

The Rhode Island Energy Challenge: Find Your Four!

2013 Year-End Survey Results

March 7, 2014

In January of 2014, National Grid and SmartPower conducted a survey of all National Grid's Rhode Island residential electric and gas customers who officially took the pledge to "Find Your Four" as part of the Rhode Island Energy Challenge – a new statewide community initiative for National Grid in 2013.

The Challenge was delivered on the ground by SmartPower (www.smartpower.org), and sought to promote residential energy conservation and efficiency, as well as raise awareness of National Grid's existing energy efficiency solutions, through the vehicle of grassroots community mobilization. At the heart of the Challenge is the goal for 5% of households in participating municipalities, businesses and non-profit organizations to pledge to find four ways to save energy at home – utilizing National Grid's solutions in the process.

Strategies for the Challenge included arranging friendly competitions between towns and cities to race to the 5% threshold of total pledged households, establishing employer and non-profit organization challenges, and having a physical presence in community meetings, events, gatherings and celebrations. The initiative laid a very strong foundation in 2013 with over 1,100 household pledges on www.FindYourFour.com. National Grid and SmartPower will use the results and recommendations from the year-end survey to help boost its success as the Challenge expands in 2014 to new cities, towns, non-profits, businesses, schools, faith-based groups, and other organizations.

The survey was sent to all household participants in the middle of January. In total, over 160 responses were received – a very encouraging participation rate of over 15%. Among the many findings, the following themes arise: Rhode Island residential customers like hearing energy conservation/efficiency information via the Challenge; the Challenge has them thinking and acting differently; and the Challenge has customers participating more actively in energy efficiency programs.

1. *Grassroots mobilization resonates with customers*
 - a. Over **70%** found it encouraging to hear about the Challenge from local community members serving as advocates for energy conservation and National Grid's energy efficiency solutions
2. *The Challenge generated positive energy behavior, as well as increased brand awareness for National Grid:*
 - a. Over **90%** of households indicated that they followed through to some degree in finding four ways to save – with **64%** stating they took at least four actions
 - b. **75%** of households became more aware of energy use in the home because of the Challenge
 - c. **78%** were aware of National Grid's role in the Challenge upon signing up
3. *Strong link with National Grid's energy efficiency offerings and services*
 - a. A significant number of participants followed through by utilizing National Grid's portfolio of residential energy efficiency solutions
 - i. **85%** replaced lighting with more efficient CFLs and LEDs – discounted by National Grid at the retail level
 - ii. **27%** scheduled and received a no-cost home energy assessment

- iii. **69%** installed high-efficiency HVAC equipment, 7-day programmable or Wi-Fi thermostats, or recycled a second refrigerator or freezer
- iv. **66%** of households who stated they receive a Home Energy Report from National Grid indicated they now pay more attention to them

In conclusion, the Rhode Island Energy Challenge: Find Your Four! campaign is having a major impact in helping National Grid accomplish important goals, including the exceedance of portfolio savings goals (National Grid achieved 102% of its 2013 residential electric target savings goal and 113% of its gas target savings goal), as well as more customer-centric program outreach and engagement.

The Rhode Island Energy Challenge has and will continue to play a critical part in helping National Grid better educate its customers about energy usage in the home, and will help better enable customer with the appropriate tools and services they need to take meaningful energy saving actions.