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## E Source Benchmarks Utility Direct Load Control Programs

### Utilities in 25 States Conduct Direct Load Control

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In early 2012, E Source began an initiative to take an in-depth look at utility direct load control programs. Direct load control happens when a utility takes control of its customers' air conditioners or water heaters to reduce electricity demand at peak times. E Source found 49 utilities that run direct load control programs in 25 U.S. states and benchmarked 24 of those programs.

The programs E Source assessed comprise 3,277 megawatts of available capacity and have nearly 2.8 million total participants. These 24 programs account for nearly 50 percent of direct load control participants and 45 percent of direct load control capacity nationwide. The basic structure of these programs is often quite similar; 42 percent of them provide a monthly bill credit to reward program participants, whereas 38 percent provide a yearly incentive. These incentives encourage participants to remain in the program, which helps utilities better manage their power supply.

"Managing peak loads is a major challenge for many utilities and prolonged hot weather in many states is only exacerbating the problem," says Adam Maxwell, product manager for E Source Efficiency Services. "If there are protracted heat waves or violent storms, power outages can occur. As the U.S. has coped with high temperatures and record demand, the need for utility demand-response programs has become ever more apparent."

The E Source benchmark study evaluated program performance in six categories: program participation rates, peak load impacts, incentive methods, program budgets and expenditures, implementation contractor duties, and load control technology capabilities and communication.

#### About E Source

For 25 years, E Source has been providing unbiased, objective research and advisory services to over 300 utilities and large energy users. Our energy experts have answered more than 8,000 questions over the past 3 years. This guidance helps our customers advance their efficiency programs, enhance customer relationships, and use energy more efficiently.

#### Public Relations Contact

Wendy Bloechle, Vice President of Marketing and Customer Service, E Source  
E-mail [Wendy Bloechle](mailto:Wendy.Bloechle@Esource.com)  
303-345-9158

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