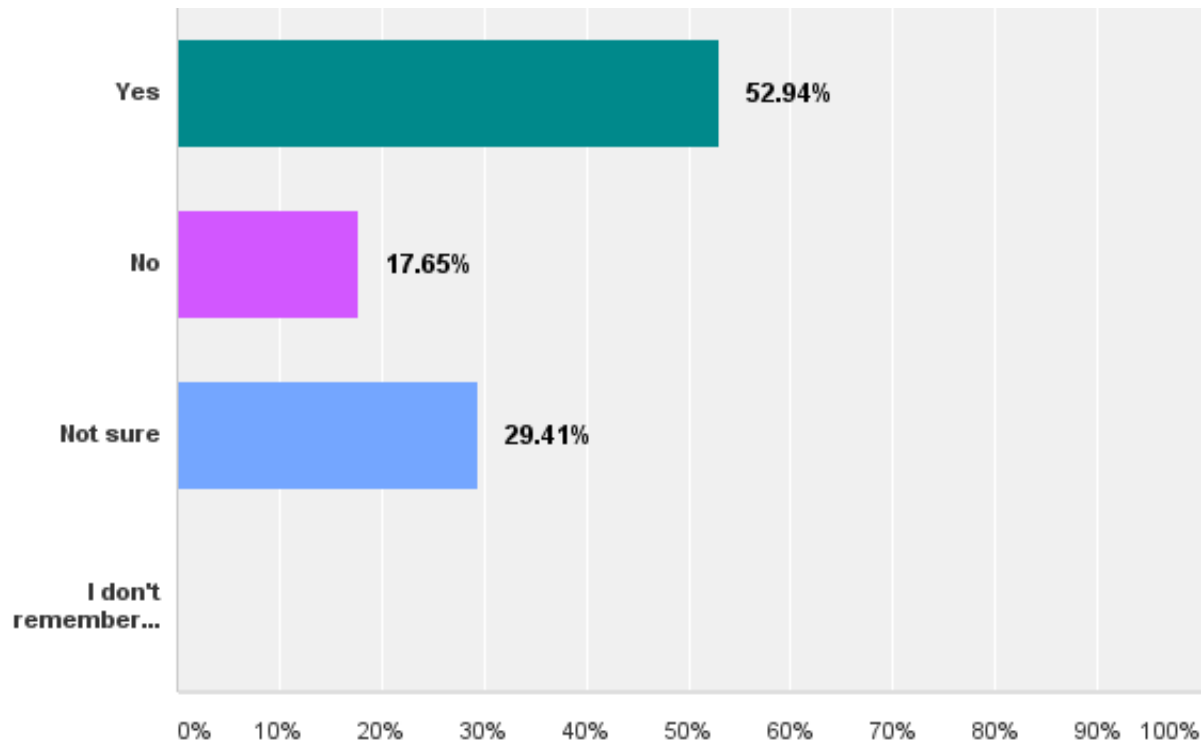
## Do you plan to stay in the program?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 1



## Have you used any of the tips in the Energy Savings Guide?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 2



# Conclusions

Based on data obtained from the utilities and customer feedback we found that:

- Preliminary data show a minimal reduction in usage and costs.
- Customers overwhelmingly like the program.
- The program offers greater flexibility and makes budgeting easier than traditional payment models.
- Customers appreciate the option of not having a single, large bill every month.
- Not having late fees, reconnect fees and deposits removes a significant burden from customers.

# Where do we go from here?

As we continue to explore the possible advantages of prepay we hope to:

- Implement additional education opportunities for customers to further reduce usage and maximize savings.
- Analyze cost and usage data annually for 3 years.
- Conduct a customer survey annually and compare results to quantitative data.
- Reevaluate whether the program is beneficial to low-income customers as a whole, particular segments of the population or not at all.



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