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Nudging Energy Efficiency Audits: Evidence from a Field Experiment*

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Abstract

This paper uses a randomized field experiment to test how information provision leveraging social norms, salience, and a personal touch can serve as a nudge to influence the uptake of residential energy audits. Our results show that a low-cost carefully-crafted notecard can increase the probability of a household to follow through with an already scheduled audit by 1.1 percentage points on a given day. The effect is very similar across individuals with different political views, but households in rural areas display a substantially greater effect than those in urban areas. Our findings have important managerial and policy implications, as they suggest a cost-effective nudge for increasing energy audit uptake and voluntary energy efficiency adoption.

Keywords: residential energy efficiency; home energy audits; non-price interventions; information provision; social norms; field experiment

JEL: D03, Q41, Q48

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