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“No Shut-Off” Policies and Natural Gas Consumption

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Highlights

- Difference-in-difference method to evaluate “no shut-off” policies gas use policy.
- NSO policy increases natural gas consumption by 4.7-4.8 percent.
- Total increase of 66–67 billion cubic feet of natural annually.

Abstract:

Many U.S. states have regulations that prevent natural gas utility companies from turning off service to non-paying consumers. The goal of these policies, termed “no shut-off” (NSO) regulations, is to provide a guaranteed minimum level of residential comfort by reducing the marginal cost of consumption to zero for a period of time. This paper employs a difference-in-difference approach applied to residential U.S. Energy Information Administration data to evaluate whether NSO policies generate higher levels of gas usage. Our preferred specifications

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