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Bring-Your-Own-Thermostat Program Structure

Michael Colby

QUESTION

How are bring-your-own-thermostat programs structured across the US?

ANSWER

Generally speaking, utility-administered bring-your-own-thermostat (BYOT) programs are structured such that the utility works with a handful of smart thermostat vendors, some of which enroll the customers themselves while others utilize the vendor for this. BYOT programs have been used for both demand response (DR) and energy efficiency, although DR is more prevalent. Here we review four utility-administered BYOT programs and highlight key aspects of their program structure. We also provide some additional resources on smart thermostats.

Austin Energy

The Austin Energy [Power Partner Thermostat Program](#) began in fall 2012 and focuses on DR. The program structure includes:

- An \$85 rebate for each approved thermostat enrolled
- Fifteen expected DR events per year (June 1 through September 30) between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m.

- Approved thermostats from Alarm.com, ecobee, Filtrete, Nest, Nexia Home Intelligence, Radio Thermostat, and Vivint

Customers must have Wi-Fi and a standard air-conditioning system. They purchase a thermostat from their chosen vendor, then register and enroll through the vendor's website.

Avista Utilities

The Avista (Washington) Smart Thermostat Rebate program (see [Washington Residential Rebate Eligibility and Guidelines](#)) began in summer 2012 and focuses on energy efficiency. The program structure includes:

- A \$50 rebate for self-installed approved thermostats and a \$100 rebate for contractor-installed approved thermostats
- No DR component
- Approved thermostats from ecobee, Emerson, Nest, Ingersoll-Rand (branded as Trane or American Standard), Radio Thermostat or Filtrete, Allure, Venstar, LockState, Aprilaire, Iris, Motison, Lennox, Bryant, and Carrier

Customers must have Wi-Fi and electricity or natural gas as their primary fuel for space heating. They purchase a thermostat from their chosen vendor, then return the [rebate form](#) (PDF) to their utility.

CenterPoint Energy

The CenterPoint Energy E5 DR Pilot program began in summer 2012 to focus on energy efficiency and DR. The program no longer appears on the utility website. The program included a \$25 Home Depot gift card



to use on a Radio Thermostat purchase. It resulted in shifting 2.5 megawatts from peak (1.2 kilowatts average per thermostat) over nine DR events over 17 hours in 2012 (see [e5 CenterPoint Energy Pilot Results \[PDF\]](#)).

Southern California Edison

The smart thermostat component of Southern California Edison's (SCE's) [Save Power Days](#) program began in summer 2013 with 2,800 customers. The utility added an additional 3,200 customers in summer 2014. SCE is planning to roll this out to a full-scale program

focused on DR. The program provides smart thermostat users an additional bill credit of \$0.50/kilowatt-hour for participating in Save Power Days, SCE's peak-time rebate program, and pays \$20 per customer enrolled to participating vendors. Approved thermostats are available from Alarm.com, Radio Thermostat, Vivint, Ingersoll-Rand, Trane, American Standard, and Nest.

The complete response contains additional resources for members of the *E Source Demand-Side Management or Technology Assessment Services*.