

DoD energy savings program begins in Riley neighborhoods



By now, residents should have heard about the Army's plan that encourages residents to be more responsible for natural gas and electric consumption in homes on-post as part of the Congressionally-mandated, Department of Defense energy savings program.

On Fort Riley, the program began with mock billing of new and renovated homes in Forsyth, Colyer Manor, Peterson Place (O'Donnell) and Ellis Heights. Renovated homes in McClellan Place and Peterson Place (Monteith) were in the second phase. The program will eventually expand to all newly-constructed and renovated homes on post.

This program is in accordance with the new Army policy, regarding electricity and natural gas usage.

This DoD program places the responsibility for utility consumption on each resident. A monthly baseline will be calculated by averaging the consumption of occupied "similar homes" each month. The resident's Basic Allowance for Housing will cover the utility consumption up to the baseline. Those who consume less than that month's baseline will earn a rebate. Those whose consumption exceeds the current month's baseline will only be billed for their "excess" consumption above the baseline.

"I think it is important that residents understand that this is a government policy and that money saved goes directly back into building and renovating homes here at Fort Riley," said Col. Kevin Brown, Fort Riley Garrison Commander. "We all have a responsibility and an interest in conserving scarce natural resources. The Department of Defense's Utilities Conservation Program has been set up to do just that," Brown concluded.

Residents may contact the Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Office at 785-239-0678 with any questions or concerns regarding the Army's energy conservation program.

Put some extra change in your pocket! Find ways to lower *your* family's energy consumption today!

Your Neighborhood Office can provide you with a copy of our Conservation Tips or you can visit www.ista-direct.com to learn more about energy conservation.



For questions regarding the DoD
Utility Conservation Program at Fort Riley, contact:

Residential Communities Initiative Office
785-239-0678

You may contact a Picerne Military Housing
representative at:

785-717-2200



Fort Riley and the Department of Defense Utility Conservation Program



*Find out how the Congressionally-mandated,
Department of Defense energy savings
program affects you and your family while
living on post at Fort Riley*



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Frequently Asked Questions

When did the U.S. Army create a policy that residents pay for their excess utility usage?

The Army's utility policy is based on the Office of the Secretary of Defense's policy to provide incentives to occupants of privatized housing to decrease utility consumption and save energy. The Army policy was written more than two years ago; however, at Fort Riley we are beginning the program in renovated homes in Colyer Manor, Peterson Place, Ellis Heights and McClellan Place and newly constructed homes in Forsyth.

Who actually meters the homes?

The RCI development partners (i.e. Picerne Military Housing) have elected to use a third-party utility service, like e:so, to read meters and inform residents of their consumption and baseline data. These third-party consultants are experts in energy conservation and billing and will manage the process in a fair and equitable way.

How does this program work?

The family housing provider establishes an appropriate baseline for utilities usage. Then, usage reports or "mock bills" will be sent to show residents how much electricity and natural gas they are using compared to their neighbors in like homes. Baselines will be established using the Average Baseline Model. During the "mock billing," residents will not be responsible for paying any overages nor will they receive rebates for savings. Following the "mock billing" period, actual rebates and billing will commence. The utilities consumption baseline will be adjusted each month to account for weather changes.

How is the baseline calculated?

Baseline calculation – The baseline is recalculated each month by taking like homes, removing vacant homes, faulty data and the top and bottom 10 percent of homes. The consumption of the resulting 80 percent will then be averaged.

Buffer – Any resident consuming an amount that is above the baseline by 5 percent or less will not be billed. Any resident consuming an amount that is more than 5 percent above the baseline will be billed for the difference between the baseline (average) and their actual consumption.

Trigger Point – All bills and credits will be subject to a minimum \$15 trigger point. If the amount owed or the amount of the rebate for conservation is less than \$15, that amount will accrue to the next month. Once any amount is \$15 or greater, a bill will be generated or a rebate check will be issued.

Can you give us an example of how this will work?

If the average cost of electricity for like homes for a month is \$100, any family that is between \$100 and \$105 (5% above the baseline), will have \$0 due. Anyone using less than \$100 worth of electricity will receive a rebate or credit. Anyone above \$105 will be responsible for the difference between what they used and the \$100 baseline average. If the difference is under \$15, it carries to the next month and nothing is owed. Anything above \$15 is owed. In the same example, residents below the \$100 baseline average for that month receives a rebate

or credit for conserving energy. Just like balances due, if credits are under \$15, they are carried to the next month. If the amount below the baseline is more than \$15, a check is sent and the balance is \$0 again. The residents' BAH pays for the consumption up to the baseline.

How will this be affected by harsh weather?

By using the current average usage as the baseline, weather will automatically be accounted for. During a harsh winter or an unusually warm summer, the baseline will move accordingly so the percentage of the variances from the baseline should remain consistent.

What does BAH pay for?

The Basic Allowance for Housing includes three components: rent, utilities and renters insurance. Remember, that if utility usage is above the established baseline, residents will owe the difference. If it is below the baseline, you will receive a rebate. You will not have to pay the entire utility bill out of pocket – only the difference above the baseline.

What if the home I live in is not energy efficient?

Your home will be grouped with like homes in order to establish the baseline. Consumption among that group of homes should be similar for the average.

Why are Soldiers being held responsible for their utilities?

Responsibility means awareness of usage and conservation. You know you will owe money for excessive usage; therefore there is awareness about conserving energy and bringing the usage down.

