

Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for Questionnaire Testing and Research” (OMB Control Number: 1905-0186)

Cognitive Research and Pretesting of Form EIA-457A, “Residential Energy Consumption Survey”

PURPOSE: The Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS) is a periodic series of surveys of households and their energy suppliers with the purpose of collecting and reporting energy characteristics, consumption, and expenditures data of homes in the United States. The data are widely used throughout the government and the private sector for policy analysis and are made available to the public via data tables, public-use data files, and analysis articles.

EIA would like to update the household characteristics questions, which are administered on-site to sampled households by trained interviewers, in preparation for the 2015 RECS. Proposed changes include adding questions to collect information on new technologies and revising questions and response options to improve respondent clarity and data quality.

EIA’s survey methodologists and contractor staff from RTI International would like to conduct in-person cognitive interviews and online question pretesting. Respondents will be recruited from the general population and panelists of online testing platforms. The purpose of these efforts includes:

- Assessing the ability of respondents to accurately identify heating equipment and fuels used in their homes
- Assessing quality of respondent reported housing unit size (i.e. square footage)
- Researching improvements to equipment and appliance usage questions and response sets, including dishwasher and air-conditioning behavior
- Researching evolving trends in electronic and entertainment device usage to potentially improve on existing TV, TV peripheral, and computer behavior questions and response sets
- Assessing quality of existing lighting stock and behavior questions
- Pre-testing new questions or response options to capture new technologies, such as geothermal heat pumps and tablet computers

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Cognitive interview respondents will be recruited from the general population. Online panel participants will be recruited from the existing pool of online panelists who are accustomed to performing similar tasks.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

Field Testing

Usability Testing

Pilot Surveys

Respondent Debriefings

Cognitive Interviews

Focus Groups

Other: _____

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true regarding the proposed collection of information:

1. It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions.
2. It avoids unnecessary duplication.
3. It reduces burden on small entities.
4. It uses plain, coherent, and unambiguous language that is understandable to respondents.
5. Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices.
6. It indicates the retention periods for recordkeeping requirements.
7. It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8 (b)(3) about:
 - i. Why the information is being collected;
 - ii. Use of information;
 - iii. Burden estimate;
 - iv. Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, or mandatory);
 - v. Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - vi. Need to display currently valid OMB control number
8. It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected.
9. It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology (if applicable).
10. It makes appropriate use of information technology.

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U.S. Energy Information Administration

To assist review, please provide answers to the following questions:

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? Yes No
2. If Yes, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? Yes No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published? Yes No

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? Y No

Cognitive Interviews: \$40 per respondent for approximately 60 minutes of effort

Online Panelists: \$1 per respondent for approximately eight minutes of effort

BURDEN HOURS

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Individuals/Householders: In-Person	50	60 minutes	50 hours
Individuals/Householders: Online Panels	150	8 minutes	20 hours
Totals	200		70 hours

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is: \$5616.50

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?
 Yes No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)? If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

For the cognitive interviews, we will recruit 50 participants from the general population in select metropolitan areas via online sources such as Craigslist, word-of-mouth, and other methods (e.g. newspaper ads, flyers posted in public areas), if necessary.

For online pretesting, we will recruit 150 participants from pre-registered panelists of web testing platform. Users of these services will see an invitation to participate in the pretesting and are accustomed to completing similar tasks.

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
 Web-based or other forms of Social Media
 Telephone
 In-person
 Mail
 Other, Explain
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? Yes No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.

Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the
“Generic Clearance for Questionnaire Testing and Research”
(OMB Control Number: 1905-0186)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

PURPOSE: Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

CERTIFICATION: Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

Personally Identifiable Information: Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

Gifts or Payments: If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

BURDEN HOURS:

Category of Respondents: Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households; (2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.

No. of Respondents: Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.

Participation Time: Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

Burden: Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time and divide by 60.

FEDERAL COST: Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents. Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

Administration of the Instrument: Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.