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Direct and Spillover Effects of a Social Information Campaign on Residential Water-Savings

Mónica M. Jaime Torres^a and Fredrik Carlsson^{b*}

Abstract

This paper investigates direct and spillover effects of a social information campaign aimed at encouraging residential water savings in Colombia. The campaign was organized as a randomized field experiment, consisting of monthly delivery of consumption reports, including normative messages, for one year. Results indicate that social information and appeals to norm-based behavior reduce water use by up to 6.8% in households directly targeted by the campaign. In addition, we find evidence of spillover effects: households that were not targeted by the campaign reduced water use by 5.8% in the first six months following the intervention.

Key Words: Peer effects, social norms, randomized evaluation, water utilities

JEL Codes: C93, D03, L95, O12

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