



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)**

### **1. How does this program work?**

The Resident Energy Conservation Program (RECP) is designed to set reasonable utility usage targets for normal utility consumption in like-type housing units. The Partnership establishes a monthly utility usage target for each home based upon the calculated average monthly. You will receive actual bills and accrue credit for refunds if you use less than the utility usage target under the 10% buffer. You will be issued a rebate check when your accrued credit exceeds \$25. You may choose to defer the rebate and apply any credited amount towards future payments. You will be responsible to pay for usage above the normal utility usage target set if your usage is above the 10% buffer. Your payment would be for only the amount above the 10% buffer.

- 2. How do Sailors and Marines and their families benefit from RECP?**

Careful conservation of resources through less energy consumption contributes to our nation's security and readiness, and takes better care of our fragile ecosystem. Dollars saved through conservation will be put right back into the PPV project in the form of capital reinvestments such as new housing, renovations, community amenities, quality of life programs, etc. Sailors and Marines will earn rebates if they conserve more electricity than amounts identified in the normal usage buffer zone (explained below).
- 3. How is my usage target determined?**

Your house will be grouped with other housing units into like-type energy baselines so that utility usage targets are set based on comparable home energy performance. The Monthly Utility Usage Target is calculated every month based on the current month's average for like-type housing units. A 10% plus and minus buffer is set around the utility usage target in order to establish the normal usage zone.
- 4. What if there is an extremely hot summer/cold winter?**

Your utility usage target is established on a monthly basis to account for actual weather changes.
- 5. Can I get information about the like-type group I'm in?**

Yes, your Resident Services Manager/Housing Office can provide you with that information.
- 6. How will this program affect my Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH)?**

There will be no impact to the BAH allowance.
- 7. Isn't a utility allowance already part of my BAH?**

Yes. An allowance for "normal" utilities is a part of the BAH. This program is intended to encourage residents to achieve normal usage and to reward them for conservation beyond normal expectations. If you conserve and use utilities wisely within the normal range, you will have no out-of-pocket utility expense and with a little extra effort could be eligible for a utilities rebate.

**8. How does billing work?**

Residents who use less than the lower utility usage buffer will accrue a credit or rebate and residents who use more than the upper utility usage buffer will have a balance due. Monthly, you will receive an actual invoice. Depending on your consumption for the month, this invoice will show that you have a credit, have to pay the balance due, or have no charge, and will indicate when you need to submit payment of the balance.

**9. How do I know that my bill is correct?**

Your bill will show the actual usage for the period based on information received from your individual home utility meter. If you feel there are inaccuracies on your bill, please contact your property manager for review. Your property manager can check your water heater and AC unit to ensure they are working properly. They can also help you perform an energy use self assessment to see how you can reduce electrical consumption and hopefully earn a credit.

**10. Does this program mean I have to pay an electric bill every month?**

You will only pay for electricity if you have excess usage. In other words, if you used more electricity than the normal usage buffer zone, you would be charged only for that usage in excess of the normal usage buffer zone.

**11. How and when will I expect a rebate?**

Residents whose monthly utilities cost is 10% or more below the monthly usage target will earn a credit or rebate that will be payable when the accumulated rebate exceeds \$25. Residents can elect to roll-over savings credits to apply against charges they may accrue in future months.

**12. We have two children in our family and live in a 3-BR home. Many of our neighbors do not have children. Will the monthly usage average for our like-type group be skewed?**

Like-type homes are homes with comparable expected energy usage based on a number of criteria including neighborhood location, size (number of bedrooms and square footage), and year of construction. These factors and the number of homes in each group (often between 50 and 100) serve to normalize the variations in family size within the 10% range.

**13. My neighbor's bill is lower than mine because they have Energy Saver appliances and I don't. Can I have new appliances to lower my bill?**

No. We account for these differences by setting the 10% plus or minus buffer around the utility usage target.

**14. What happens if I don't pay on time? Will late payments affect my credit?**

Residents with a past due account will receive up to three late notice letters from the billing company on 15-day intervals. The PPV partnership may contact you to work out a payment plan. Since utility bills will be a component of rent, the failure to pay utility bills will be treated as delinquent rent as per your lease. Please refer to your lease on how delinquent rent is treated and for specific actions that will be taken by your property manager for payment delinquencies. One consequence may be that your lease may not be renewed or extended if you don't pay your bill. Finally, late payments could affect your credit.

**15. Am I responsible for water and gas?**

At this time, the energy conservation efforts focus on electricity. Water is not currently part of the program – but we still encourage you to conserve water.

**16. If this is a Department of Navy program, do I have to participate if I'm in another branch of Service?**

All military members, regardless of branch of Service, must sign a lease that requires the resident pay for electricity usage.

**17. Why did the Department of Navy decide to start RECP after all these years?**

PPV residents use significantly more electricity and gas per day than residents in the community residing in comparable homes. In September 1998, OSD issued a policy for the payment of utilities in PPV housing to encourage a reduction in energy consumption. In support of the Secretary of the Navy's energy initiatives, RECP represents the Department of Navy's next step toward full implementation of the OSD policy for PPV housing.