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| **Name of project** |
| Summer discount programme |
| **Location** |
| California, USA |
| **Time frame** |
| Inception in 1985 |
| **Lead organisation** |
| Edison |
| **Sponsor/source of funding** |
| Edison funded |
| **Distribution, retail or both** |
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| **Mandatory or opt-in** |
| Opt-in |
| **Trial or roll-out** |
| Roll-out |
| **Brief overview of project** |
| In Southern California, Edison (SCE) has a well established electricity demand conservation programme, whereby houses can sign up to a [summer discount programme](https://www.sce.com/wps/portal/home/residential/rebates-savings/summer-discount-plan/!ut/p/b1/hc5BC4IwAAXgXxR723DpcdLYJqIspWwX2SFikNoh-v0t8BbZuz34HjziyUD8HF7xFp5xmcP9070Yaa6lsR2sVpmELVH0WS34AVkClwTwIxL_9mfit4ij_Asc9wy2Oqm6LSlDzlZQaChTtQn0jsNyh6aTkgNiBRsnG7) (inception in 1985). This allows Edison to switch off their electric air conditioners at peak times (varying options) they can receive incentives totalling up to $200 off their electricity bills. |
| **Customer type** |
| Residential. This program is available only to customers with a fully operational central A/C system. In order to participate in an override option, all A/C units enrolled in the Summer Discount Plan must be installed on the ground. The vast majority of the residential customers that participate in these types of programs are single-family customers due to the utility targeting strategies that focus on owner-occupied housing. |
| **Technology used (high-level functionality)** |
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| **Means of interaction with customer** |
| When the A/C compressor is shut off a green LED light flashes on the cycling device installed on or near the A/C unit supplied by Edison.  Customers can choose between 4 levels of participation: customers can save most money with the “standard”option, or they can choose to have a more flexible “override” option, which lets customers opt out of up to 5 energy event days a year. Then decide between Maximum Savings (100% cycling) or Maximum Comfort (50% cycling.) |
| **Appliances targeted** |
| Central air conditioning |
| **Period and duration of interruptions (for direct load control)** |
| It can be turned off for up to 6 hours a day during “energy events” Edison may call during periods of high electricity demand, or emergencies. Edison supplies and installs a device on customers’ homes or central-A/C units to remotely shut it off during energy events.  If customers have an override option, if a yellow LED light on the device is seen, they have remaining overrides to use. In this instance, if the customer presses the button on the upper right hand corner of the device, the A/C compressor will turn back on within 10 minutes. Once an event is overridden, a customer will not have any more energy events for the remainder of the day. |
| **Level of load reduction (overall and peak)** |
| As of September 2009, the SCE Summer Discount program had 354,098 participants, 97% residential, 3% commercial.  Over the past five years, the programme has helped save homes and businesses up to 6.8 billion kwh of electricity. |
| **Consumer Experience** |
| Southern California, Edison (SCE) has most of its key program functions in-house apart from marketing where they use an outside firm. SCE has a dedicated program call centre and Customer Service Representatives are trained to try to recruit potential customers who call with complaints of high bills as well as asking customers during home moves whether they have a central air conditioner and, if so, whether they might be interested in the Summer Discount program. About 25% of SCE program participants come from this dedicated call centre.  Two ways to measure participant comfort include whether program participants notice the control events and whether of those that did, whether they were uncomfortable. According to [research](http://www.calmac.org/publications/Final_report_for_California_DLC_Program_Comparison.pdf) for the years 2004 and 2005, about 36% of Edison participants noticed such events, and 72% of which reported a higher level of discomfort.  The SCE process evaluation report indicates that the Summer Discount program only initiated four control events in 2004 and 2005, but no information on the heat intensity during these control events is available. A possible explanation is that SCE simply has a higher percentage of its participants on the 100% cycling options: in 2005 88 percent of the program participants were on 100% cycling options. The [report](http://www.calmac.org/publications/Final_report_for_California_DLC_Program_Comparison.pdf) examines this and alternative explanations in more detail.  Customer satisfaction can also differ with the form of the payment, the frequency of the payment, the timing of the payment, and the payment amounts. |