



How do our energy bills compare to others?

We've started to explore what factors influence residential electricity use, including home appliances, dwelling features and household characteristics. But how do our thoughts and perceptions, such as how we compare ourselves against others, match up with our energy use? Find out more in this survey snapshot.

In a previous survey snapshot, we presented some early findings on the key drivers of household energy use. We've found that major appliances (e.g. number of fridges, usage of laundry appliances) can help explain differences in electricity usage across households, as can things like the number of occupants and number of bedrooms in our home.

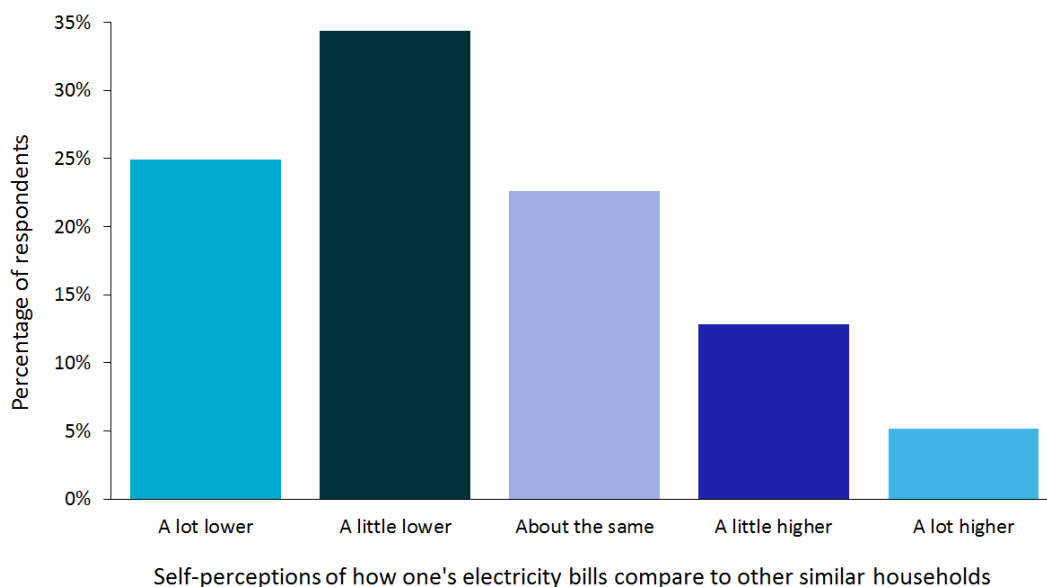
But what about more subjective things like our thoughts, attitudes and perceptions – how well do these align with our household energy consumption and costs?



How do you think you compare to others?

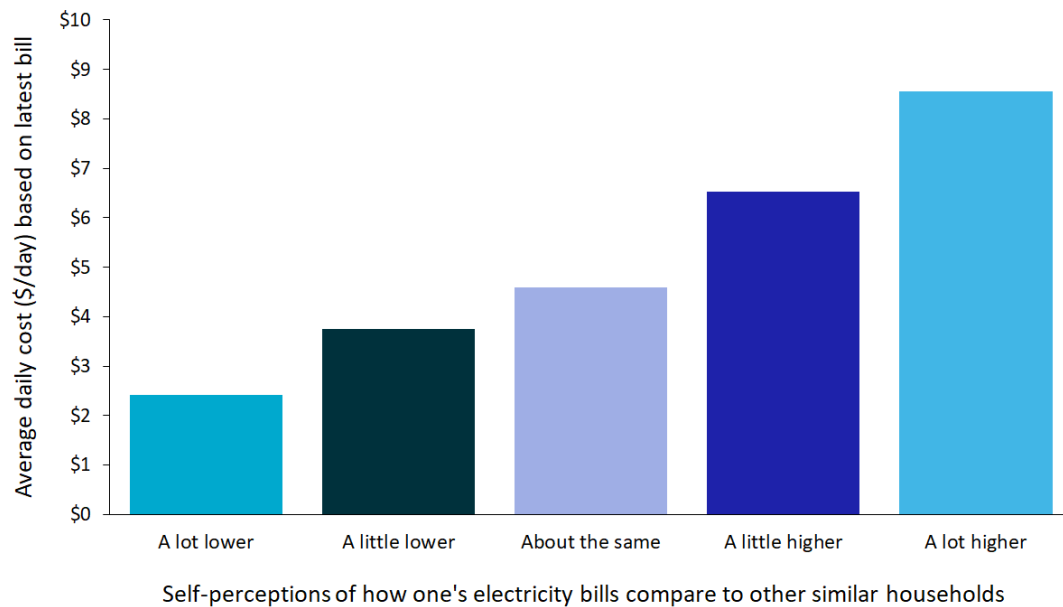
In one of our surveys, we asked our citizen scientists to rate how they thought their electricity bills compared to similar households. Did they feel that their bills were lower, about the same, or higher than others?

Most people (almost 60%) felt that their electricity bills were either a little or a lot lower than that of other households, while just under a quarter (23%) rated themselves about the same.



So how do our perceptions of energy bills stack up with reality? To explore this question, we looked at the average daily electricity costs (\$/day) of citizen scientists who thought their bills were a lot lower, a little lower, about the same, a little higher and much higher than others. And guess what, people knew what they were talking about!

As shown in the chart below, we found that those who judged their electricity bills to be lower than other households in an initial survey tended to report lower bill costs in a later survey about electricity bills. In contrast, those who judged their bills to be higher than other household tended to report higher bill costs.



Perhaps unsurprisingly, we also found that bill perceptions matched with average daily electricity use (in kWh/day), as reported on one's latest electricity bill. For example:

- those citizen scientists who estimated their bills to be higher than other households also tended to report higher levels of average daily electricity usage.
- those citizen scientists who estimated their bills to be lower than other households also tended to report lower levels of average daily electricity usage.

What have we learned?

These results suggest that among our survey respondents, perceptions of one's electricity bills compared to others were pretty well aligned with actual bill costs and energy-use levels across households. So our citizen scientists seem to have a pretty good sense of judgement when it comes to estimating just how much they pay for energy, relative to other households!

Survey snapshots provide a quick look at some of the results provided so far by our citizen scientists.

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