

Participant Information Sheet

Designing for values, practices and information needs around domestic energy consumption and energy use feedback: **Energy use monitoring trial**

Principal Investigators

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School/Department

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Background to this project

Energy constitutes a substantial household expense, yet users have little point-of-sale information on their energy consumption. In this trial we are seeking households willing to adopt an energy use monitoring and display unit free of charge for a 12-month period. Participating households will have a Phisaver energy monitoring unit installed in their house (normally \$395) free of charge (www.phisaver.com).

The primary aims of this study are to:

- Understand preferences and needs with regard to energy use visualisations and consumer-utility relationships
- Understand how household interaction and engagement with energy monitors varies over time
- Involve end-users (i.e. you) in the tailoring of information and design of energy use visualisation technologies which are specific to user needs

Eligibility

Participants should be over 18 years old and should own their home, or alternatively should be in possession of approval from their landlord (or similar) to install energy monitoring hardware in the meter box.

What you have to do

This study involves adopting (free of charge) a Phisaver energy monitor for a 12-month period. The Phisaver consists of circuit monitoring hardware installed in the meter box which communicates over WIFI to visualise energy use on a display in the home. Households can choose where they would like their display to be placed. Households will engage with researchers throughout the trial, taking part in semi-structured interviews on up to four occasions over the 12 months, completing energy diaries for specific weeks that detail factors affecting their energy use and responding to short email or phone surveys about preferences for improvements to their energy visualisations.

Interviews and surveys will focus on use of the energy monitor, improvements to the energy monitor, and energy use/generation practices. You may be invited to provide feedback on prototypes of possible future technologies. **For your participation you will receive free of charge an energy monitor valued at \$395 (Phisaver).**

Data we are collecting

Energy use data: The energy monitor will collect, visualise and log energy use and energy generation information from your house. This information will be available to you through the energy monitor display and will be available to researchers at UQ and to the Phisaver company.

Interview and qualitative data: Interviews will be audio-recorded and we may ask your permission to take photographs of different technologies in your home such as your solar panels and battery etc. Survey responses will be collected either through SMS, email or via a platform such as Survey Monkey. These surveys will not require the input of identifiable information. What information you provide as part of your energy diaries or self-authored videos is completely up to you.

All data collected will be stored on a password protected laptops and UQ's Research Data Management system.

Confidentiality

All participating households will be given a pseudonym, e.g. P1, P2. Both quantitative energy use data and qualitative interview/survey data will be stored against these pseudonyms, and can only be attributed to individual households with reference to a participant key, which will be available only to UQ researchers on this project via the UQ Research Data Management System and to the Phisaver company as per other paying customers.

De-identified or aggregated data from the may be shared further or be made available as non-identifiable datasets. Information in this form would have all identifiers removed and would not be re-identifiable.

After the trial has ceased, the document kept by the research team linking pseudonyms with participant names will be destroyed, rendering all data de-identified/anonymised.

Risk to you

There are no risks to you participating in this study beyond those that exist in normal daily life. A qualified installer will install the Phisaver unit.

Participation is voluntary

Your participation is entirely voluntary. Participants benefit by receiving a \$395 multi-circuit energy monitor free of charge, and have the opportunity (during the interviews) to request changes to the information visualised to suit your households' preferences.

The trial is 12 months in length and prospective participants are requested to only consider participation if they are willing and able to participate

Uninstall / Withdrawal

There is an expectation that participating households will be able to participate for the full 12 months.

End of trial: At the end of the 12 months, participants can elect to (a) have the Phisaver unit uninstalled at no cost (b) keep the

Phisaver monitor and continue as a regular Phisaver customer without further involvement with UQ. This would involve taking up the data subscription fee themselves (\$15 per month) which can be cancelled with Phisaver at any time.

Early withdrawal: There is a hope that participating households will be able to participate for the full 12 months of the trial and will consider this commitment as part of their consent to participating in the study. However participants can withdraw at any point without penalty. In the case of early withdrawal, participants have the options of (a) having the Phisaver device uninstalled at no cost, (b) recompensing UQ the cost of the installation themselves (\$395) and keeping the Phisaver device as an ordinary Phisaver customer with no further involvement with UQ. There are no negative consequences for early withdrawal, and all data collection will cease immediately. Further all data that has been collected about you will be removed from datasets and destroyed.

Ethics clearance

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

You are welcome to discuss your participation in this study with the investigators:

Stephen Snow (Phone 0417079392)

Mashhuda Glencross (Phone 07 3365 2937)

Stephen Viller (Phone 07 3365 1190)

Neil Horrocks (Phone 0417795851)

If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinator on 3365 3924.

Need to know more?

Information on the Phisaver product is available at:
www.phisaver.com.

For further information about this study or if you wish to stop your involvement in the study please contact the Investigator:

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