

NEWS RELEASE



EFFICIENCY TEXAS

Working to reduce electricity consumption, lower costs and improve air quality through energy efficiency...

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COALITION OF TEXAS ELECTRICITY CONSUMERS APPLAUDS NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

AUSTIN, TX – Efficiency Texas, a broad coalition of electricity consumers seeking to expand energy efficiency programs offered by Texas utilities, today voiced its support for a plan sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that creates a national commitment to energy efficiency. The DOE/EPA *National Action Plan for Energy Efficiency* was unveiled this morning in San Francisco, CA.

“Efficiency Texas strongly supports the DOE/EPA Action Plan and applauds those involved with its development,” said Mark R. Stover, director of Efficiency Texas. “Although energy efficiency has never been more important to Texas, its efficiency programs are stalled and cannot keep up with consumer demand. Efficiency Texas hopes the Action Plan will help jumpstart the effort in Texas to create an environment where energy efficiency programs flourish and the many benefits of energy efficiency are fully realized.”

The goal of the Action Plan for Energy Efficiency is “to create a sustainable, aggressive national commitment to energy efficiency through gas and electric utilities, utility regulators, and partner organizations.” Improving energy efficiency, states the Action Plan, is “one of the most constructive, cost-effective ways to address the challenges of high energy prices, energy security and independence, air pollution and global climate change.” The Action Plan presents policy recommendations and was developed by 50 leading organizations who pledged to take specific actions to make the Action Plan a reality.

The Action Plan offers five recommendations to overcome the barriers that have limited a greater investment in energy efficiency in the United States. They are:

- Recognize energy efficiency as a high-priority energy resource;

- Make a strong, long-term commitment to implement cost-effective energy efficiency as a resource;
- Broadly communicate the benefits of and opportunities for energy efficiency;
- Promote sufficient, timely and stable program funding to deliver energy efficiency where cost-effective; and
- Modify policies to align utility incentives with the delivery of cost-effective energy efficiency and modify ratemaking practices to promote energy efficiency investments.

“The Action Plan explains why energy efficiency is so important and it provides excellent recommendations for states to follow,” said Stover. “The Action Plan is an important roadmap for policymakers and it will serve as a foundation for the Coalition’s campaign for a more efficient Texas.”

The Texas Legislature in 1999 required each investor-owned electric utility to offer cost-effective, market-based energy efficiency programs to meet at least ten percent of the utility’s annual electric load growth. Customer demand for the utilities’ efficiency programs is exceptional. In fact, the majority of the efficiency programs in Texas are oversubscribed and most funds are gone for the remainder of 2006, leaving large numbers of customers unable to obtain efficiency assistance. That, in turn, results in lost cost savings and environmental improvements.

Efficiency Texas, whose members include commercial building owners, retailers, churches, environmental organizations, citizen groups and individual businesses, wants cost-effective energy efficiency programs to be available year-round and fully funded to ensure that consumer demand for such programs is adequately met. To meet its goal, the Coalition supports cost recovery and reasonable incentives for utilities that exceed the efficiency mandate of the Texas Legislature.

“While the energy efficiency programs in Texas have been successful to date, the energy efficiency goal is simply too modest,” said Stover. “It’s time for Texas to dedicate far more resources to energy efficiency. What’s more, there’s no shame providing incentives to make energy efficiency a priority for utilities and not a legislatively-mandated afterthought.”

For more information, please visit www.energycitytexas.org