



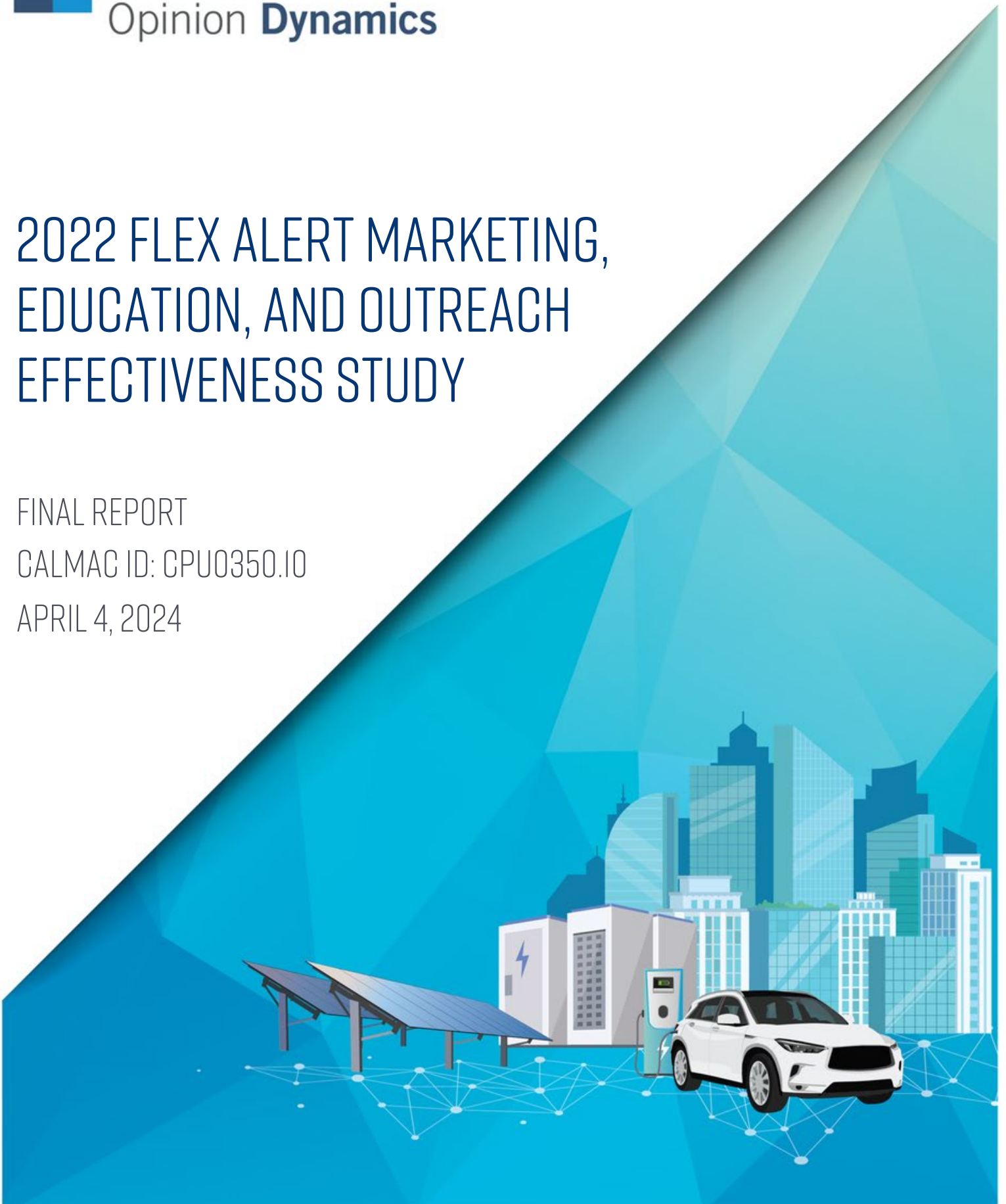
Opinion **Dynamics**

# 2022 FLEX ALERT MARKETING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

FINAL REPORT

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents results from the 2022 Flex Alert Marketing, Education & Outreach (ME&O) Effectiveness Study conducted by Opinion Dynamics to evaluate the performance of the Flex Alert ME&O Campaign in meeting its stated objectives and program performance metrics. In 2022, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) expanded the Flex Alert Campaign to include marketing of the new residential Emergency Load Reduction Program pilot (ERLP), which uses the customer-facing name Power Saver Rewards (PSR). The objectives of the 2022 campaign were to build awareness of Flex Alerts, build awareness of ELRP, and notify Californians when a Flex Alert event was happening.

### I.1 METHODOLOGY

It is not always possible to directly measure consumer exposure to ME&O, and there are many possible market drivers of the campaign outcomes. Therefore, Opinion Dynamics used a preponderance of evidence approach<sup>1</sup> to assess campaign effectiveness across multiple data sources and types to provide a full view of the campaign's effects. We conducted the following research activities throughout the 2022 campaign year:

- Development of a program theory and logic model (PTLM) to document the goals of the Flex Alert ME&O Campaign, the barriers to achieving them, and the activities the campaign implementer planned to employ to overcome them, along with intended outputs, outcomes, and impacts.
- Monthly residential tracking surveys of 500 Californians fielded using a YouGov web panel to measure campaign performance across established key performance metrics,<sup>2</sup> including customer awareness and familiarity with the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards campaigns, understanding of the reason behind the need to act during Flex Alert events, knowing what energy-saving actions to take, as well as intent to take such actions during a Flex Alert event and sign up for Power Saver Rewards to earn bill credits for reducing energy use during events.
- An assessment of stakeholder engagement processes to provide insight into how the CPUC and the Doyle Dern and Bernbach Group (DDB) can ensure high levels of engagement and meet the needs of individual stakeholders.
- An assessment of partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) to understand the effectiveness of their involvement in the campaign and their ability to reach target customers, including interviews with CBO and DDB staff (part of the DDB team), a review of campaign materials and program activity, and four case studies.

### I.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

We synthesized key findings from the residential tracking survey, stakeholder engagement assessment, and CBO assessment to identify several conclusions and recommendations for the CPUC and DDB to consider. We summarize these conclusions and recommendations below.

- **Conclusion: Rolling outages were avoided during the 2022 campaign cycle, even with the unprecedented 10-day stretch of Flex Alerts.** While we cannot directly link this phenomenon to campaign performance, the interplay between Californians taking action during Flex Alerts and multiple organizations working in tandem to alert Californians of the need to take action likely contributed to this positive outcome.

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<sup>1</sup> This approach draws on multiple sources and data from different types of research efforts (e.g., quantitative and qualitative).

<sup>2</sup> YouGov, a public opinion polling firm, maintains a US panel of 2 million respondents. YouGov used non-probability opt-in methods to ensure the respondents selected to complete the residential tracking surveys were representative of the California population based on gender, age, race, homeownership, education, whether the respondent is Spanish-speaking, and income. For more information on YouGov's panel, please visit: <https://today.yougov.com/about/about-the-yougov-panel/> and/or the Monthly Tracking Survey Methodology in Section3.

■ **Conclusion: Overall, the 2022 campaign performed well against its metrics, especially those related to awareness and action-taking.** Throughout the campaign period, Californians had multiple points of exposure to the campaign, whether through social media postings, radio or television ads, or trusted CBOs. There was an increase in the percentage of Californians who were aware of Flex Alerts (11 percentage points) and Power Saver Rewards (9 percentage points) compared to baseline (52% to 63% and 18% to 27%, respectively) and 95% of Californians who were aware that a Flex Alert had been called reported taking at least one action. Results regarding general awareness messaging, event day messaging, and future event notification preferences all suggest that text messaging is a preferred and effective way to reach Californians.

- **Recommendation:** Continue building on the success from 2022 through increased use of text messaging and additional research to identify specific customer groups who remain unaware, allowing targeted messaging to those customers.

■ **Conclusion: Given current market conditions, some campaign performance metrics are outdated or need modification.** For example, the metric for action taken during a Flex Alert is measured as the percentage of Californians who took one or more of the specified Flex Alert actions featured in the campaign. However, nearly all Californians who were aware a Flex Alert had been called reported taking at least one campaign featured action during alert events, highlighting a ceiling effect for this metric. As of the close of 2022, we had two years of tracking data on Flex Alerts and one year of data on Power Saver Rewards and we have continued collecting tracking data in 2023. This information provides valuable information for modifications to the program's metrics.

- **Recommendation:** Beginning in Q1 of 2024, the CPUC and the 2024 campaign implementer, along with the evaluation team, should meet to discuss current metrics and opportunities for improvement as metrics should be modified or adjusted with concrete goals to reach or exceed in 2024. Each year, the campaign has changed and most often these changes occur in late Q1 or Q2 of a given campaign year. Given changing campaign goals from year to year, we recommend that any adjustments to 2024 metrics occur right after the campaign plans are solidified for 2024 and are informed by discussion between the CPUC and DDB. Some possibilities for discussion include modifying the metric for action so that it aligns with the top 2 or 3 campaign actions and/or separating out metrics that will be collected monthly and reported as percentage point change over time vs metrics that are only collected when a Flex Alert is called.

■ **Conclusion: The mid-summer stretch of Flex Alerts was both an opportunity and a challenge for the 2022 campaign.** Following the mid-summer 10-day stretch of alerts, more Californians were aware of Flex Alerts than ever before, as indicated by increased unaided and aided brand awareness (11% and 61% in September, respectively, compared to baselines of 3% and 52%, respectively). Additionally, Californians' likelihood to take action during a Flex Alert and enroll in the Power Saver Reward program increased after the lengthy stretch of alerts (34% of Californians were extremely likely to sign up for Power Saver Rewards in September compared to 21% at baseline). However, this period of intense Flex Alert activity was challenging for the CBO outreach channel of the campaign. In particular, CBOs reported seeing evidence of messaging fatigue through an influx of constituent requests to be removed from CBO distribution lists. Additionally, despite positive feedback from DDC representatives, CBOs reported feeling strained during this period.

- **Recommendation: Reconsider the role that the CBO channel plays during multiple-day events.** As evidenced by the 2022 campaign, CBOs provide a valuable communication channel to reach specific types of consumers with general Flex Alert information. However, when multiple back-to-back alerts are called, CBOs may feel strained to keep up with communication efforts as well as lose constituents from their distribution lists.

■ **Conclusion: There is an opportunity to improve collaboration to optimize the alignment and saliency of campaign messaging.** DDB-facilitated biweekly stakeholder meetings were not structured in a manner that encouraged collaboration. DDB would frequently quickly share updates from a slide deck, pause for a second or two for questions and then move on or end the meetings early, which did not foster collaborative discussion. Improving collaborative



discussions would be especially helpful for the Power Saver Rewards Program, where the lack of steady collaboration between the main stakeholder groups resulted in multiple names being used to describe event days, and yielded low results for awareness from the tracking survey (although low awareness is expected with a new program).

- **Recommendation:** We recommend that DDB experiment with new meeting facilitation strategies to foster more productive discussion during biweekly stakeholder meetings. For example, DDB can use polls or questions posed ahead of time to respond to in the meeting to facilitate discussion. DDB should also create space for questions or discussion, potentially through “intentional silence,” where the meeting facilitator purposely pauses and embraces periods of seemingly awkward silence (five to seven seconds) to create space for stakeholders to think and respond.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, we recommend sending the agenda and slides out 24–48 hours before the stakeholder meetings.
- **Recommendation:** Given that a focus of the 2023 Flex Alert ME&O Campaign is Power Saver Rewards and that the IOUs meet separately from the main stakeholder group, we recommend that the IOUs share their meeting notes or status updates with the Flex Alert stakeholder group to foster continued information sharing and more effective collaboration with DDB and the CPUC.
- **Conclusion: Formal partnerships between CBOs present a viable model for maximizing outreach while reducing the strain on individual CBOs.** Case study results indicate that collaboration between Sustainable Claremont and San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance (SGVCA) was beneficial as it helped alleviate the strain of campaign responsibilities in the face of many other day-to-day tasks and opened up a more extensive network of valuable contacts (e.g., local leaders) and constituent groups. DDC staff already plan to assess the feasibility of using this model again in 2023.
  - **Recommendation:** DDC should support participating CBOs in identifying opportunities to collaborate with other participating organizations in their region to maximize reach. This could include encouraging partnerships in the request for proposal (RFP) process and DDC staff connecting organizations they think may be well aligned.
- **Conclusion: Campaign implementers should take additional steps to enhance consumer understanding of pre-cooling, given the nuances of this energy-saving behavior.** For pre-cooling to be effective, Californians must (1) run their AC cooler before 4:00 p.m. and (2) set it to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Flex Alert days. While awareness of pre-cooling fluctuated throughout the campaign period, about half of Californians are willing to run their AC cooler before 4:00 p.m. or set it to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on hot days. Despite interest, there may be challenges to pre-cooling for those who are not at home or who may be at home but are busy or forgetful unless the process is automated (set it and forget it).
  - **Recommendation:** Continue building awareness around pre-cooling as a two-step action with general awareness campaign assets and event-day assets. More specifically:
    - Further develop the existing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on the Energy Upgrade California website to include the following:
      - What is pre-cooling?
      - What does “set it and forget it” mean?
      - How can I use my smart thermostat to pre-cool my home on event days?
    - Add links to the FAQ page to direct customers to their utility-sponsored smart thermostat program/rebate webpage.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/intentional-silence-ux/>  
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## 2. INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the CPUC established Energy Upgrade California (EUC) as the brand for Statewide Marketing, Education, and Outreach (SW ME&O) activities to increase ratepayer awareness of energy efficiency, demand response, and distributed generation and to offer ways for consumers to manage their energy use better. The marketing firm, DDB, designed and managed the EUC campaign from 2017 through 2021. Beginning in 2021, the CPUC shifted the focus of SW ME&O to a Flex Alert paid media campaign to encourage Californians to reduce their energy use when electricity demand is predicted to outstrip supply. With the release of CPUC Decision 21-12-015 in 2022,<sup>4</sup> the Flex Alert paid media campaign was also required to promote the new residential ERLP, which uses the customer-facing name of Power Saver Rewards.

### 2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STATEWIDE MARKETING, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM

#### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The objectives of the 2022 campaign were to build awareness of Flex Alerts, build awareness of ERLP, and notify Californians when a Flex Alert event is happening.<sup>5</sup> The campaign slogan, “The Power is Ours to prevent outages with Flex Alerts,”<sup>6</sup> highlights the campaign’s focus on preventable power outages, compared to non-preventable outages such as a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

Key campaign stakeholders for the 2022 campaign included the CPUC, California Independent Service Operator (CAISO), and the three electric IOUs: Southern California Edison (SCE), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), and San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E). Furthermore, DDB was a key stakeholder serving as the campaign implementer. DDB’s team included the public affairs firm, DDC, and the media communication agency, Optimum Media Direction (OMD). DDC engaged CBOs as campaign partners with the goal of reaching core customer groups who are typically harder to reach, including low-income, rural and agricultural, multicultural, and senior residents, as well as residents living with disabilities. DDC also distributed media assets designed by DDB for the general public and IOU customers to CBOs to share with their networks. OMD, who shares the same parent company as DDB, was responsible for executing the digital media assets.

Due to privacy restrictions around customer data, stakeholders decided that the DDB would be responsible for statewide Flex Alert marketing efforts while IOUs would develop and implement their own direct-to-consumer Power Saver Rewards strategies. This split the larger campaign into two components: statewide Flex Alert marketing and Power Saver Rewards marketing. DDB, in coordination with DDC and IOUs, developed some Power Saver Rewards materials for CBO and IOU distribution, respectively. Figure 1 provides a visual depiction of the program’s theory of change in achieving desired outcomes.

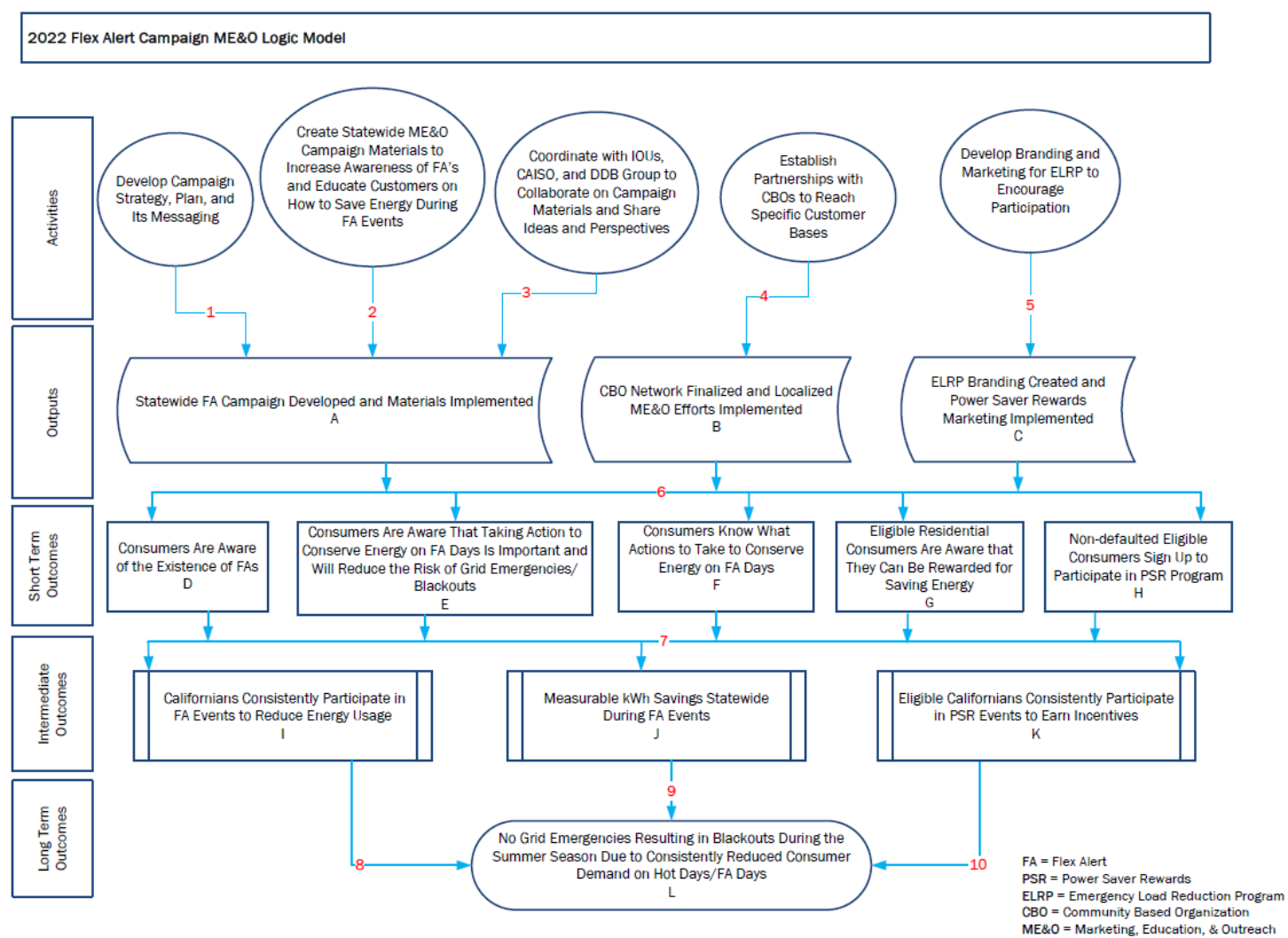
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<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M428/K821/428821475.PDF>

<sup>5</sup> Discouraging the use of back-up generators (BUGs) during Flex Alerts was also an original objective for the 2022 campaign but was discontinued by the CPUC in October 2022.

<sup>6</sup> Energy Upgrade California. “Flex Alerts.” Accessed May 22, 2022. <https://energyupgradeca.org/flex-alert>.

Figure 1. 2022 Flex Alert Campaign Program Theory Logic Model



DDB utilized multiple marketing channels throughout the campaign, including:

- Television and radio ads focused on the general and Hispanic markets
- Outdoor digital and print placements
- Newspapers
- Paid search on Google and social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter)<sup>7</sup>
- Multiple digital channels, including displays, videos, streaming audio
- SMS texts to Californians across the state, using available records
- Various partnerships (Nextdoor® and CBOs)

<sup>7</sup> All product or company names that may be mentioned in this publication are tradenames, trademarks, or registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Campaign assets were designed for the general market in English as well as the multicultural market in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean. Figure 2 includes examples of key campaign assets used to promote awareness of Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards and to notify Californians when an event occurred.

Figure 2. 2022 Campaign Assets



Throughout the 2022 campaign period, 11 statewide Flex Alerts were called, with 10 occurring back-to-back. On one of the event days, CAISO also issued an Energy Emergency Alert 3 (EEA 3), the highest alert level signaling that the grid operator is “unable to meet minimum reliability reserve requirements,” and utilities are notified to prepare for outages. Californians reduced their demand following the EEA 3, and the grid operator did not order utilities to institute rotating power outages.<sup>8</sup>

CAMPAIGN METRICS

Table 1 outlines the approved core metrics and associated measurement approaches for assessing the effectiveness of the campaign.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.caiso.com/Documents/Grid-Emergencies-History-Report-1998-Present.pdf> and <http://www.caiso.com/Documents/Emergency-Notifications-Fact-Sheet.pdf> for further information.

Table 1. Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Metrics

Metric	Measurement Approach
<b>FAMILIARITY</b>	
Objective: Increase Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards recognition through awareness and familiarity	
Unaided Awareness	% of Californians who are aware of Flex Alerts Unaided % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards Unaided
Aided Awareness	% of Californians who are aware of Flex Alerts Aided (% of Californians who have heard of the Flex Alert name) % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards Aided (% of Californians who have heard of the Power Saver Rewards name)
	% of Californians who are aware that a Flex Alert has been called after alert
	% of Californians who are aware of the actions they can take to save energy during Flex Alerts
Flex Alert/Power Saver Familiarity	% of Californians who correctly associate Flex Alerts with goal (unaided and aided) % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards with goal (unaided and aided)
<b>UNDERSTANDING</b>	
Objective: Increase understanding of the reason behind the need to take action during Flex Alerts	
Understanding of the Connections Between Grid Conditions and Flex Alerts	% of Californians who correctly answer a series of True/False statements that make connections between heatwaves, electricity supply, and power outages. % of Californians who are able to pick out the correct definition of a Flex Alert % of Californians who are able to select the correct definition of Power Saver Rewards
<b>BACK-UP GENERATORS (BUGs) <sup>a</sup></b>	
Objective: Discourage the use of BUGs	
Likelihood to Use BUGs	% of Californians who currently own a BUG % of Californians who do not own a BUG but are considering purchasing one in the near future
<b>INTENT TO ACT AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE</b>	
Objective: Increase intent to sign up for Power Saver Rewards (when not already enrolled) and to take action during a Flex Alert	
Likelihood to Take Action During a Flex Alert	% of Californians who are extremely likely to temporarily reduce their electricity use during times of high demand (the Flex Alert)
	% of Californians who would be likely to take the specified Flex Alert actions featured in the campaign (we would assess this for respondents that are signed up for Flex Alert and respondents overall)
Likelihood to Sign Up	% of Californians who have signed up/intend to sign up for the Power Saver Rewards program with their IOU
Action	% of Californians who took one or more of the specified Flex Alert actions featured in the campaign

<sup>a</sup> Discouraging the use of backup generators (BUGs) during Flex Alerts was also an original objective for the 2022 campaign but was discontinued by the CPUC in October 2022.

## 2.2 EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

It is critical to understand the effectiveness of the expanded Flex Alert ME&O campaign, how it can best support Power Saver Rewards, and what enhancements should be made to optimize campaign reach and effectiveness moving forward. In 2022, ME&O evaluation activities focused on assessing the design, implementation, and performance of SW ME&O in this shifting landscape, with an emphasis on gaining insights to inform campaign improvement. Evaluation

activities focused on key metrics such as customer awareness and understanding of Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards.<sup>9</sup>

The overarching objective of this evaluation was to provide ongoing feedback and insights to improve campaign execution. To achieve that objective, the evaluation team conducted the following tasks:

- Assessed the effectiveness of the campaign against key metrics
- Informed and evaluated the stakeholder engagement process
- Assessed the contributions and effectiveness of CBOs supporting the campaign

### 3. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team leveraged results from developing the program theory logic model, monthly residential tracking surveys, stakeholder engagement assessment, and CBO assessment to assess ME&O campaign effectiveness in 2022. Given that it is not always possible to directly measure consumer exposure to ME&O and there are many possible market drivers of the campaign outcomes, we use a preponderance of evidence approach to assess campaign effectiveness across multiple sources and data of different types (e.g., quantitative and qualitative) to provide a full view of the campaign’s effects. Table 2 summarizes the methodology we used to meet the evaluation objectives.

Table 2. Evaluation Methodology by Study Objective

Study Objective	Program Theory and Logic Model Development	Monthly Tracking Survey	Stakeholder Engagement Assessment	CBO Assessment
Assess the Effectiveness of the Campaign Against Key Metrics	✓	✓		
Assess the Contributions and Effectiveness of CBOs Supporting the Campaign				✓
Inform and Evaluate the Stakeholder Engagement Process	✓		✓	

All data collection instruments are available in Appendix A.

#### PROGRAM THEORY LOGIC MODEL

Given the range of actors involved in the design and execution of the Flex Alert ME&O campaign, as well as the close connection between the campaign and Power Saver Rewards implementation, the evaluation team developed a PTLM for the campaign. The PTLM was a valuable tool in this evaluation that documented the goals of Flex Alert ME&O, the barriers to achieving them, and the activities the campaign implementer plans to employ to overcome them, along with intended outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

<sup>9</sup> To provide greater insights into actual customer behavior change in response to the Flex Alert ME&O campaign, we conducted an additional Post-Season Event Survey, as part of the Performance Analytics task. Findings from this task will be presented in a separate memo.

The evaluation team reviewed all relevant documentation and campaign materials, leveraged information learned during the in-depth interviews, and built a comprehensive PTLM to formally relay intended theories of change. We reviewed our initial draft of the PTLM with DDB and CPUC staff to solicit feedback. With that feedback, we refined and finalized the PTLM.

## MONTHLY TRACKING SURVEY

We used monthly residential tracking surveys of 500 Californians to measure campaign performance across established key performance metrics, including customer awareness and familiarity with the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards campaigns, understanding of the reason behind the need to act during Flex Alert events, including what energy-saving actions to take, as well as intent to take such actions during a Flex Alert event and sign up for Power Saver Rewards to earn bill credits for reducing their energy use during events. As part of the 2022 evaluation, we added survey questions to measure performance metrics related to the new Power Saver Rewards campaign launched in June 2022.

The evaluation team fielded the tracking survey using a sample from YouGov's non-probability opt-in web panel. To help ensure that our sample was representative of California's diverse population, we offered the tracking survey in English and Spanish. For each monthly tracking survey, a minimum of 15% of survey responses were completed in Spanish. Data weights based on gender, age, race, homeownership, education, whether the respondent was Spanish-speaking, and income were applied to the results to ensure that the findings were representative of the California population.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

The evaluation team conducted two phases of research to assess the stakeholder engagement process. The first phase of the Stakeholder Engagement Assessment addressed the need for iterative feedback. It provided the CPUC with a deep dive into how stakeholders collaborated in the campaign's early months. The second phase also addressed the need for iterative feedback. It provided the CPUC with insights into how stakeholders collaborated and engaged with the campaign and ways to improve these processes for future campaign cycles. Table 3 lists the specific research objectives and methods for Phases 1 and 2 of the Stakeholder Engagement Assessment.



Table 3. Stakeholder Engagement Assessment Overview

	Phase 1 – Prelaunch	Phase 2 – Post Implementation
Research Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the goals of each stakeholder as it relates to their involvement with the campaign? What differences, if any, exist across stakeholders?</li> <li>What needs do IOU stakeholders have related to their involvement with the campaign? What, if any, needs around collaboration have not been met to date?</li> <li>What obstacles or challenges exist to stakeholders achieving their goals? What obstacles exist to their active engagement in the process?</li> <li>How can the stakeholder engagement process be structured and managed to achieve the desired outcomes? (How can the process be improved?)</li> <li>Are there specific tools, resources, or process changes that would make engaging easier (meeting set-up, formality, etc.)?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the objectives of the Flex Alert Campaign stakeholder engagement process?</li> <li>What methods were used to engage stakeholders in the campaign development and implementation?</li> <li>What worked well and what did not work well? Why?</li> <li>What lessons could be learned for future campaign cycles or campaigns?</li> <li>Have the objectives of the engagement process been met?</li> <li>What impact has the engagement process had on the campaign? On the stakeholders?</li> </ul>
Methods	In-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including DDB, DDC, the IOUs, CAISO, and the CPUC	
Interim Deliverables	Memo	

We explored the research objectives in Table 3 by conducting in-depth interviews with each of the campaign's core stakeholders, including CPUC, CAISO, DDB, DDC, and the IOUs. Table 4 summarizes the in-depth interviews conducted during each phase of the Stakeholder Engagement Assessment. We recorded each interview with the respondents' permission and maintained confidentiality across all responses. After careful review and analysis, we presented findings during two share-out and iteration sessions with the CPUC and DDB Group to hear their feedback and thoughts on how they might implement the research recommendations.

Table 4: Summary of Stakeholder Interviews per Organization

Organization	Phase 1		Phase 2	
	# of Interviews	# of People Interviewed	# of Interviews	# of People Interviewed
CPUC	1	1	0	0
CAISO	1	1	1	1
DDB	1*	1	1	3
DDC	1*	1	1	2
SCE	1	1	1	1
PG&E	1	2	1	2
SDG&E	1	2	1	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

Note: We conducted a joint interview with DDB and DDC for Phase 1 of the stakeholder assessment.

Given the key role of CBOs, we conducted several activities to assess the effectiveness of their involvement in the campaign and their ability to reach priority customers. Table 5 provides an overview of the CBO Assessment and maps each research question to the evaluation tasks. Additionally, CBO data review and categorization and CBO geographical mapping helped inform these research tasks.

Table 5. Community-Based Organization Assessment Overview

Research Question	Research Task		
	DDC Staff Interview	CBO In-Depth Interviews	CBO Case Studies
How is DDC utilizing CBOs within the Flex Alert campaign?	✓		
Which CBOs are participating?	✓		
What outreach strategies are used by CBOs to educate their constituents?	✓	✓	✓
Do CBO partners have the capacity to support the campaign's objectives?		✓	✓
How effective have CBOs been in supporting campaign calls to action?	✓	✓	✓
Who are CBOs reaching? Does that align with campaign targets?		✓	✓
What did/did not work well? Why?	✓	✓	✓
What lessons could be learned for future campaign cycles?	✓	✓	✓

Table 6 provides a summary of the campaign's CBO network (n = 16) by IOU service territory. Across all CBO research tasks, we conducted 13 in-depth CBO interviews from January to April 2023, each lasting around 60 minutes. We generated a recruitment sample from the contact information provided by DDC, which included all CBOs that received funding to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. We semi-prioritized recruitment based loosely on each CBO's reported geographical reach, key performance indicators, overall detail of their monthly reports, and the CBOs for which we planned to develop case studies. Outreach consisted of an initial invitation email, followed by two rounds of reminder emails. We recorded each interview with the respondents' permission and maintained confidentiality for the CBO interview sample. Due to the nature of case studies, we received explicit consent to attribute responses to the specific organization.

Table 6. CBO Population and Sample by IOU Territories Served

IOU Service Territory	Flex Alert CBO Network	CBO Interview Sample
PG&E	11	7
SCE	12	9
SDG&E	6	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>

Note: Five of the 13 CBO interviews we conducted were with representatives from the case study CBOs

Ultimately, the evaluation team selected five CBOs for case studies. We based our selection on our assessment of which organizations would provide the most insight into their capacity for and effectiveness in supporting the 2022 Flex ME&O campaign and on which organizations were best positioned to inform campaign improvements and recommendations for future campaign cycles.<sup>10</sup> All IOU service territories were represented in the case study selections. We reviewed all publicly available materials relevant to each organization's participation in the campaign, such as organizations' websites. We also reviewed formally requested documentation provided by DDC, such as the CBO monthly reports (and attached documents) and any additional materials provided to us as part of our evaluation. Our review focused on materials for May through October 2022.

## 4. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

In the following sections, we synthesize results from the monthly residential tracking surveys, stakeholder engagement assessment, and CBO assessment.

### 4.1 CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE AGAINST METRICS

The evaluation team has conducted tracking surveys to measure changes in Flex Alert campaign objectives and performance metrics since 2021, when the updated campaign began. This report presents findings from monthly surveys conducted between June and November 2022. When relevant, we also include results from the 2021 tracking survey conducted between June and November 2021 to help understand the progress of the campaign year-over-year.

Table 7 summarizes the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards campaigns' performance against key metrics based on data collected from the tracking survey fielded from June to November 2022. For most items, we present data from the start of the campaign (baseline in June) and the end of the campaign (November). In some instances, such as where the change is varied, we also provide the campaign high for the specific data point.

Overall, the campaign saw gains in aided and unaided awareness of Flex Alerts as well as aided awareness of Power Saver Rewards. Familiarity with both campaigns fluctuated throughout the campaign period, increasing and peaking in the summer. Californians' familiarity with Flex Alert remained notably higher by the end of the campaign; however, familiarity with Power Saver Rewards dropped to levels similar to the 2022 baseline by the end of the campaign. The share of survey respondents who could recall when Flex Alert events had been called remained the same in the months following those events but notably was a greater proportion than historically observed.<sup>11</sup> Surveyed Californians'

<sup>10</sup> Two CBOs were recognized as "one" organization in supporting the campaign but were counted as two organizations in the aggregate of CBOs we covered across case studies.

<sup>11</sup> Post-Flex Alert survey questions were only asked in September and October following alert events.

likelihood to (1) enroll in the Power Saver Rewards program and (2) take action when a Flex Alert event is called both peaked over the summer following a 10-day stretch of Flex Alert events.

Table 7. Campaign Objectives, Metrics, and Outcomes

Objective	Metric	Result	Change
Increase Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards recognition through awareness and familiarity	Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Unaided Awareness	% of Californians aware of Flex Alert (without prompting): 3% to 9%. 6 percentage point increase.	▲
		% of Californians aware of Power Saver Rewards (without prompting): 1% to <1%. Constant.	—
	Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Aided Awareness	% of Californians aware of Flex Alert (prompting): 52% to 63%. 11 percentage point increase.	▲
		% of Californians aware of Power Saver Rewards (prompting): 18% to 27%. 9 percentage point increase.	▲
	Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Familiarity	% of Californians who identified the correct purpose of Flex Alert: 35% to 40%. 5 percentage point increase.	▲
		% of Californians who identified the correct purpose of Power Saver Rewards: 54% (baseline: June) to 65% (campaign high: August) to 51% (end of campaign: November). Varied.	▼▲
		% of Californians who recalled Flex Alert events: 38% (high in 2021) to 54% (high in 2022). 16 percentage point increase.	▲
Increase understanding of the reason behind the need to act during Flex Alerts and what actions to take	Understanding of the connection between grid conditions	% of Californians who accurately identified why Flex Alerts are called: 59% (baseline: June) to 68% (campaign high: July) to 61% (end of campaign: November). Varied.	▼▲
		% of Californians who identified the correct time period to conserve energy during a Flex Alert: 60% (baseline: June) to 67% (campaign high: September) to 64% (end of campaign: November). Varied.	▼▲
		% of Californians who demonstrated understanding of the connections between grid conditions and Flex Alerts. Constant.	—
	Understanding what actions can be taken	% of Californians aware of specific actions to take during Flex Alerts generally increased.	▲
Increase intent to sign up for Power Saver Rewards and take action during a Flex Alert	Likelihood to reduce usage during a Flex Alert	% of Californians likely to take specific actions to reduce their energy usage during a Flex Alert varied depending upon action. Varied.	▼▲
	Likelihood to sign up for Power Saver Rewards	% of Californians who are “extremely likely” to enroll in the Power Saver Rewards program: 21% (baseline: June) to 34% (campaign high: September) to 19% (end of campaign: November). Varied.	▼▲
	Action	% of Californians who took one or more of the specified actions during Flex Alert event(s): 95% of Californians who were aware a Flex Alert had been called took at least one action <sup>a</sup>	Not Applicable

<sup>a</sup> Unlike other metrics that were measured monthly, “Action” was measured twice, once in September following the stretch of Flex Alerts and again in October. We do not have sufficient data to indicate whether this metric increased or decreased over the course of the campaign, given there are only two data points. See Section 4.1.3 for details.

## 4.1.1 OBJECTIVE: INCREASE FLEX ALERT AND POWER SAVER REWARDS RECOGNITION

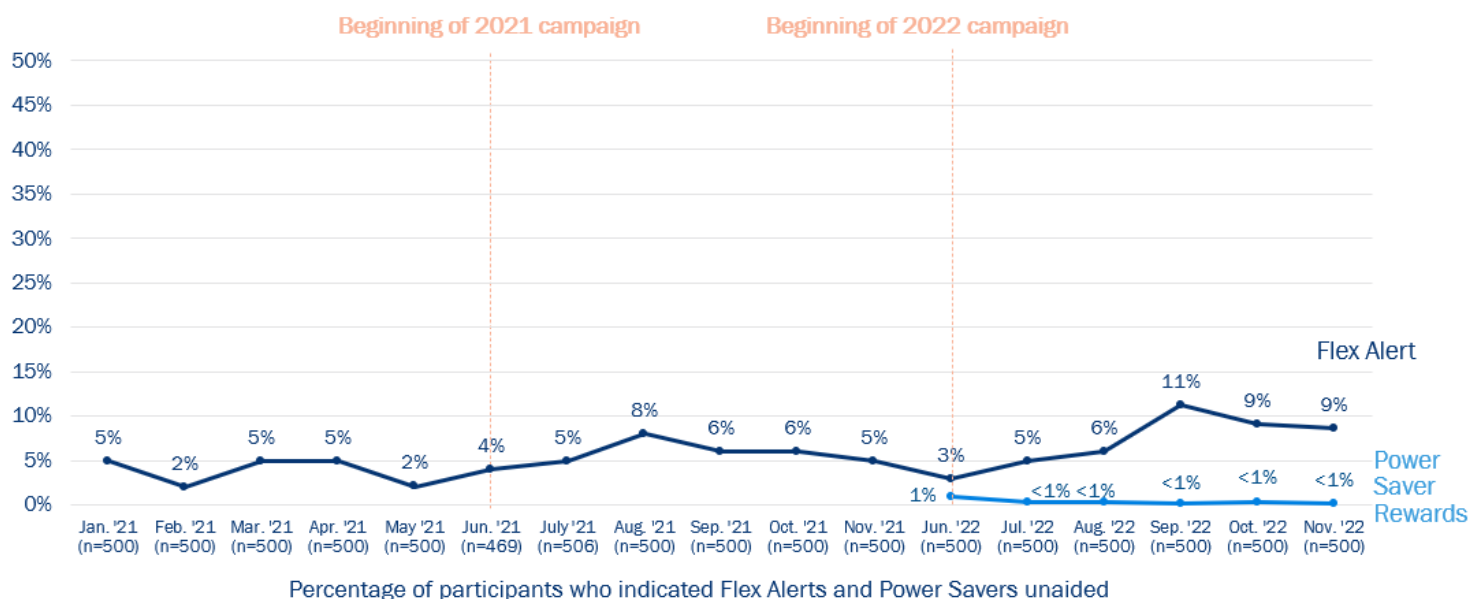
An ongoing objective of the Flex Alert ME&O campaign is to raise awareness of the Flex Alert brand. This objective expanded in 2022 to include increasing awareness of the Power Saver Rewards program.

### PERFORMANCE METRIC: UNAIDED AWARENESS

Unaided awareness of Flex Alerts has remained relatively constant since first measured in 2021, while unaided awareness of Power Saver Rewards stayed consistently low throughout the campaign period (Figure 3). Unaided awareness is the gold standard for measuring brand awareness; it is the best way to know that a brand has reached your intended audience because respondents are not prompted or assisted with brand specifics. For unaided awareness, we asked respondents for the names of up to three “brands, campaigns, or initiatives that encourage Californians to save energy.”<sup>12</sup> Results indicate that Californians’ unaided awareness of the Flex Alert brand progressively grew over the summer 2022 campaign period while slightly tapering off in the fall, following a similar trend observed during the 2021 campaign. The significant increase in unaided awareness in September most likely reflects the stretch of alerts issued during that time.<sup>13</sup>

Unsurprisingly, as a new campaign in 2022, unaided awareness of Power Saver Rewards was very low and consistently stayed below 1%. Not all Californians are eligible for Power Saver Rewards, so the Power Saver Rewards brand will likely never gain as much brand awareness as Flex Alerts among the general population.

Figure 3. Unaided Awareness of Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Over Time



### PERFORMANCE METRIC: AIDED AWARENESS

Despite minimal growth early on, aided awareness of both Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards increased in the latter half of the 2022 campaign period, reaching new all-time highs (Figure 4). To assess aided awareness, we provided respondents with a list of several different energy brands, including Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards, and asked

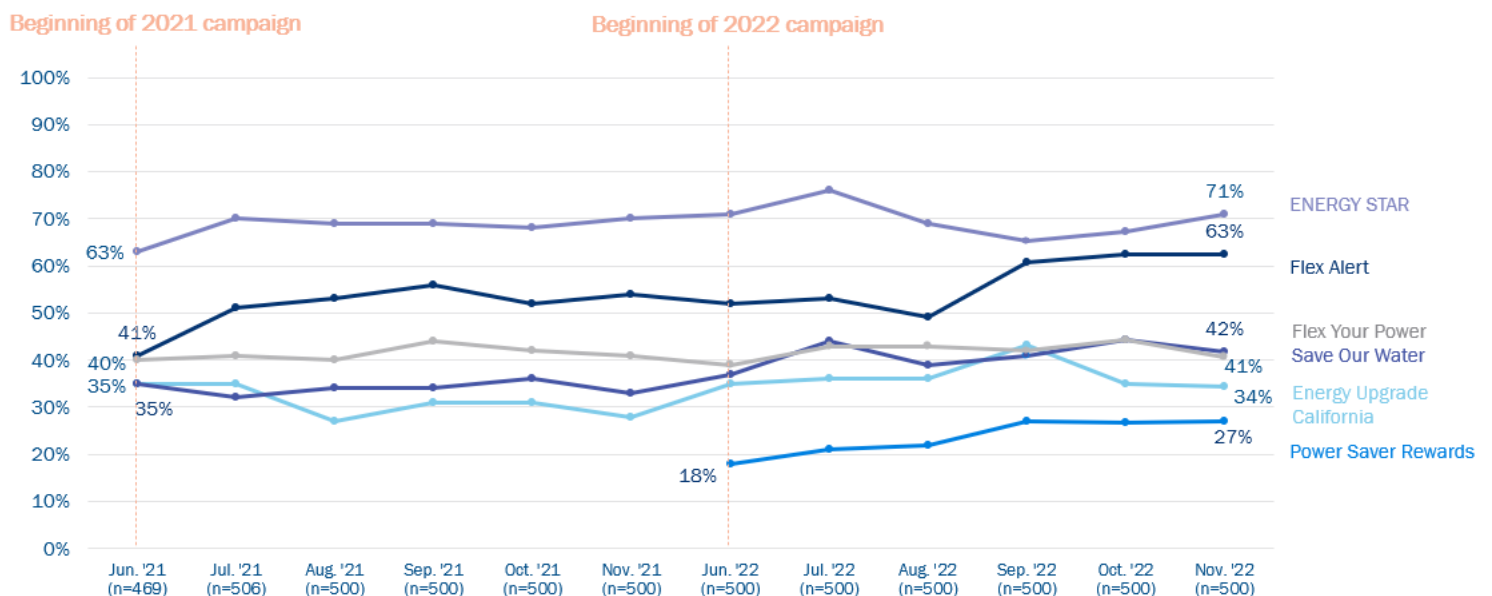
<sup>12</sup> We decreased the number of brands, campaigns, or initiatives respondents could provide from five in 2021 to three in 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Note: Mentions of the “stretch of alerts” refers to the 10 consecutive Flex Alert events called between August 31, 2022 and September 9, 2022..

respondents to identify the brands they had heard of before taking the survey. Since we began measuring aided awareness of Flex Alert in January 2021, aided awareness has increased a similar amount year over year, peaking at 63 percentage points at the end of the 2022 campaign. Notably, like unaided awareness, a large increase was observed in September 2022 following the mid-summer stretch of alerts. Aided awareness has increased by more than 20 percentage points since the Flex Alert Tracking Survey began fielding in June 2021, indicating campaign messaging, likely along with non-campaign related alert messaging, word of mouth communication, and other approaches, has helped to engage one-fifth of Californians who were previously unaware. Even with these gains, nearly 40% of Californians remain unaware. Although this highlights the opportunity for more targeted messaging to this population, this also demonstrates success in campaign messaging as aided awareness of Flex Alert approaches that of ENERGY STAR®, a longstanding energy-related brand with strong public awareness.

On a smaller scale, aided awareness of Power Saver Rewards followed a similar trend to the Flex Alert brand, with the largest increase occurring directly after the mid-summer stretch of alerts. Although awareness of Power Saver Rewards remains low, we anticipate growth in 2023 as the campaign enhances its focus on the Power Saver Rewards brand. Specifically, this includes allocating more resources to Power Saver Rewards messaging.

Figure 4. Aided Awareness of Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Relative to Other Energy Brands Over Time

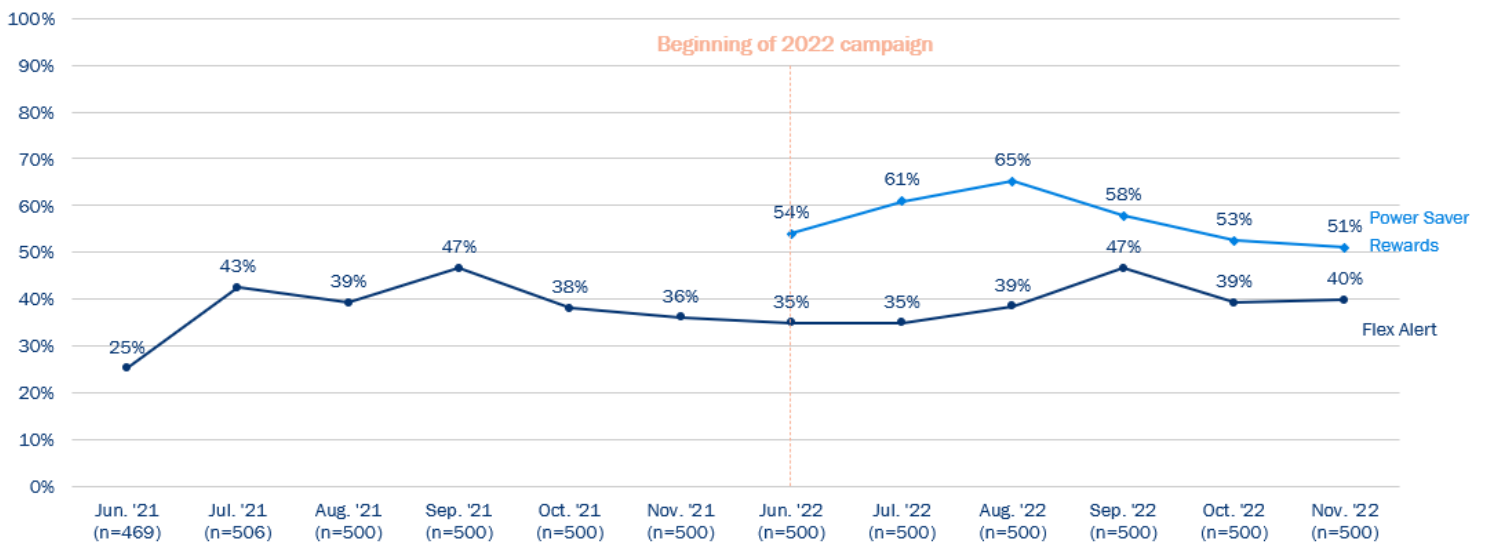


## PERFORMANCE METRIC: FAMILIARITY

**Californians' understanding of the purpose of Flex Alerts increased overall, while Power Saver Rewards fluctuated throughout the campaign (Figure 5).** In two separate questions, we asked respondents to select the purpose of (1) Flex Alerts and (2) Power Saver Rewards. The rate at which Californians chose the correct purpose of Flex Alerts was similar to the trend observed during the 2021 campaign, initially increasing and peaking in September, then tapering off in the latter half of the campaign. Notably, respondents' ability to identify the purpose of Flex Alerts overall increased by five percentage points over the campaign period, from 35% in June to 40% in November. Californians' ability to identify the purpose of Power Saver Rewards progressively increased in the first half of the campaign, only to drop off in the second half to a percentage below baseline. For both brands, the proportion of respondents who selected the correct purpose peaked in September following the mid-summer stretch of alerts.



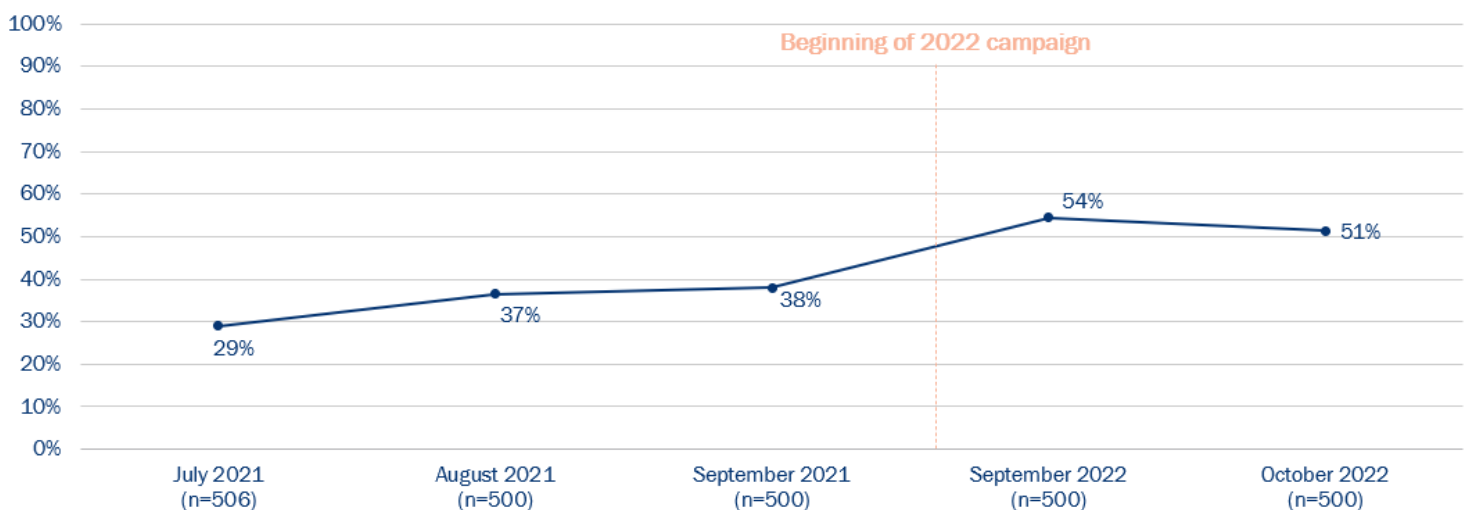
Figure 5. Percentage of Californians Who Selected the Correct Purpose of Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards



Californians demonstrated the highest rate of Flex Alert event recall since July 2021 (Figure 6). To measure metrics related to past Flex Alert events, we added a series of questions to the tracking survey once an event had been called. This series included a question asking Californians if they recalled hearing about a recent Flex Alert event. Californians' recall increased by 16 percentage points between September 2021 (highest recall in 2021) and September 2022 (highest recall to date); both surveys were fielded within one week of when multiple Flex Alert events were called. Two consecutive events were called within a week of the September 2021 survey, whereas 10 consecutive events were called within a week of the September 2022 survey. These findings propose that in addition to the recency of events, a greater number of events may also increase recall, a potential result of consistent, repetitive campaign messaging about the events and enhanced urgency to take action created by numerous events called closely together.

Although no additional Flex Alert events were called after September 9, 2022, Californians demonstrated strong recall in October, suggesting that multiple events can help sustain recall over time.

Figure 6. Percentage of Californians Who Recalled Past Flex Alert



Note: Post-Flex Alert questions were not asked in July or August 2022 due to first alert being called in mid-August.

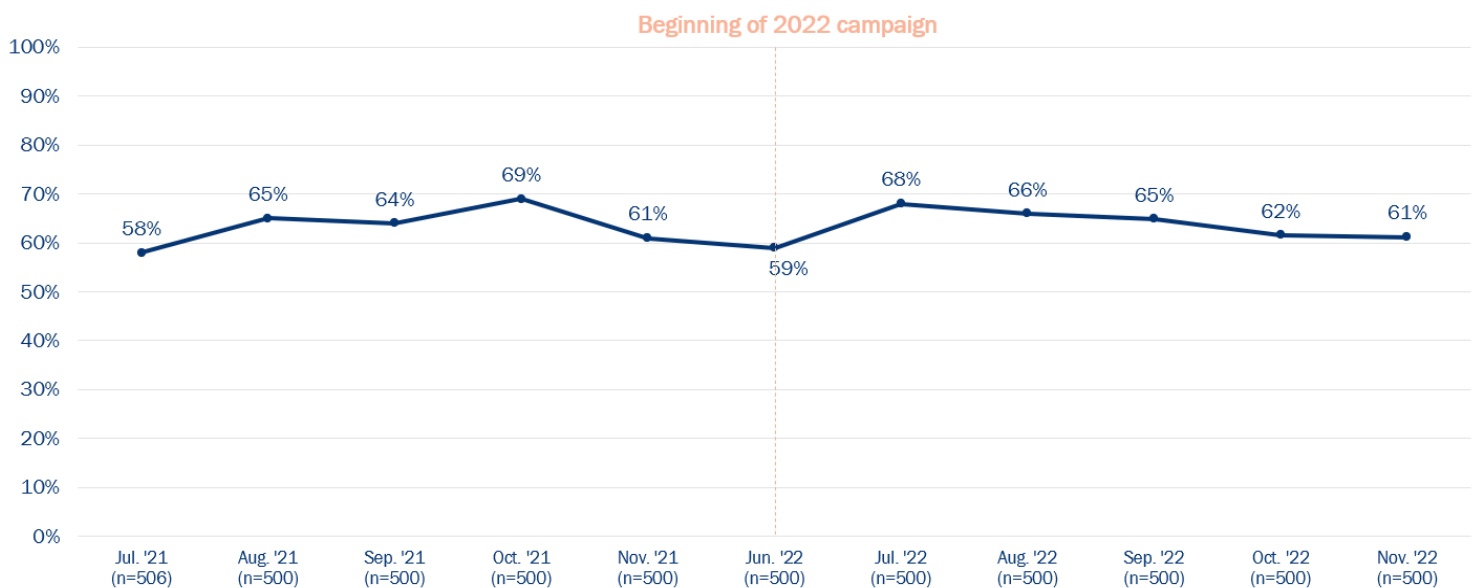
## 4.1.2 OBJECTIVE: INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF THE REASON BEHIND THE NEED TO ACT DURING FLEX ALERTS AND WHAT ACTIONS TO TAKE

Another continued objective for the Flex Alert campaign has been to increase Californians' understanding of Flex Alerts, including why they are called and how they are connected to grid conditions. To address performance relative to this objective, we asked Californians questions about specific campaign-related details, including awareness of pre-cooling and the timeframe that Californians are asked to reduce their energy use during a Flex Alert.

### PERFORMANCE METRIC: UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONNECTION BETWEEN GRID CONDITIONS

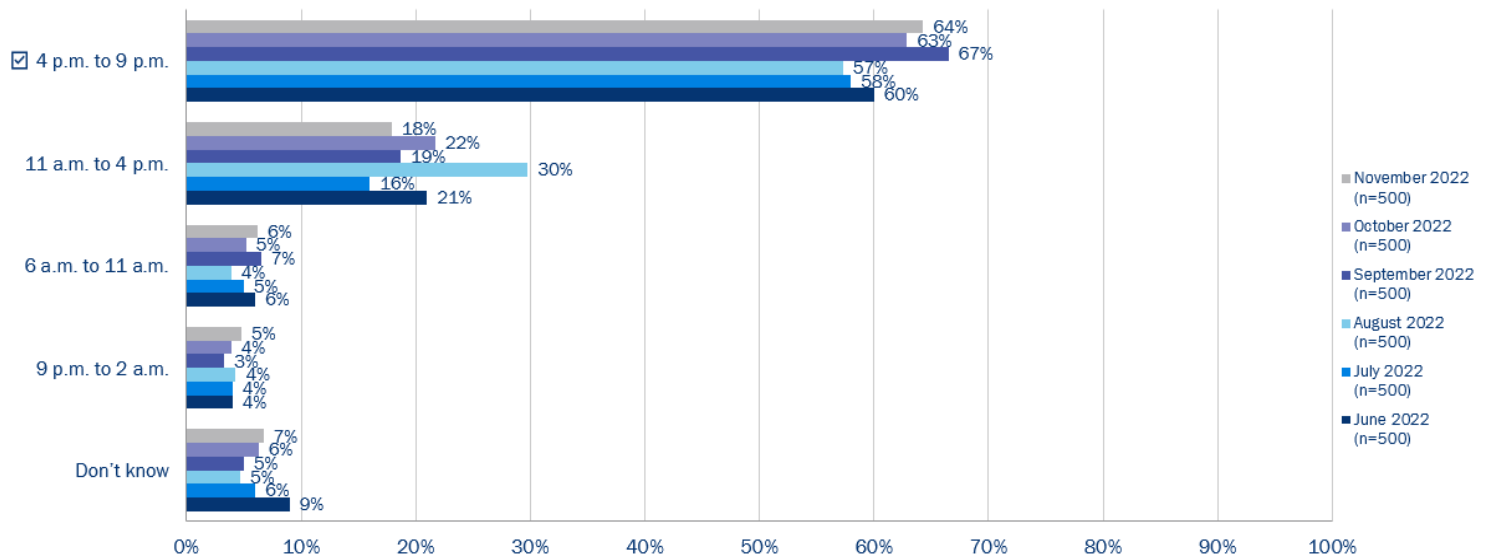
**Californians' understanding of why Flex Alerts are called has stayed within a 10-percentage point range over time (Figure 7).** We asked respondents to select the correct statement to finish the sentence, "Flex Alerts are called when..." Since first measured in July 2021, the proportion of Californians who were able to select the correct reasoning behind why a Flex Alert is called has remained relatively consistent. On average, two-thirds of Californians accurately identified that Flex Alert events are called when CAISO predicts an increase in electricity demand due to high temperatures to avoid power outages, indicating an understanding of how events are related to power grid conditions.

Figure 7. Percentage of Californians Who Selected the Correct Reason Behind Why Flex Alerts Are Called Over Time



**The percentage of Californians who could accurately identify the correct time period to conserve energy during a Flex Alert increased over the campaign period (Figure 8).** The proportion of Californians who correctly identified 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. as the timeframe to reduce their energy use during a Flex Alert increased in September following the mid-summer stretch of alerts and remained higher than observed in the first half of the campaign. This increase aligned with the influx in campaign messaging throughout the 10-day stretch of alerts between late August and early September. Similar to previous findings, this suggests that more frequent and urgent messaging strengthens Californians' recall of campaign details.

Figure 8. Percentage of Californians Who Identified the Correct Timeframe to Conserve Energy During a Flex Alert



Californians continued to confuse the underlying reason for Flex Alert events with PSPS and over-estimate battery storage capacity throughout the 2022 campaign. We asked respondents whether a series of statements about power grid conditions, wildfire prevention, solar energy generation, and battery storage were true or false (Table 8).

Table 8. Percentage of Californians Who Correctly Identified True/False Questions About California

Statement	Percentage of respondents who gave correct answer					
	Jun 2022 (n=500)	Jul 2022 (n=500)	Aug 2022 (n=500)	Sep 2022 (n=500)	Oct 2022 (n=500)	Nov 2022 (n=500)
On hot sunny days, when many people use their air conditioners, CA's electricity demand may exceed its supply	92%	91%	91%	89%	89%	91%
When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, there is a risk that there will not be enough electricity for all Californians and the power grid operator may need to create localized power outages to protect the grid	85%	83%	82%	83%	82%	83%
CA's electricity supply is most limited in the evening hours when solar panels start to generate less electricity and Californians are using more electricity	58%	59%	59%	66%	71%	70%
CA's electricity supply is most limited in the morning hours when solar power plants are not fully up and running yet and Californians are using more electricity (False)	67%	70%	72%	69%	66%	67%
In CA, innovations in battery storage have made it possible to store enough energy generated by solar panels when the sun is shining to completely power our electricity grid when it gets dark (False)	41%	41%	40%	36%	48%	37%
When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, the power grid operator may ask Californians to conserve energy to prevent wildfires (False)	29%	23%	27%	23%	25%	24%

**Overestimation of battery storage:** Californians have continued to exhibit a limited understanding of the capacity of battery storage since we started measuring the metric in June 2021. Over half of Californians consistently overestimated battery storage advancements, specifically the amount of solar energy that can be stored and utilized as reserves for the power grid in the evening hours.

■ Approximately 40% of Californians consistently correctly identified the second to last statement in Table 8 (“In CA, innovations in battery storage have made it possible to store enough energy generated by solar panels when the sun is shining to completely power our electricity grid when it gets dark”) as false. This highlights an opportunity for the campaign to better educate Californians about the current capabilities of battery storage and how the amount of stored

energy reserves compares to power grid demand, especially during times of high energy demand (i.e., when Flex Alerts are called).

- A realistic understanding of energy storage capabilities is critical in helping Californians recognize the need for energy conservation, particularly in the evening hours when solar generation is unavailable and energy demand tends to be highest. A greater understanding of this topic could also help clarify the purpose and need for Flex Alerts.

**Confusion with PSPS:** Since we began measuring understanding of these concepts in June 2021, Californians have continued to demonstrate the most confusion differentiating between Flex Alert events and PSPS.<sup>14</sup> Most specifically, a high proportion of Californians continued to incorrectly associate Flex Alert events (i.e., requests from CAISO to reduce energy use) with wildfire prevention.

- More than 80% of Californians consistently correctly identified the second statement in Table 8 (“When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, there is a risk that there will not be enough electricity for all Californians and the power grid operator may need to create localized power outages to protect the grid”) as true. At the same time, 75% of Californians continuously misidentified the opposing statement as true (i.e., “When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, the power grid operator may ask Californians to conserve energy to prevent wildfires”). As these are true or false items, it is possible that a single respondent could potentially correctly identify one statement as well as misidentify the opposing statement, indicating confusion. Overall, only about 20% of Californians in each wave correctly identified both statements; presenting the campaign with an opportunity to highlight and clarify the purpose of Flex Alerts in future messaging.

- Californians need to be able to differentiate between outages. Some outages are avoidable (power outages caused by high energy demand [i.e., reason for calling a Flex Alert]). In contrast, others are unavoidable (power outages that occur to prevent wildfires, where energy demand does not play a role [i.e., PSPS]), and these types of outages require different actions.

#### PERFORMANCE METRIC: UNDERSTANDING WHAT ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN

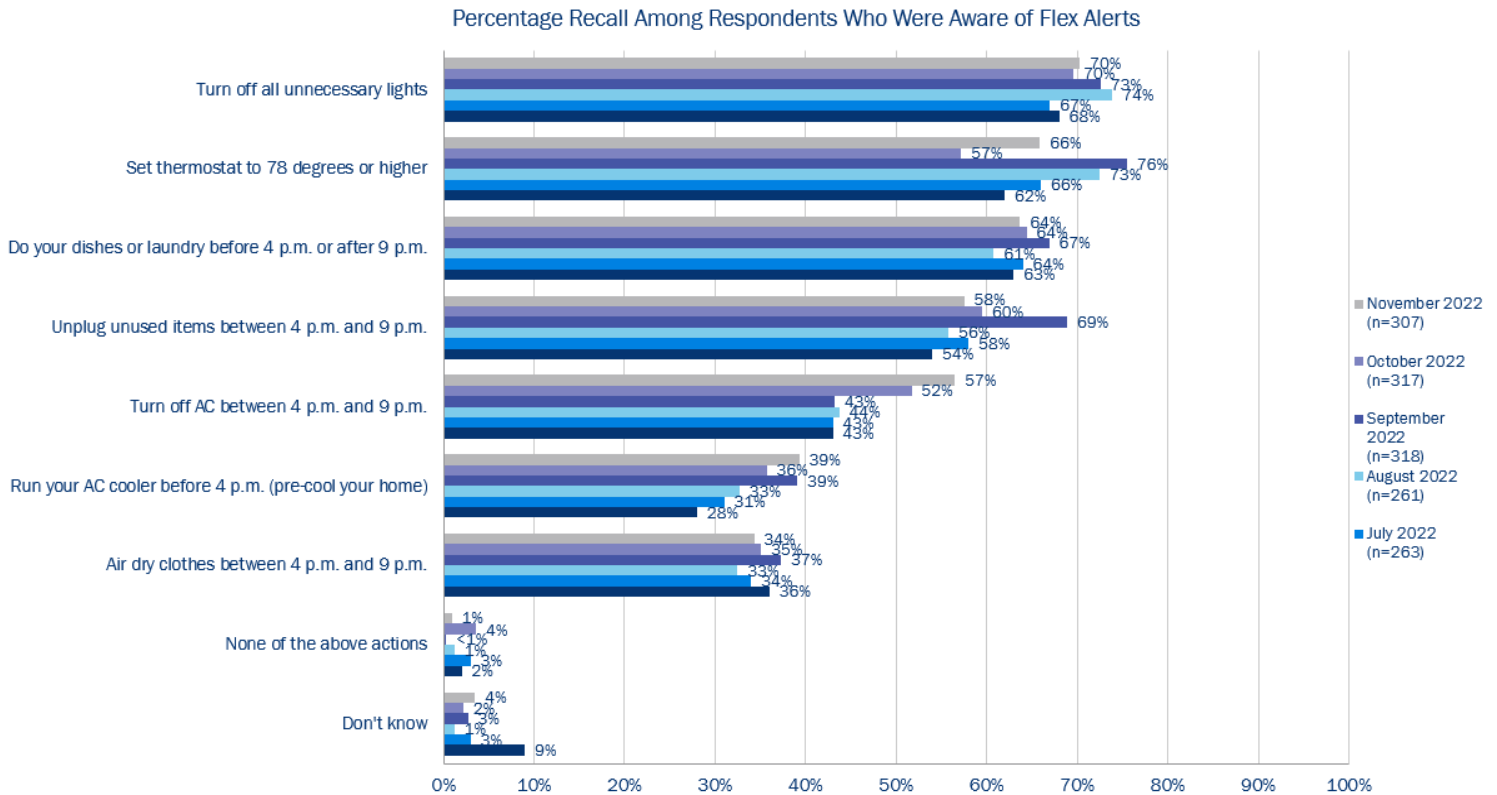
**Similar to Flex Alert event recall, reported awareness of most energy-saving actions promoted by the campaign increased in September following the mid-summer stretch of alerts (Figure 9).** We observed an increase in Californians’ awareness of most (five of seven) promoted actions in September, directly following the mid-summer stretch of alerts. Awareness of a couple of these actions decreased by nine or more percentage points by the following month, suggesting that recall of specific campaign details may fade more quickly compared to whether an event occurred.

Overall, the two actions Californians were most commonly aware of across the 2022 campaign were turning off unnecessary lights and setting the thermostat to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. Increasing Californians’ awareness of the promoted action to set thermostats to 78°F or higher not only indicates greater potential for the action to be taken but also poses an opportunity for high energy-savings and grid relief as the use of air conditioning represents a large proportion of home energy usage on hot days.

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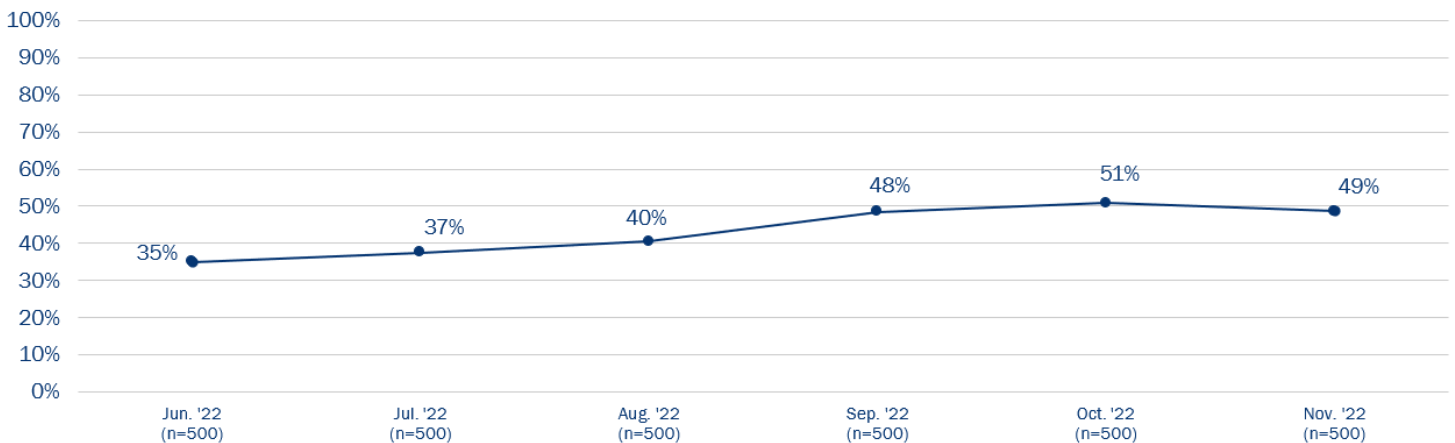
<sup>14</sup> Utilities may temporarily turn off power to specific areas (i.e., Public Safety Power Shutoff) to reduce the risk of wildfires caused by electric infrastructure.

Figure 9. Percentage of Californians Aware of Energy-Saving Actions



Californians' awareness of pre-cooling has fluctuated fairly consistently since we began measuring the metric in September 2021 (Figure 10). Awareness of pre-cooling increased steadily over the summer period of the campaign to a high of just over 50% in October. These findings reinforce the notion that Californians are better able to recall campaign details when messaging is delivered more frequently with greater urgency. Pre-cooling is an action that is more visibly promoted for the 2023 campaign, so we anticipate awareness of pre-cooling to increase in 2023.

Figure 10. Percentage of Californians Who Had Heard of Pre-Cooling Over Time



Note: Although the results are based on the entire sample, only those who were not aware of pre-cooling as a Flex Alert action were asked this question. It was assumed that if someone selected pre-cooling as a Flex Alert action, then they were aware of pre-cooling and were added to the yes category. 2021 data removed in 2022 Wave 6; historical high prior to June 2022 was 40% in October 2021.

### 4.1.3 OBJECTIVE: INCREASE INTENT TO SIGN UP FOR POWER SAVER REWARDS AND TAKE ACTION DURING FLEX ALERTS

Measures of intent are useful proxy variables for measuring behavior changes. Before customers can act, they must recognize opportunities to make changes. To assess Californians' intent to take action, we first asked respondents how likely they would be to take each energy-saving action promoted by the campaign. We also measured intent to enroll in the Power Saver Rewards program among Californians eligible to earn credits towards their electric utility bill (i.e., IOU electric customers). To assess the actions Californians took during Flex Alerts, we asked respondents which campaign-promoted actions they could take during the recent Flex Alert(s).<sup>15</sup>

#### PERFORMANCE METRIC: LIKELIHOOD TO TAKE ACTION

**Californians were most likely to take action to reduce their energy use when a Flex Alert event had recently been called.** For most energy-saving actions promoted by the campaign, Californians' likelihood to take action during a Flex Alert peaked between August and September, directly following the Flex Alert events (Table 9).<sup>16</sup> Over the campaign period, Californians were consistently most likely to turn off unnecessary lights, do dishes and/or laundry before 4:00 p.m. or after 9:00 p.m., and unplug unused items between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on hot days.

Table 9. Californians' Likelihood to Take Campaign Promoted Energy Saving Action(s)

Statement	Percentage of respondents that selected "extremely" or "very" likely					
	Jun. '22 (n=500)	Jul. '22 (n=500)	Aug. '22 (n=500)	Sep. '22 (n=500)	Oct. '22 (n=500)	Nov. '22 (n=500)
Turn off all unnecessary lights between 4pm and 9pm	77%	80%	76%	74%	66%	68%
Do your dishes or laundry before 4pm or after 9pm	64%	70%	66%	66%	57%	59%
Unplug unused items between 4pm and 9pm	54%	52%	52%	64%	54%	52%
Pre-cool your home	54%	52%	51%	61%	50%	50%
Set thermostat to 78 degrees or higher between 4pm and 9pm	46%	47%	43%	54%	48%	47%
Run your AC cooler before 4pm	49%	49%	53%	50%	48%	42%
Air dry clothes between 4pm and 9pm	44%	43%	43%	48%	39%	40%
Turn off AC between 4pm and 9pm	37%	28%	29%	34%	32%	37%

#### PERFORMANCE METRIC: LIKELIHOOD TO ENROLL IN POWER SAVER REWARDS

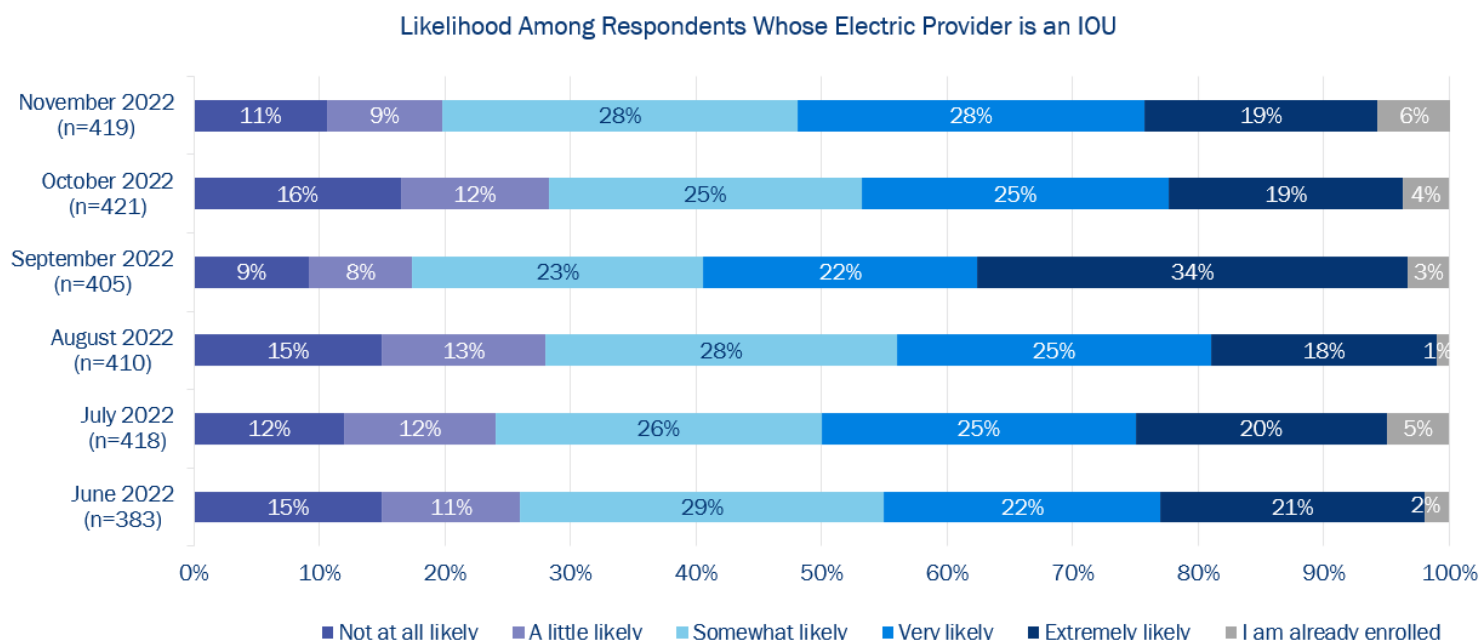
**The proportion of IOU customers who were likely to enroll in the Power Saver Rewards program in the future remained fairly consistent throughout the campaign.** On average, throughout the campaign, nearly half of IOU customers not enrolled in Power Saver Rewards were likely to sign up in the future (to earn bill credits for reducing their energy use). Unsurprisingly, the share of those likely to enroll peaked in September directly following the mid-summer stretch of alerts (Figure 11). The data suggests that Californians see greater value in enrolling in the program when one or more opportunities to earn credit toward their utility bill are presented to them.

<sup>15</sup> A survey question that asked respondents which promoted actions they were able to take during the recent Flex Alert event(s) was added to the survey in cases where the most recent alert had been called within a month prior to the survey launch. This question was only included in the September and October surveys during the 2022 campaign.

<sup>16</sup> Orange bars in Table 8 indicate months Californians reportedly were most likely to take action(s).



Figure 11. Californians' Likelihood to Sign Up to Receive Power Saver Rewards in the Future

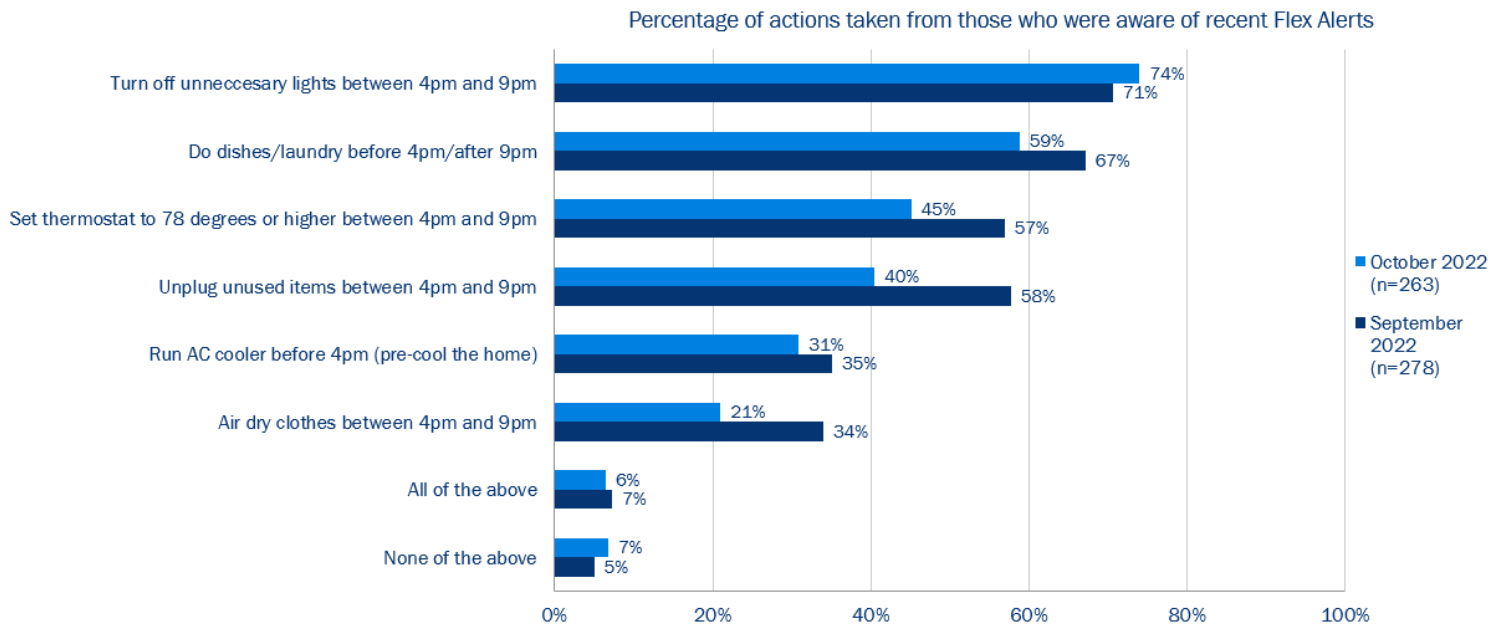


#### PERFORMANCE METRIC: ACTION

**We are unable to determine if the rate actions were taken increased due to data limitations. Still, nearly all Californians who were aware a Flex Alert had been called took at least one energy-saving action during alert events.** In months where it had been one month or less since the most recent Flex Alert had been called (September and October), we added a survey question that asked respondents which actions, of those commonly promoted by the Flex Alert campaign, they were able to take to reduce their energy use during the Flex Alert event(s) that were called. On average, 95% of Californians who reported they were aware a Flex Alert had been called took at least one action promoted by the campaign to conserve their energy use, similar to proportions observed in 2021. Most commonly, Californians turned off unnecessary lights, did dishes and laundry before 4:00 p.m. or after 9:00 p.m., and set their thermostat to 78° F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. (Figure 12).

Although almost all Californians took at least one action, aside from those who reported turning off unnecessary lights, the share that took each specific action decreased between September and October as more time passed since the last Flex Alert event had occurred.

Figure 12. Percentage of Californians Who Reported Taking Promoted Energy Savings Action(s)



Note: The response option "Air dry clothes between 4pm and 9pm" was added as an action in the 2022 tracking survey.

## 4.2 OPTIMIZATION OF THE STAKEHOLDER PROCESS

Stakeholders played an integral role in the design and execution of the SW ME&O campaign. Representatives from the IOUs and CAISO coordinated with and provided input to the DDB Group throughout the lifecycle of the campaign. Given the different perspectives and levels of engagement across stakeholders, we conducted targeted research to inform how the stakeholder engagement processes can be optimized to foster high levels of engagement and help ensure individual stakeholder needs are met. The research was designed to occur in two phases, so findings were timely and actionable: pre-campaign launch and post-campaign implementation. This phased approach allowed the evaluation team to look at the role of stakeholders from two vantage points: how stakeholders could work better together (pre-launch) and how stakeholder engagement and collaboration went overall (post-campaign).

### 4.2.1 STAKEHOLDER OBJECTIVES AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Stakeholders most frequently mentioned the following key objectives for engaging in the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign:

- Work with stakeholders to promote the conservation of energy by compelling consumers to take energy-saving action during a Flex Alert (4 mentions); and
- Promote education and awareness around both Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards (2 mentions).

A few stakeholders mentioned several other objectives, including execution of the Flex Alert ME&O campaign (1 mention), conservation of energy specifically to avoid grid emergencies that result in rolling blackouts (1 mention), and notifying customers about Flex Alert events (1 mention). **These objectives are relatively consistent with the overarching campaign goals that stakeholders mentioned during Phase 1 of our research.** One stakeholder was particularly pleased with how

"I think some of my concerns have been alleviated somewhat to my satisfaction. Conservation – that's a focus that's come more into view than in previous years."

stakeholders' objectives have evolved over the 2022 campaign year to focus more on the importance of energy conservation rather than awareness and education for Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards alone.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The biweekly Flex Alert stakeholder meetings were the primary method used to facilitate stakeholder collaboration. The meetings were designed for stakeholders to receive big-picture updates on the campaign, voice concerns, and ask questions. **Overall, stakeholders felt the biweekly meetings effectively engaged their organizations with the campaign (5 of 6) and supported effective campaign implementation (5 of 6).** Most stakeholders also said the meetings were productive and a good use of their organizations' time to learn about key campaign updates and overall progress.

"We said we really should exchange ideas and learnings and come together and see what we've learned—what's working, what's not, and how we can learn from each other to enhance the program."

**While the DDB-facilitated biweekly meetings were the main way stakeholders collaborated, the meetings could have benefited from more discussion.**

Feedback and observation indicated that most stakeholders do not contribute during the biweekly meetings, which, according to one stakeholder, often felt like more formal presentations rather than a space for collaboration and open dialogue. Another stakeholder wished the CPUC would have been more involved in facilitating the meetings and helped spur conversation. Therefore, finding ways to increase the level of discussion could encourage more crosstalk among stakeholders and allow for more sharing of perspectives and ideas.

Another method for campaign development and implementation was the solicitation of feedback. Following biweekly meetings, stakeholders like the IOUs were invited to provide comments and feedback on campaign materials before they were sent off for final approval from the CPUC. **All three IOUs mentioned that limited time to comment and provide feedback on campaign materials hindered collaboration.** They called for being involved in the materials review process as early as possible, such as during initial creative and collateral development. They also asked for more flexible deadlines so their feedback could be incorporated into campaign materials before official implementation.

**Collaboration and engagement among stakeholders were more prevalent around statewide Flex Alert messaging and marketing than Power Saver Rewards.** Although stakeholders met biweekly, these meetings primarily focused on DDB presenting statewide Flex Alert messaging and marketing efforts and not so much on Power Saver Rewards. Outside the biweekly stakeholder meetings, IOUs also met separately to discuss Power Saver Rewards. They shared feedback on marketing plans with one another and provided updates on their individual implementation efforts. **All three IOUs felt the IOU-only meetings were an effective tool for supporting the successful execution and effective implementation of the overall campaign.** One IOU felt that these meetings were more effective than the biweekly stakeholder meetings because they allowed IOUs to work in a smaller group and focus on activities limited to their organizations (i.e., Power Saver Rewards marketing and messaging).

Due to privacy restrictions regarding customer information, IOUs were responsible for direct-to-consumer outreach for the Power Saver Rewards program. **Given this provision, IOUs worked independently on Power Saver Rewards marketing and messaging and did not collaborate with non-IOU stakeholders directly on these efforts.** One stakeholder wished IOUs would share more of their work on Power Saver Rewards during the biweekly stakeholder meetings and allow other stakeholders to collaborate with them when developing their marketing plans and materials for the program. Two IOUs mentioned that while they did not directly work with non-IOUs on Power Saver Rewards marketing, their teams cross-checked statewide Flex Alert collateral to ensure terminology was consistent with their messaging when referencing Flex Alerts and energy usage in general.

"I think there's value in hearing what's going on with everybody... just like IOU learnings can inform us, our learnings can help inform the IOUs."

## 4.2.2 SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

Stakeholders felt the biggest successes that came from collaboration during the campaign were:

- Effectively reaching customers about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, and
- Avoiding grid emergencies that could have resulted in rolling blackouts, especially during the 10-day stretch of consecutive Flex Alert events.

Stakeholders were pleased that their efforts simultaneously raised awareness for the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards brands and prevented outages in the state. Stakeholders also said that these campaign achievements would be extremely difficult to realize without strong stakeholder engagement and collaboration on key activities such as the fast-paced Flex Alert call to action channel.

“Looking back and seeing the results, going through a 10-day Flex Alert period without an outage speaks to the successful collaboration among all the partners.”

As mentioned, stakeholders were pleased with the biweekly stakeholder meetings and found them to be an effective and useful tool for executing the campaign. One stakeholder highlighted that continued collaboration in and outside of these meetings allowed for their individual organization’s needs to be better met and ideas considered.

**Despite successes, IOU and non-IOU stakeholders both experienced challenges associated with collaboration.** While all stakeholders did work together to select the brand name “Power Saver Rewards” as the ELRP customer-facing program name during the pre-launch phase of the campaign, stakeholders did not work together on a shared campaign-wide name for what an issued Flex Alert would be called (i.e., “Flex Alert Event” versus “Power Saver Rewards Event”). All three IOUs used the term “Power Saver Rewards Event” in communications to their customers when a Flex Alert was issued, while the non-IOUs used the term “Flex Alert Event.”

**Several stakeholders (IOU and non-IOU) said alignment of branding and messaging for Power Saver Rewards collateral was challenging and may have potentially caused customer confusion (4 mentions).** This alignment challenge was likely a result of the campaign’s overall structure and general IOU sentiment around marketing to customers. Due to privacy restrictions around customer data, stakeholders decided during the prelaunch phase that the campaign implementer would be responsible for statewide Flex Alert marketing efforts. At the same time, IOUs would develop and implement their own direct-to-consumer Power Saver Rewards strategies. This split the larger campaign into two components: statewide Flex Alert marketing and Power Saver Rewards marketing. In addition to the campaign’s structure, one IOU explicitly expressed that IOUs knew how to communicate with their customers best and thus did not need to collaborate on marketing and messaging strategies. Overall, stakeholder collaboration around Power Saver Rewards was hindered due to this alignment challenge; however, this challenge is not surprising given the context of a statewide brand and campaign being leveraged by IOU-specific marketing.

IOUs also shared challenges unique to their organizations. **As expressed by representatives during our Phase 1 interviews, all three IOUs reiterated that receiving campaign collateral too close to the marketing launch date hindered collaboration, leaving them limited time to review content, comment and provide feedback.** This posed complications around their Power Saver Rewards marketing plans, which had already been in development, and made efforts to align marketing and messaging materials difficult under tight timelines. IOUs also mentioned additional challenges, including:

- Tackling customer confusion around the oversaturation of brand names and programs (2 mentions)
- What to call a Flex Alert event (1 mention)

Non-IOU stakeholders had unique challenges to stakeholder collaboration. One stakeholder expressed misgivings around how Power Saver Rewards implementation across the IOUs was communicated, specifically surrounding details such as amount, timing, and delivery of bill credits to customers. This posed challenges with marketing the program

statewide and accurately and cohesively incorporating these differences into their statewide plan. As mentioned above, another stakeholder noted difficulty connecting with IOUs to review and provide input on their individual Power Saver Rewards marketing plans.

### 4.2.3 LESSONS LEARNED FOR FUTURE CAMPAIGN CYCLES

Overall, stakeholders reported that their objectives for the stakeholder engagement process were met. Based on the findings presented above, however, the CPUC and DDB should consider the following adjustments to improve stakeholder engagement for future campaign cycles:

- Stakeholders should consider establishing a regular cadence for IOUs to share their Power Saver Rewards marketing plans at the biweekly stakeholder meetings. Scheduled share-outs will help keep other non-IOU stakeholders in the loop on Power Saver Rewards branding and messaging, encourage collaboration on these materials, and limit the collaborative gap between the ME&O campaign's two core components. This could also improve the alignment of campaign branding and messaging across both statewide Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards efforts.
- Stakeholders should select a time at certain biweekly stakeholder meetings for all stakeholders to briefly share key highlights and samples of what they have been working on, plan on doing, and if they are running into any challenges they would like to discuss with the group. This could help foster crosstalk and take advantage of the time dedicated to stakeholder collaboration. In addition, this could potentially allow stakeholders to view campaign materials and marketing collateral as they are in development rather than too close to marketing launch deadlines when opportunities for input and feedback are limited.
- When possible, stakeholders should consider sharing presentations 24–48 hours before the planned stakeholder meetings. This may allow stakeholders to prepare questions ahead of meetings to ensure Q & A time is utilized efficiently and effectively.

## 4.3 CBO CONTRIBUTIONS AND EFFECTIVENESS

CBOs have been long-term partners in SW ME&O and were part of 2022's Flex Alert campaign efforts to connect with low-income, hard-to-reach, and disadvantaged customers. ELRP's recent expansion to the residential sector has underscored the importance of CBOs in reaching low-income and disadvantaged customers who are either already enrolled in the program by default based on their energy assistance program status or those who have not been enrolled or participated yet. The following sections summarize the results of our evaluation activities aimed at assessing the effectiveness of CBO involvement in the campaign and their ability to reach priority customers.

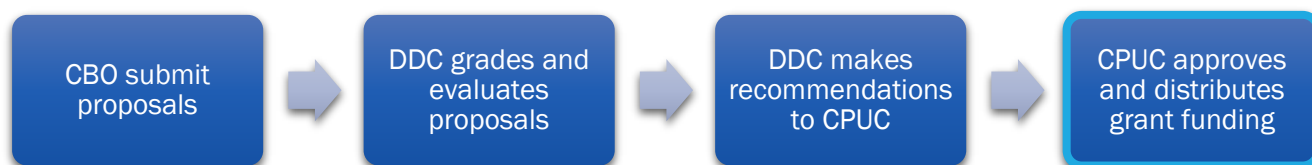
### 4.3.1 CBO SUPPORT FOR THE FLEX ALERT CAMPAIGN

#### CBO SELECTION AND CHARACTERISTICS

DDC was responsible for recruiting and selecting CBOs for the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. They released an RFP during the pre-launch phase, which included certain baseline qualifications for prospective CBOs, such as (but not limited to) a minimum number of events they needed to hold and/or attend, the extent of expected social media push and reach, and capacity to mobilize a quick response when Flex Alert events were called. While these requirements were important in their ultimate selection decisions, DDC emphasized that their selection process was holistic rather than strictly prescriptive. DDC used a loose grading system that allowed flexibility for weighing certain campaign needs, specifically the ability of CBOs to reach core customer groups and certain geographical areas. Figure 13 summarizes the selection and approval process for approved CBOs. In total, DDC received and reviewed 26 CBO applications.

Following review, DDC selected and recommended 16 CBOs to the CPUC, which approved all 16 CBOs for funding to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign.

Figure 13: DDC Selection and Approval Process for CBO Support Network



The CBO support network included non-profit, charity, and civil rights organizations. Collectively, the CBOs represented a wide range of different missions and interests, including but not limited to serving veterans across the nation, engaging with communities of faith, promoting sustainability in local communities, empowering utility consumers' rights, and elevating those living with certain disabilities. The CBO network covered all three IOU service territories and a majority of the counties in the state. Table 10 provides an overview of the CBO network's service territory across the state. (See Appendix C. for a list of each county served.)

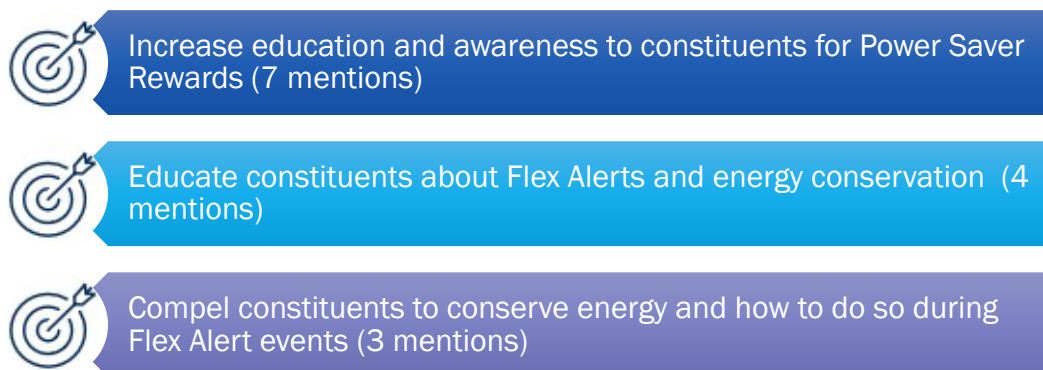
Table 10. Overview of CBO Network Coverage

CBO Type	IOU Territory Served	# of Counties Served
Non-profit	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	21
Non-profit	PG&E	14
Non-profit	PG&E	9
Non-profit	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	8
Non-profit	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	8
Non-profit	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	8
Charity organization	SCE, PG&E	8
Non-profit	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	8
Non-profit	SCE, PG&E	5
Non-profit	SCE	4
Civil-rights organization	SCE, PG&E	3
Non-profit	SCE	3
Non-profit	SCE	2
Non-profit	SDG&E	1
Charity organization	PG&E	1
Non-profit	SCE	1
Other	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E	N/A

Participating CBOs had similar objectives for the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign that centered around education and increasing awareness of Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program, as well as compelling Californians to conserve energy during Flex Alert events (see Figure 14 below).



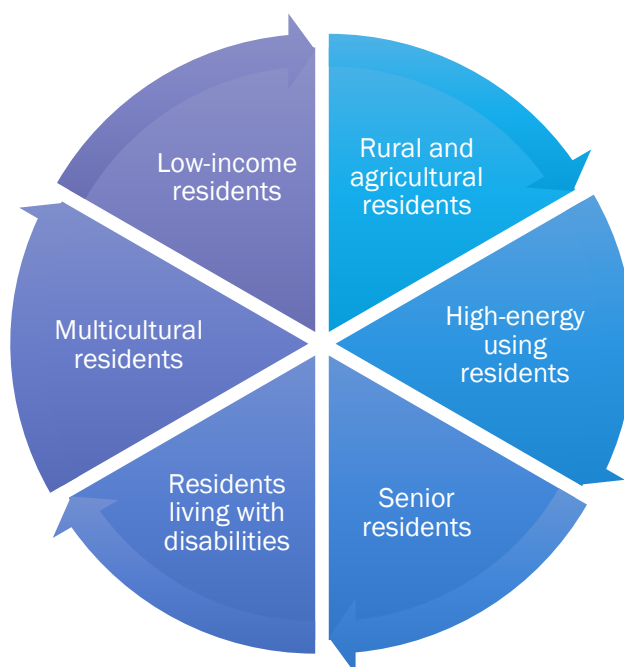
Figure 14. 2022 Flex Alert ME&O Campaign CBO Objectives



## CBO REACH

As a funding requirement, all CBOs needed to focus their campaign outreach on one or more core customer groups, listed in Figure 15. While most CBOs focused on multiple core customer groups, not all CBOs concentrated on every single group or reached each group to the same degree.

Figure 15. Core Customer Groups Identified for the 2022 Campaign



CBO representatives highlighted multicultural, low-income, and senior residents as their highest priority core customer groups and were most easily reached compared to the other core customer groups. This was corroborated by tracking data provided to us as part of this evaluation (see Table 11). CBO representatives noted these groups were likely already being reached through their day-to-day operations, which reassured CBOs that their efforts were reaching them even without a designated focus. Rural and agricultural residents were harder for most CBOs to reach in comparison, especially through in-person engagement that often took place closer to or within urban centers. As mentioned, residents living with disabilities were also challenging for CBOs to reach, given that there are multiple non-visible disabilities, and one cannot easily tell who may be living with a disability.

Table 11. Core Customer Groups Served by CBOs

Core Customer Groups	# of CBOs That Served These Groups
Multicultural Residents	15
Low-Income Residents	11
Senior Residents	10
Residents with Disabilities	9
Rural and Agricultural Residents	7

Source: DDC CBO Tracking Data

## OUTREACH STRATEGIES

To achieve the campaign objectives mentioned by CBO representatives in Section 4.3.1, CBOs implemented myriad activities that directly and indirectly reached constituents. They did so through two primary channels: in-person events and online platforms. Figure 16 below summarizes ME&O activities implemented by CBOs across each channel. Specific activities included tabling and canvassing at farmer's markets, county fairs, weekly flea markets, festivals, religious gatherings, musical events, and other community-focused events; social media posts and advertisements on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and/or individual CBO websites; door-to-door canvassing in priority neighborhoods; mail and text banking; radio broadcasts; and mailings and newsletters.

Figure 16. ME&O Activities Implemented by CBOs

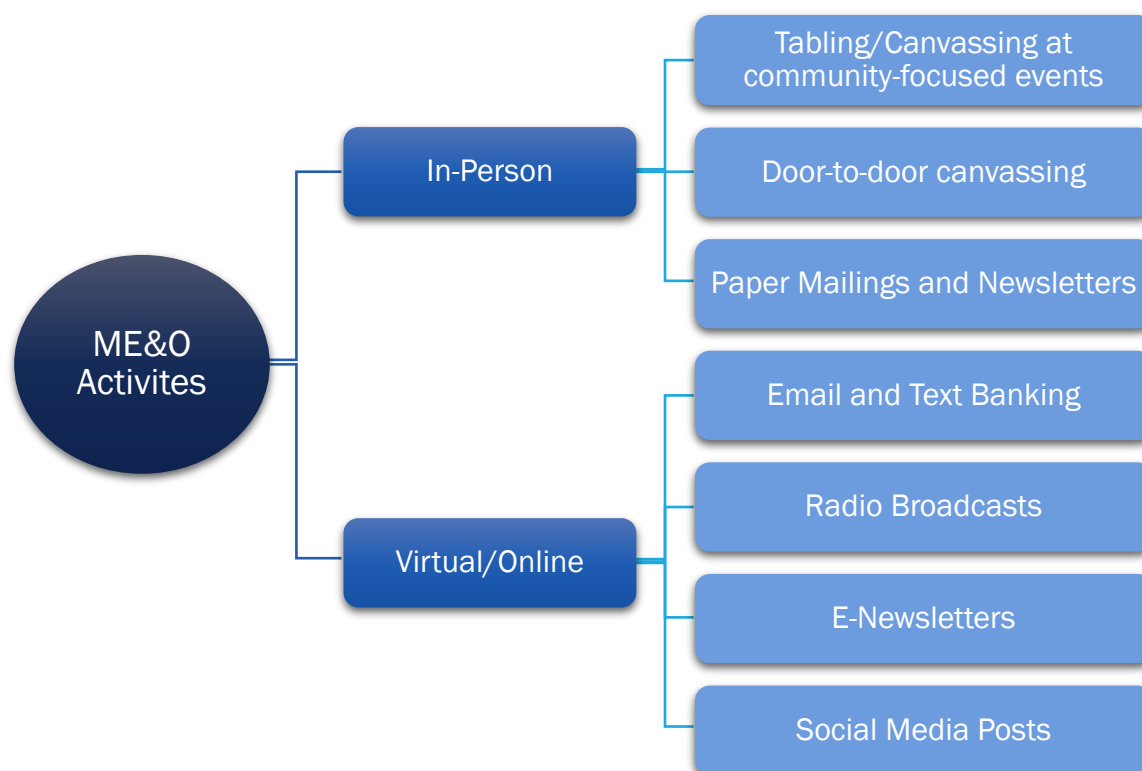


Table 12 below summarizes all ME&O activities conducted and completed by CBOs from May to October 2022 to raise awareness for Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program. DDC provided all CBOs with campaign materials developed by DDC/DDB to use for social media posts and to hand out at in-person events. Materials included flyers about Power Saver Rewards with QR codes to direct customers to the EUC Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards landing

page, which contained general information about the program and how to sign up for Power Saver Rewards if they had not already been auto-enrolled. CBOs were also given draft language and images to post on social media platforms. All of these assets were easily accessible and available for download on EUC's community website.<sup>17</sup>

Table 12. Summary of CBO Activities in Supporting Campaign Awareness

Activities	Total Units
In-Person Events	621
Online Events	64
Event Engagement (online and in-person)	985,302
Event Attendance (online and in-person)	1,486,211
Doors Knocked On	8,566
Text Messages	48,105
Social Media Posts <sup>a</sup>	935
Radio Spots	11
Newsletters	1,365
Mailers	251
Website Clicks	30,233

<sup>a</sup> Data presented here is self-reported and not independently verified. Event engagement is how many people the CBO engaged at an event (handed collateral to and spoke with, heard an announcement or presentation, etc.), while event attendance is how many people they estimated were attending the in-person or online event. The social media posts had an estimated reach of 5,214,533. Social media reach is measured as the potential reach a post may have, as indicated by the number of followers per post. It is not a measure of impressions.

**Five CBO representatives mentioned submitting their own marketing materials to DDC for approval to be used with the provided campaign collateral.** Organizations did so for several different reasons:

- **Racial and Cultural Representation.** Two CBO representatives said they wanted to incorporate their own materials to represent people of color better and acknowledge more multicultural holidays and history/heritage months.
- **Brand Voice.** One CBO representative felt their organization's brand voice was compromised by using only the DDC-provided collateral, specifically the draft language for select media posts or emails to members and subscribers. They submitted their own materials and tweaked campaign language to help incorporate their organization's brand voice into their messaging to constituents.
- **Creative Variation.** One CBO representative said the lack of variation in the content was a pain point for engaging their followers on social media, who they suspected were fatigued by the repetition. This required them to request and add their own material to their online posts. Another CBO representative said their organization was looking for different and creative ways to get the message out about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, such as publishing an opinion editorial in a local news publication and developing a script for a local Chamber of Commerce marketing video.

CBOs also implemented several online and virtual activities to support the campaign's calls to action during Flex Alert events. Table 13 provides a summary of the messaging conducted and completed by CBOs during all 2022 Flex Alert events to notify their constituents. Social media posts were the most common call-to-action messaging strategy implemented by CBOs, with nearly 1,600 social media posts uploaded to social media platforms with a potential reach of over 20 million. Text messaging was also a frequently used strategy, with nearly 360,000 text messages sent for Flex Alert event notifications alone. Despite challenges faced by CBOs, especially during the 10-day stretch of consecutive

<sup>17</sup> The assets were available at <https://energyupgradecacommunity.org/resources/>.

Flex Alert events, the majority of CBOs were able to publish dozens (if not hundreds) of social media posts to get the word out to Californians.

Table 13. Summary of CBO Activities in Supporting Campaign Calls to Action

Activities	Total Units
Text Messages	358,790
Social Media Posts	1,598
Radio Spots	45
Broadcasts of Radio Spots	150
Newsletters	48

Note: Data presented here is self-reported and not independently verified. The social media posts had an estimated reach of 20,087,470. Social media reach is measured as the potential reach a post may have, as indicated by the number of followers per post. It is not a measure of impressions.

### 4.3.2 COLLABORATION BETWEEN DDC AND PARTICIPATING CBOS

#### DDC'S PERSPECTIVE ON WORKING WITH CBOS TO SUPPORT THE FLEX ALERT CAMPAIGN

DDC worked extensively with CBOs at both the beginning of their time supporting the campaign and throughout the campaign period. All CBOs attended an online onboarding session shortly after they were granted campaign funding, where DDC provided general education about Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program, how customers could sign up for Power Saver Rewards, and expectations of what CBOs were expected to do when a Flex Alert was called. DDC also held separate training sessions with each CBO grant manager that focused on campaign collateral, how to access them, and the process for submitting requests to use additional ME&O materials created by CBO staff.

DDC staff recalled that CBOs met with them individually throughout the campaign, at least once or twice per month. These check-in meetings addressed how CBOs were doing, whether they were on track to meet key goals and deliverables, what events they had planned, and if they needed any assistance with developing custom campaign collateral like flyers, hand-outs, posters, or any other asset with altered campaign messaging.

DDC staff said they were extremely satisfied with the communication they received from CBOs. In addition to established check-ins, DDC assisted CBOs throughout the campaign with any ad hoc needs, such as helping to design custom assets, providing more materials, assisting with writing monthly reports, or helping to resolve any unforeseen challenges (e.g., running out of materials to hand out at events).

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*"I think we've structured it to where CBOs know they can lean on us for support with whatever it is. We're there to support each of their individual efforts and campaigns. The internal staff of our agency will help them continue to move the needle within their communities."*

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DDC relied solely on self-reported data from CBOs' monthly reports and check-in meetings for tracking their progress toward meeting ME&O goals and performance benchmarks. The monthly reports asked CBOs to document several key performance indicators, including but not limited to attendance at in-person and online events, number of clicks on their website, social media reach, and number of text messages and emails sent to constituents. DDC also asked CBOs to include details about events, including descriptions, schedules, and pictures, as well as to provide screenshots of social media posts and scheduling for upcoming posts in their reports.

**Most CBO representatives described DDC staff as helpful, hands-on, and supportive, both at the campaign's start and throughout the duration of the summer and early fall months.** They recalled being onboarded to the campaign by attending a webinar training, followed by meetings between each of their organizations' project managers responsible for implementing campaign activities and DDC staff. Throughout the campaign period, CBOs also had formal check-ins with DDC staff to go over their progress toward achieving agreed-upon goals and deliverables. While collaboration with DDC was mostly remembered as positive, five CBO representatives mentioned challenges with several campaign processes:

- **Approval Process for Campaign Collateral.** CBOs were required to submit requests for approval to DDC if they wanted to incorporate their own collateral into the mix of provided campaign ME&O materials. One CBO representative said this approval process was long and held them back from posting on social media as frequently as they would have liked.
- **Reporting Feedback.** Throughout the campaign, DDC worked with CBOs on reporting and provided report feedback as necessary. One CBO representative was frustrated at times with the varying feedback on their reporting, which came from numerous people and often had conflicting advice.
- **Progress Tracking.** DDC mostly relied on the monthly reports submitted by CBOs as their main mode of tracking CBO progress towards meeting campaign goals and deliverables. One CBO representative wished DDC had a better way of tracking CBO progress and performance beyond self-reporting so organizations could have a better and more concrete idea of where they stand.
- **Working with DDC.** Only two CBO representatives mentioned minor difficulties working with DDC. One CBO representative noted that the change in their organization's point of contact at DDC towards the latter half of the campaign complicated their working relationship, given they had to get to know someone new and form a new working relationship. Another CBO representative wished the members of the DDC team they interacted with were a bit more versed in the energy space. In one instance, they recalled having to explain energy demand concepts to staff, which was something already specifically related to the campaign.

**In addition to working with DDC overall, most CBO representatives recalled a positive experience with the RFP process (11 of 13), describing it as easy, straightforward, and clear in its expectations for selected CBOs.** Only two CBO representatives expressed initial hesitations about applying, though these reservations did not stop them from submitting their applications. One representative was concerned about their organization's ability to meet some of the requirements, such as the number of people they needed to reach and the number of events they had to host or join. Another had initial hesitations about the expectations for the types of marketing and outreach that needed to be implemented, given that their organization had previously found that more traditional ME&O strategies did not effectively reach their constituents (e.g., social media posts, email blasts, canvassing at musical events).

### 4.3.3 SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF CBO PARTICIPATION IN THE FLEX ALERT CAMPAIGN

**All CBO representatives felt that in-person events and consistent digital messaging were their most successful campaign activities.** The CBO representative stated that tabling at large events like farmer's markets, music festivals, flea markets, town gatherings, and other large community-focused events was especially successful because the face-to-face conversations with interested community members enabled CBO staff to explain Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. In addition, CBO representatives felt that messaging through social media posts and email and text outreach to constituents was successful as it allowed them to reach community members who either did not attend in-person events or who they missed at their table or booth. Virtual messaging opportunities also provided CBOs with a much larger pool of community members to reach.

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*Being in-person was really positive because you're giving people the message that ordinarily they might have heard or seen on TV but it doesn't connect. This way, you explain it and put something in their hands.*

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DDC representatives felt the most successful campaign activity implemented by CBOs was engagement at in-person events. They highlighted the value of face-to-face interaction in getting the message out to constituents about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. DDC representatives also noted that CBOs were especially successful in reaching low-income and multicultural residents out of all the campaign's core customer groups.

DDC and CBO representatives shared several challenges that their organizations experienced while supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign:

- **Reporting Process.** While all CBOs managed to turn in their monthly reports, almost all CBOs described challenges with the reporting process. These reports were often extremely arduous and time-consuming to draft, especially given they had to be done every month during the campaign. The reporting was also described as repetitive and often required CBOs to explain the same descriptions and narratives repeatedly. Reporting also took significant time away from regular day-to-day operations and other campaign activities. DDC staff recognized that the monthly reports were long and even became too time-consuming for their team to read at times. They plan to make improvements to the process for future campaign cycles to alleviate the time burden and make data fields more straightforward, resulting in an improvement in the reporting experience overall.
- **Negative Response from Membership.** About half of the CBO representatives mentioned their organizations faced a negative response from their membership and email subscribers, most notably during the 10-day stretch of Flex Alerts from August 31 to September 9, 2022. The responses mostly consisted of negative emails and unsubscribes/unfollows from their organizations' main listservs, likely a result of message fatigue. This was difficult for CBOs to avoid, given the unusually high temperatures during that time, coupled with each CBO's commitment to implementing daily messaging to their constituents when Flex Alerts were called.
- **Negative Opinion of Energy Conservation.** A few CBO representatives mentioned that staff members encountered residents at in-person events who had negative feelings towards energy conservation in general and, by extension, Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. These residents felt that energy conservation should not be their responsibility and that governmental entities and utility companies should be responsible for ensuring a stable and reliable grid in the state. Some CBOs utilized a few different strategies to help alleviate negative feelings toward Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. CBO staff shared personal anecdotes about participating in the Power Saver Rewards program and emphasized the monetary savings residents could earn from reducing their energy usage during a Flex Alert. Another CBO team tried a community-centered approach where they highlighted the mutual benefit to both the individual and the community-at-large for conserving energy (e.g., earning credits towards your utility bill for saving energy while also helping to ensure neighbors with medical devices do not lose power).
- **COVID-19 Pandemic.** DDC representatives noted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on CBOs, which placed strain on their staffing numbers and capacity to host and attend in-person events.
- **Verifying Reach to Residents with Disabilities.** DDC representatives noted it was challenging for CBOs to reach residents with disabilities, specifically at community events, given that there are multiple non-visible disabilities, and you cannot easily tell who may be living with a disability or not.



## 4.3.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF CBOS IN SUPPORTING CAMPAIGN AWARENESS AND CALLS TO ACTION

DDC and DDB relied on CBOs to effectively reach core customer groups throughout the campaign months to educate them about energy conservation, raise awareness around Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, and compel energy conservation during Flex Alert events. **CBO representatives felt their organizations were effective at both promoting Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program to their constituents, as well as supporting Flex Alert calls to action when Flex Alert events were called.** Many attributed their organizations' effectiveness to the dedication and resiliency of their staff members to meet campaign deliverables and the urgency to do their part to help California avoid grid emergencies and blackouts.

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*"The stretch of Flex Alerts was stressful on staff. You only have so much time that you can get the information out. But we made the commitment to do it. My staff members were troopers. They did an excellent job."*

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**DDC staff perspectives aligned with that of CBOs' perspectives, and DDC felt CBOs were overall very effective at supporting campaign awareness.** Based on self-reported data from the CBOs, frequent check-ins with CBO staff, and periodic observation of CBO activities (e.g., attending in-person events and posting on social media), DDC staff emphasized the hard work of the CBO network to raise awareness around Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards.

In terms of Flex Alert calls to action, DDC staff also felt the CBO network appeared to be effective, highlighting the network's ability overall to mobilize quickly and effectively, especially during the critical 10-day stretch of consecutive Flex Alert events. DDC staff noted that some CBOs struggled more than others to keep up with the constant messaging that was required during those critical ten days but recognized that the consecutiveness of Flex Alert events for the 2022 season was not anticipated.

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*"From a number's standpoint, CBOs went above and beyond. It was also really cool to see CBOs across California pull together. I think that's something we're really proud of. They were extremely effective and over-performed for those Flex Alert periods."*

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**Some CBO representatives mentioned that while they were effective at supporting Flex Alert calls to action, the consecutive stretch of 10 Flex Alerts in late August into early September created a notable strain on their operations (5 of 13).** The most common challenge was limited staff to keep up with the quick response messaging for such an elongated period, especially among the smallest organizations. This posed difficulties on the weekends when Flex Alert events were called, as many staff members were unavailable to help push out messaging. In addition, staff had to juggle their usual day-to-day operations and initiatives despite having the extra responsibility of supporting the campaign.

In regard to event-related activity, one DDC representative mentioned that while in-person events were the most successful, email outreach was probably the least effective way to reach constituents about Flex Alert events, given the general difficulty of getting recipients to open emails.

**Lastly, CBO representatives said the funding they received as part of the grant was a large factor in their overall success in effectively supporting the campaign.** Ten CBO representatives said the grant funding positively impacted their ability to support the campaign and reach Californians effectively (10 of 13). Without the funding, many CBO representatives felt their organizations would not have been able to support the campaign. These CBOs also mentioned

that the funding they received was adequate to sustain all their efforts. Three CBO representatives said they could have benefited from more grant funding. One representative offered that if the campaign wants smaller CBOs to broaden their reach and effectively support the campaign, they need additional funding to hire part-time staff that will be dedicated solely to working on campaign efforts and activities instead of having staff members who are already busy take on additional responsibilities.

### 4.3.5 CBO ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDIES

Given the range of organizational missions and constituencies served by CBOs, Opinion Dynamics developed four case studies covering five participating CBOs. We aimed to provide a deeper dive into specific CBO planning and implementation strategies, explore key focus areas unique to the work of each organization, and provide insight into their capacity to and effectiveness in supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign.<sup>18</sup>

The evaluation team defined CBO “capacity” and “effectiveness” as follows:

- **Capacity:** A CBO’s overall ability to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign using the resources at their disposal, such as staffing, funding, and time, with limited overall strain on their regular operations.
- **Effectiveness:** A CBO’s degree of success in meeting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign’s goals and objectives, including educating Californians about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, raising awareness around Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, and compelling constituents to take action during Flex Alert events.

CBO capacity and effectiveness are interrelated but adhere to a linear relationship. Any given CBO could not be truly effective in supporting the campaign if they did not have, at a minimum, adequate capacity to do so. Therefore, capacity was necessary for campaign effectiveness, in which CBOs successfully supported the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign’s goals and objectives.

While the above definitions are useful for understanding the concepts of capacity and effectiveness within the context of the campaign, they do not address the data limitations related to the measurement of these concepts. While DDC collected data directly from the CBOs on their activities and level of engagement with constituents, this data alone provides no indication of the impact that these ME&O activities had on those reached. As such, the assessment of effectiveness conducted as part of this evaluation is qualitative in nature and draws upon both CBO and DDC perspectives and the evaluation team’s analysis of their input. Additional research is needed with Californians who engaged with the CBOs to determine the full effect of CBO actions on these individuals.

The case studies were based on in-depth interviews with the selected organizations, as well as a review of all supporting materials. We developed case studies for the following organizations:

- Sustainable Claremont – San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance (SC-SGVCA),
- High Sierra Energy Foundation (HSEF),
- Alliance to Save Energy (ASE), and
- American GI Forum Education Foundation (AGIF).

To better understand each CBO’s capacity and effectiveness during the campaign, we begin with a summary table of each CBO’s campaign activities (Table 14). The table provides self-reported data for key performance indicators from May to October 2022.

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<sup>18</sup> Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA were recognized as “one” organization in supporting the campaign but are counted as two organizations in the aggregate of CBOs we covered across our case studies.

Table 14. Summary of Case Study CBO Activities

Activities	AGIF	ASE	HSEF	SC-SGVCA
<b>General Awareness (Units)</b>				
In-Person Events	70	34	10	14
Online Events	0	0	0	0
Event Engagement (online and in-person)	14,340	571,455	4,540	18,902
Event Attendance (online and in-person)	69,432	512,583	44,675	30,310
Doors Knocked On	663	0	0	150
Text Messages	7,441	0	0	0
Social Media Posts	23	14	44	76
Social Media Reach	141,694	530,318	32,022	147,732
Radio Spots	2	0	0	0
Newsletters	0	8	8	6
Mailers	0	0	0	0
Website Clicks	0	0	0	0
<b>Flex Alert Calls to Action (Units)</b>				
Text Messages	26,556	0	0	0
Social Media Posts	76	54	41	195
Social Media Reach	1,646,334	1,662,678	22,189	851,319
Radio Spots	0	0	5	0
Broadcast Spots	0	0	15	0
Newsletters	0	17	5	15

Note: Data presented here is self-reported and not independently verified. Social media reach is measured as the potential reach a post may have, as indicated by the number of followers per post. It is not a measure of impressions.

## AMERICAN GI FORUM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The American GI Forum Education Foundation (AGIF) is a non-profit organization located in Santa Maria, CA, that serves veterans and their families in the state. It operates as a subsidiary of the National American GI Forum, a federally chartered organization founded in 1948 to serve Hispanic and Latino veterans nationwide. The parent and subsidiary organizations have deep roots in addressing inequities and challenges faced specifically by Hispanic and Latino veterans in the United States. Despite the focus on Hispanic and Latino veterans, both organizations serve veterans of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds.<sup>19</sup> AGIF primarily focuses on “obtaining funds through solicitations or grants, bequests, gifts, donations, and contributions to be used for educational scholarships, educational and charitable grants and loans, educational research, and educational-related endeavors for needy and qualified persons.”<sup>20</sup> They also provide emergency assistance to veterans and their families who are experiencing physical, emotional, or financial hardships.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> According to a 2017 report published by California’s Legislative Analyst’s Office, 17% of California’s veteran population identifies as Hispanic or Latino (see <https://lao.ca.gov/reports/2017/3525/veterans-services-011717.pdf> for more information).

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.agifedfoundation.org/>

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

The evaluation team explored the experience of AGIF, which encountered a series of early implementation challenges, and developed several strategies to address them. Given their experience, we sought to answer the research questions listed in Figure 17 below:

Figure 17. AGIF Case Study Research Questions

 ADAPATING TO CONSTITUENTS' NEEDS		
How did AGIF address early implementation challenges?	How effective was AGIF at addressing these challenges?	How can CBOs be better prepared to adapt to the needs of their constituents (e.g. multicultural constituents)?

AGIF CAMPAIGN CYCLE HIGHLIGHTS

AGIF kicked off its campaign activities in May 2022 with a strong in-person and online presence. The organization placed staff members at several events throughout the month, including the “Santa Maria Flea Market,” the weekly “Santa Maria Downtown Fridays” event, and a food bank event. They reached approximately 1,008 people directly from in-person tabling and canvassing at each of these events, as well as 52,773 people indirectly from social media postings about the Power Savers Reward program.

AGIF saw a notable increase in the number of people reached both directly and indirectly in June as compared to May. This was the result of staff attending double the number of events, as well as additional posts on social media platforms like Facebook and Facebook Marketplace. The interviewed AGIF representative was especially proud of the organization’s engagement at the City of Lompoc’s Juneteenth Event, which drew a large crowd of nearly 600 people, one-third of whom stopped by AGIF’s booth to learn about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. July was a successful month for supporting the campaign as well, with AGIF reaching 1,859 residents across 13 events and a reach of 242,236 from online promotions. AGIF’s largest engagement of residents was at the “Paso Robles Mid State Fair,” where they spoke with and provided collateral to 220 people, mostly low-income and Mexican American residents. The AGIF representative highlighted the organization’s ability to reach low-income, multicultural, and rural residents who frequently come from surrounding towns and counties to attend events in Santa Maria.

CUSTOMER REACH:

- Multicultural (Mixtecan-speaking)
- Low-Income
- Rural and Agricultural



AGIF TAKEAWAYS

Based on their experience implementing the campaign in the field, AGIF made two tactical changes to engagement with their constituents. The organization took steps to address (1) issues with in-language collateral and communications and (2) the negative constituent response to environmentally focused messaging.

**AGIF implemented changes in the first two months of supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign after realizing they were underprepared to serve Spanish and Mixtecan-speaking constituents.** Once AGIF kicked off their in-person activities, the organization quickly realized many of the residents they were engaging with were Mixtecan- and Spanish-speaking. While team members had some Spanish-translated material on hand, they ran out early in the process. They

also did not have Mixtecan-translated material or Mixtecan-speaking staff. This was challenging given Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program often required more explanation than what was provided on the hand-outs and flyers, and, for many, it was their first time hearing about these topics. Some residents also had trouble scanning the QR codes that were on the flyers, especially elderly individuals who were not comfortable using smart devices and technology. To rectify these challenges, AGIF implemented two major actions:

- Submitted a request to DDC for Mixtecan-translated collateral and additional Spanish-translated material.
- Rehearsed various scenarios for what questions staff could anticipate from residents who were 1) limited-English speaking, 2) unfamiliar with Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, 3) inexperienced with technology like QR codes and smartphones, and 4) new to energy topics altogether.

**AGIF also focused on personalizing campaign messaging to quell negative feelings towards energy conservation.** AGIF staff frequently encountered a negative response toward energy conservation by constituents. Many of them did not believe they should be burdened to conserve energy when utilities and officials should be better prepared to handle these issues. To better respond to this sentiment, AGIF staff prepared a response that focused less on the need to conserve energy during hot days and emphasized the monetary benefit of the Power Saver Rewards program for families and individuals. This was an effective strategy to help residents think less about the perceived negative effects of participating in a Flex Alert (e.g., using less energy) and more about how they could personally and directly benefit from doing so.

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*"We have rehearsed many times and role-played how to explain the message in a variety of forms so the community could clearly understand the information and the message of the Flex Alert Program."*

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#### AGIF CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

**AGIF appeared to demonstrate a strong capacity to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign, most notably through staff and time; this was in part fueled by the staff's dedication to the cause and commitment to the work.** AGIF staff spent countless hours engaging with residents at dozens of in-person events in Santa Maria and going door-to-door to speak with residents one-on-one, often beginning in the morning and continuing well into the evening hours. The organization's monthly reports and the interview with AGIF staff both conveyed a strong sense of understanding of what the campaign was about and what changes were needed to best reach their constituents, such as ordering more translated materials, anticipating residents' questions, and crafting the best ways to answer questions, especially for limited-English speakers. The organization also went above and beyond to reach priority constituents after identifying the strong presence of Mixtecan-speaking individuals in the area. Staff visited local businesses owned and frequented by Mixtecan-speaking residents to make sure they were aware of Power Saver Rewards and could share it with their customers, friends, and family who may have not been reached by campaign messaging or did not fully understand campaign messaging.

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*"I watched my staff do this, and I think they're so committed to it. They believe in it, and they think it's good for the community to know. They were up late at nights making sure they did everything."*

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From both the evaluation team's and AGIF staff's perspective, AGIF appeared to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign effectively. They did so by maintaining a strong online and in-person presence and adapting to the needs of multicultural constituents to best communicate Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards messaging. The organization reached tens of thousands of Californians by not only attending in-person events but also by going door-to-door and business-to-business. AGIF staff were prepared to talk with any of the thousands of residents they encountered by anticipating and rehearsing conversations, including dialogue with limited-English speaking residents, those who had never heard of Flex Alerts or Power Saver Rewards, and even those who held a negative opinion of energy conservation in general.



AGIF bolstered their support of the campaign by preparing for a wide range of in-person conversations and prioritizing posts in online groups with large followings like Facebook and Nextdoor.

AGIF also engaged extensively with their online followers on Facebook and Nextdoor, posting frequently throughout the campaign months. This was especially true of AGIF's calls to action for called Flex Alert events. The interviewed AGIF representative highlighted the staff's resiliency during the 10-day stretch of Flex Alert events, where they worked tirelessly to get the word out multiple times a day to as many of their constituents as possible. According to self-reported data, AGIF sent a total of 26,556 individual text messages to constituents alerting them that a Flex Alert event had been called. Additionally, they made a total of 76 posts on social media by the time of the last Flex Alert event (see Table 14). AGIF had hoped to solidify a recurring text banking notification system to alert their followers and members about Flex Alert events, but it was costly and complicated to sustain for the long term. This, however, did not prevent AGIF from keeping the momentum going to notify their constituents when Flex Alerts were called.

In addition, the interviewed AGIF representative stressed the importance of CBOs needing to be prepared to adapt quickly to unanticipated needs, such as adjusting campaign collateral and the way information is communicated (e.g., different languages), as this could be a pivotal piece of whether campaign messaging is being effectively communicated to residents. They also mentioned hiring multilingual staff to be present at in-person events for future campaign cycles to further improve the organization's ability to engage with non-English speaking residents.

## ALLIANCE TO SAVE ENERGY

Alliance to Save Energy (ASE) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1977 to "advance federal energy efficiency policy and lead bipartisan initiatives that drive technology innovation and energy efficiency across all sectors of the economy."<sup>22</sup> In addition to their policy and advocacy work, ASE administers several strategic initiatives focused on energy efficiency education, awareness, and development. The organization's "Empowered Schools Initiative" served as its model for supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. The "Empowered Schools Initiative," since its inception in 1996, has partnered with schools across the country to "educate students about energy efficiency through a project-based curriculum while saving energy in schools and building pathways to green jobs."<sup>23</sup> ASE used its existing network of schools to support the campaign.

We explored ASE's classroom-to-community approach leveraged to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign, where teachers in participating classrooms provided lessons about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards to students. The expectation was that following the lessons, students would share this information both inside and outside of the home. The purpose of our focus on the classroom-to-community approach was to explore how effective it was at supporting the campaign and the resultant saliency of campaign messaging. Given this unique model of disseminating information,


<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ase.org/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.ase.org/strategic-initiatives/empowered-schools>



we were interested in assessing what role this type of approach could play in the future. We specifically sought to answer the research questions listed in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18. ASE Case Study Research Questions

 CLASSROOM-TO-COMMUNITY APPROACH			
What was the participating student population like? How was campaign information presented and taught to these students?	To what degree were students interested and engaged in Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards that they felt compelled to share it outside the classroom?	How effective was the classroom-to-community approach at supporting campaign objectives overall?	How did ASE view this theory of change with respect to the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign?

ASE CAMPAIGN CYCLE HIGHLIGHTS

ASE partnered with a total of 125 classrooms. These classrooms ranged from 3rd through 12th grade, spanning dozens of schools in PG&E and SCE service territory. Through these partnerships with participating classrooms, ASE reached 3,375 students directly through classroom lessons and an estimated 16,000–18,000 students indirectly through school assemblies, school announcements, and school art projects. Participating teachers were responsible for implementing ASE’s Five-Part Lesson Plan that contained a PowerPoint about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, as well as flyers for students to pass out to fellow peers, family, and any other interested community members. Through this outreach, ASE prioritized reaching low-income and multicultural residents, groups the organization already reached through their usual program operations. In addition, students worked together to deliver Flex Alert event announcements over a loudspeaker, at school assemblies, and/or up at the front of their classrooms. They also had the option to participate in two different competitions where they could earn a prize for their creativity in (1) stressing the importance of energy conservation or (2) raising awareness for Power Saver Rewards and Flex Alerts. The competition accepted art or video submissions. These combined efforts were the foundation of the classroom-to-community approach that enabled students to educate their communities about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards while being empowered to become active youth leaders in their communities.

*“The objective is to really empower students to conduct the outreach. We really see the power of student outreach campaigns in home-based education. Whether it’s a language barrier that we might experience if we were doing the outreach to homes, students can often be that bridge. And so, for us, empowering them to see themselves as changemakers, as leaders, on issues like this, that’s a main objective for us.”*

ASE TAKEAWAYS

ASE was able to reach thousands of students and community members in their support of the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign; however, they had somewhat limited insight into how students disseminated campaign information outside of the classroom, as well as how students felt about the program in general. ASE received positive written testimonials from teachers about student engagement with the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards lesson plans, handouts, school announcements, and creative competitions. However, they did not have any verbal or written feedback from students directly. To identify potential areas of improving the program and its delivery, ASE implemented student check-ins for

future campaign cycles to get first-hand insight into how students felt about the program and their experiences engaging with and sharing the campaign information at home and in the community. The ASE representative also mentioned soliciting feedback from parents and families directly in the form of “household pledges” to verify that children spoke with them about the program, which has been done for some of ASE’s other educational programs.

**Though data tracking is challenging for this type of program model, the classroom-to-community approach was easily transferrable to students and required minimal administrative coordination between implementers and teachers.** All materials were provided to teachers via email and did not require any training, which minimized the amount of time teachers needed to dedicate to work beyond what they were already doing day-to-day in their classrooms. It also allowed flexibility for how teachers and students wanted to engage with the material, such as how the PowerPoint lessons were delivered to students, how schoolwide Flex Alert notifications were announced, and the creation of unique artwork or visual media to showcase their knowledge of the topics and the importance of informing others about them. The flexible and minimally invasive nature of this implementation strategy allowed teachers and students to actively take part in supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign while also minimizing disruption to their usual teaching and learning.

#### ASE CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

**ASE appeared to demonstrate a strong capacity to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign using resources such as institutional knowledge, staff, time, and an easily transferrable curriculum about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards.** ASE has had decades of experience designing and implementing educational programs prioritized for K–12



ASE was well-positioned to support the campaign using their classroom-to-community model through which they have raised considerable awareness for energy issues since 1996.

students across the country. These programs have focused on teaching students about energy efficiency and energy conservation and engaging them in hands-on opportunities to help reduce schools’ energy costs, save electricity, and spread their knowledge about energy and sustainability to their homes and communities. ASE’s team also worked closely with DDC to develop the key components of the Five-Part Lesson Plan used in

participating classrooms, as well as to ensure they were on track with their campaign goals and deliverables. Given the unique structure of ASE’s overall ME&O strategy, they did not attend or hold any in-person events in the traditional sense to raise awareness about the campaign—it was solely done in schools and classrooms by and through students. Challenges for ASE were mostly limited to the arduousness of the reporting process and collecting data related to student engagement and dissemination of campaign messaging, but this did not hinder the organization’s overall operations to support the campaign.

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*“[The approach] has been successful for us. In the past, we’ve looked at actual energy savings and energy efficiency metrics. As long as we’re providing all the resources upfront and front-loading it to the teachers, that’s where we see success – in other programs, and Power Saver Rewards.”*

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From both the evaluation team’s and ASE staff’s perspective, ASE uniquely supported the campaign by aligning the objectives of their classroom-to-community approach with the campaign’s need to educate and mobilize families and community members around Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards; this appeared to be an effective way of supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. While



ASE aligned their focus on student education and leadership to include promoting energy conservation in order to effectively support the campaign.


ASE's primary objective was to expand the breadth of energy knowledge and leadership opportunities for students, the organization was able to integrate this mission with California's need to drive energy conservation amongst the wider population during the summer months to stabilize the grid. The interviewed ASE representative emphasized that ASE was very effective at not only promoting Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards but also quickly mobilizing students to notify others about Flex Alert events and encourage them to take action by conserving energy at home. Call-to-action plans were in place ahead of time to prepare for the alerts, which often involved schoolwide announcements over loudspeakers or at assemblies informing other students and faculty that a Flex Alert event had been issued. According to the self-reported data, ASE had also published over 50 social media posts to their followers over the course of the campaign season, alerting them about called Flex Alerts. For future campaign cycles, ASE plans to work on improving its ability to collect primary data about how students share Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards information outside of the classroom to further verify the effectiveness of this approach.

HIGH SIERRA ENERGY FOUNDATION

The High Sierra Energy Foundation (HSEF) is a non-profit organization founded in 2005 to “promote the culture of energy efficiency and sustainability in the Eastern Sierra,” with a focus on Inyo and Mono Counties. The organization focuses on several different initiatives, including the promotion of Power Saver Rewards, the Southern California Regional Energy Network (SoCalREN) Multifamily Program, and SoCalREN Public Agency Programs, as well as managing partnerships with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), Mammoth Community Water District, and other rural agencies across the state to promote energy efficiency policies, measures, and programs.<sup>24</sup> HSEF also administers a program called the “Eastern Sierra Green Business Program” that certifies qualifying businesses for their work to “conserve resources and prevent pollution in the areas of waste, energy, water, pollution prevention, and air quality.”<sup>25</sup>

The evaluation team developed a case study of HSEF’s work with the campaign to provide greater insight into efforts to reach rural California residents in particular, we sought to answer the research questions listed in Figure 19.

Figure 19. HSEF Case Study Research Questions

 SERVING RURAL CONSTITUENTS			
What were the general attitudes of rural constituents around the campaign?	What limitations and barriers existed to reaching rural constituents?	What tools, resources, or strategies were particularly useful in reaching rural constituents?	How can CBOs better reach rural communities about energy topics like Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards?

HSEF CAMPAIGN CYCLE HIGHLIGHTS

HSEF prioritized rural constituents in their support of the campaign, many of whom were also low-income, senior, and/or multicultural (primarily Spanish-speaking) constituents. HSEF attended and supported several in-person events throughout the campaign months to reach these constituents. In June, HSEF tabled at Mammoth Lakes’ “Summer Jam” event and spoke with a few dozen individuals about Power Saver Rewards, as well as introduced Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards to some for the first time. They also tabled and made event-wide announcements at Mammoth Lakes’ Fourth of July celebration, encouraging residents to sign up for Power Saver Rewards and conserve energy from 4:00

p.m.–9:00 p.m., both when a Flex Alert was called and whenever they could do so daily. HSEF also utilized its existing partnerships with community action organizations to collaborate on ME&O with their members; the organizations included the Mono County Advocates for Community Action, the Inyo County Chamber of Commerce, several local libraries, and local food banks.

In addition to in-person activities, HSEF used digital marketing channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn to reach additional residents with collateral provided by DDC. Based on monthly report data, HSEF reached about 2,800 online followers in June across all their posts and 11,500 online followers in July. HSEF also created additional assets to

CUSTOMER REACH:

- Rural
- Low-Income
- Seniors
- Multicultural (primarily Spanish-speaking)



<sup>24</sup> <https://www.highsierraenergy.org/>  
<sup>25</sup> <https://www.highsierraenergy.org/the-eastern-sierra-green-business-program>

reach its constituents, including published news pieces and radio spots. The Executive Director wrote opinion editorials and general articles about the difference between Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards and the importance of education around energy conservation. These articles were published in local newspapers, where community members read them as their main source of news. HSEF also recorded radio spots for radio station broadcasts to mobilize residents during a Flex Alert event.

## HSEF TAKEAWAYS

**HSEF leveraged a mix of traditional and tailored ME&O strategies to best reach their rural constituents; local radio and newspapers were particularly effective at reaching residents of rural counties.** While most CBOs that supported the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign used similar strategies such as tabling, canvassing, and posting on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, the interviewed HSEF representative noted that these strategies are not always the most effective modes of reaching rural residents. This was also true of statewide advertising of Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, which often consisted of television ads and online posts. The representative said radio spots, local newspaper articles, and local newspaper advertisements were more effective mediums for reaching rural constituents. These mediums also included prioritizing Spanish-speaking and Spanish-reading residents who make up a notable portion of the population in rural areas such as Mono, Inyo, Alpine, and other eastern California counties. The newspaper articles focused on helping residents distinguish between a Flex Alert and the Power Saver Rewards program (as well as how they were related), how to sign up for Power Saver Rewards, and what to do when a Flex Alert event was called.

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*“Energy Upgrade California over the years has focused both CBOs and a broader scope of statewide advertising on urban areas. The same plan doesn't work in rural areas. Here, most of the content and say just television news or whatever will come from Reno, not from California. Local radio... newspaper ads, Spanish-speaking newspapers, that's the type of thing to reach [rural residents].”*

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**HSEF's existing relationships with rural communities at the local level, coupled with personalization and depoliticization of campaign messaging, greatly aided their reach to rural constituents.** Since its founding in 2005 by residents of Mono County, HSEF has built a strong foundation in California's rural regions. This has created a significant level of trust between HSEF and rural communities and localities. This trust has kept a reliable line to local leaders and community action groups that helped HSEF reach constituents in those towns about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards. The interviewed HSEF representative highlighted how rural residents have historically mistrusted governmental programs and campaigns, including ones that involve energy issues such as energy conservation and electrification. A recurring sentiment that HSEF heard from residents at in-person community events was not understanding why the onus of reducing energy was being placed on them by entities like the government and utility companies who have failed to support the grid in the past. Other residents, especially those living in higher elevations, did not understand why they should be reducing their summer energy consumption when they do not even own equipment like air conditioners and other power-demanding appliances. HSEF worked to personalize and depoliticize campaign messaging about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards to help counteract these sentiments and highlight the components of the program that would be beneficial to them (e.g., earning monetary rewards for conserving energy).



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*Sometimes you get pushback, which I would say is more political than anything. ‘Why is government pushing so hard for electrification if we can’t even handle what we currently have’ - that kind of thing. If you present it more like, ‘we’re all just trying to do our best, help your neighbor who might be on a medical device... it’s about finding the right messaging that’s going to resonate with your community.’*

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## HSEF CAPACITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

HSEF appeared to demonstrate a strong capacity to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign using resources such as staffing, time, and existing organizational trust. While a small non-profit organization, the HSEF team was able to implement their campaign activities with minimal strain on their day-to-day operations. They tabled and canvassed at several in-person events throughout the summer months using the DDC-provided collateral, posted frequently on social media platforms, and published newspaper articles to increase the salience and relevance of campaign messaging to their constituents. HSEF also utilized its connections with local governments to amplify their quick response messaging to alert residents about called Flex Alert events, in addition to their own notifications via social media, email, and day-of radio spots.

From both the evaluation team’s and HSEF staff’s perspective, HSEF appeared to be effective at supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign; this was especially apparent through their tailored ME&O approach designed to reach rural constituents. HSEF’s strong foundation in advocacy and awareness work for sustainability and energy efficiency in the Eastern Sierra region over the last two decades positioned them well to support the campaign, as well as their deep connections with rural constituents in the region.

The interviewed HSEF representative said the organization’s main objective was to “educate the community on why Flex Alerts are important, educate them on the Power Saver Rewards program, and how everyone can pitch in,” which was already aligned with their organization’s mission of promoting energy efficiency and sustainability. They



HSEF’s tailored ME&O approach through local channels and personalized delivery of campaign messaging was effective at supporting the campaign and reaching rural constituents.

shared how this helped inform their double-pronged approach to effectively disseminate this information to rural constituents where they (1) worked to prioritize local modes of communication and information sharing (e.g., newspapers and radio broadcasts) and (2) personalized and depoliticized campaign messaging in such a way that made energy topics like energy conservation more palatable to rural residents. HSEF also was selective in what in-person events they attended to maximize the saliency of their tabling and canvassing efforts. The interviewed HSEF representative mentioned that while the organization was effective at supporting the campaign overall, increased grant funding for more local advertisement and outreach would improve their reach to rural communities exceedingly.

## SUSTAINABLE CLAREMONT – SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CIVIC ALLIANCE

This case study focused on two CBO organizations that joined forces to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. First, Sustainable Claremont is a not-for-profit advocacy organization focused on education, awareness, and community action for environmental sustainability and conservation efforts in the state of California. Since its inception in 2009, Sustainable Claremont has grown from a local volunteer-based group to a wide-reaching organization serving the community through various programs and initiatives, including but not limited to the Green Crew urban tree-planting program, a one-on-one gardening assistance program, the Drought Resistant Irrigation Program (DRIP), and the Schools Action Group (SAG).<sup>26</sup> Second, San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance (SGVCA) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to

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<sup>26</sup> <https://sustainableclaremont.org/>.



“bringing together a diverse coalition of stakeholders from the business, labor, government, education and community sectors for the purpose of identifying policy challenges and best practice solutions” in the area. Membership includes organizations and people such as government officials, county boards, school boards, unions, local community action groups, and business leaders and CEOs.

The evaluation team explored Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA’s combined efforts to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign as a key focus of this case study. The purpose of this focus was to explore the effectiveness of collaboration between CBOs in not only implementing campaign activities but also to inform the value of potential collaborations for future campaign cycles. We sought to answer the research questions listed in Figure 20.

Figure 20. Sustainable Claremont - SGVCA Case Study Research Questions

 COLLABORATION BETWEEN CBOs			
How did collaboration impact CBO campaign activities?	How did collaborating on campaign activities and objectives differ from the activities and objectives of individually operating CBOs?	How did collaboration impact each CBO’s reach to certain communities and Core Customer Groups?	How can this collaboration inform potential future collaborations among CBOs for the 2023 Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign?

Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA Campaign Cycle Highlights

Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA leveraged a mix of both in-person and virtual ME&O strategies throughout the campaign months, including tabling and canvassing at in-person events, as well as posting frequently on various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The majority of residents reached were low-income, senior, multicultural (Latine, Chinese, and American Pacific Islander), and veterans.

CUSTOMER REACH:

- Veterans
- Low-Income
- Seniors
- Multicultural



In May, both organizations’ combined efforts directly reached 670 individuals across four in-person events and reached an estimated 12,000 online followers across social media posts focused on Power Saver Rewards. June saw a substantial increase in both direct and indirect reach (2,500 individuals and 850,557 online followers across all posts, respectively), with attendance at four events, 21 social media posts published, and two newsletters distributed. SGVCA’s attendance at the “Riviera Village Summer Festival” was particularly impactful, engaging nearly 1,000 individuals over eight hours about what to do in the event of a Flex Alert and how to earn money for doing so by participating in Power Saver Rewards. The team split into groups to cover the wide ground of individuals at food trucks, beer gardens, carnival rides, and live music stages. In July, the organizations reached a total of 8,050 people across seven events while also reaching an

estimated 60,000 online followers across social media posts for the month. Teams of staff members attended several Fourth of July celebrations in Claremont, La Verne, and Rosemead, handing out campaign collateral to thousands of individuals. Sustainable Claremont also took advantage of several fresh produce deliveries in the San Gabriel Valley to provide a few dozen families and small businesses with Power Saver Rewards flyers along with their produce baskets. Though a much smaller scale effort in comparison to the other efforts, it highlights their creative thinking in approaching ME&O.

## Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA Takeaways

Collaboration allowed Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA to work together and split up campaign activities, ensuring both organizations could adequately support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. SGVCA was able to focus its efforts on in-person engagement, while Sustainable Claremont zeroed in on social media outreach and monthly report writing. A frequent strain on participating CBOs was needing to juggle multiple campaign activities at once in addition to their normal operations. By dividing the campaign work aligned with each organization's strengths and expertise, SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont were able to adequately support the campaign when they otherwise may have struggled to do so on their own. This was especially true of report writing, which often proved to be a long and arduous process for many participating CBOs. Sustainable Claremont was the primary author of their joint monthly reports to DDC and helped navigate SGVCA through the process, which, in turn, gave SGVCA more time to plan and prioritize their attendance at in-person events. Both interviewed CBO representatives noted that being able to divide the labor and always having another CBO team to brainstorm ideas with were the most impactful aspects of working with another organization to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign.

Collaboration also provided each organization access to the other's network of contacts and connections in local and surrounding communities, substantially increasing their reach to priority constituents. While SGVCA had many contacts in governmental and business spaces, Sustainable Claremont had a deep footing in community-based spaces (both in-person and online), given their extensive engagement with residents and Claremont city partners on sustainability and conservation projects. This enabled both organizations to target an even larger pool of Californians with campaign messaging than they otherwise would have reached without access to the others' networks. The interviewed SGVCA representative highlighted the expanded reach to residents in cities outside of the San Gabriel Valley, including Lancaster, High Desert, and Long Beach, as well as Redondo Beach and Santa Monica, where SGVCA tabled and canvassed at a night market and daytime festival. It also allowed both organizations to collectively attend a diversified range of event types, including a car show, public concert, tree planting event, community festival, golf tournament, and a veteran and military families' tribute.

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*"Could we have done it without each other. Yes.*

*Could we have done it as effectively and as efficiently? Probably not."*

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## Sustainable Claremont and SGVCA Capacity and Effectiveness

SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont appeared to demonstrate a strong capacity to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign by combining their resources and working together on their core campaign activities. The monthly reports and in-depth interviews indicated that both CBOs had leaders and team members invested in raising awareness for Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program to help support the grid in California. They recognized participation during Flex Alerts as an imperative "community need" and were determined to use their organizational resources to assist in meeting that need. These resources included dedicated staff, large social networks, and alignment of campaign activities with each organization's core competencies. As mentioned, both CBO representatives shared that their organizations would not have been able to support the campaign to the same degree if it were not for the help from the other. Collaboration greatly limited the strain on both organizations to keep up with their day-to-day work and support the campaign simultaneously.



Collaboration between SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont created a symbiotic relationship that gave both CBOs a strong capacity to support the campaign.

From the perspective of both the evaluation team and these CBOs' staff, SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont appeared to be effective at supporting the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign, most notably through their collaboration with one another. Both organizations were aligned in their primary objective of supporting the campaign to raise awareness around Flex Alerts and the Power Saver Rewards program to reduce energy usage during critical grid conditions in California. According to self-reported tracking data, SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont attended over a dozen in-person events, reached tens of thousands of individuals both face-to-face and online with campaign messaging and marketing, and completed each monthly report promptly and thoroughly. They also communicated with their constituents daily over the course of the 10-day stretch of Flex Alert events despite limited staff support on weekends and the demanding frequency of online posts and communications. Between the two organizations, they published 195 social media posts to notify constituents about called Flex Alerts and are estimated to have reached over 850,000 online followers across all posts on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Table 14). Both CBO representatives spoke highly of their staff and their organization's overall performance in supporting the campaign. Representatives from DDC also highlighted SGVCA and Sustainable Claremont as two of their top-performing CBOs, emphasizing their attendance at community events and the quality of their monthly reports.

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*"I thought we were pretty darn successful. We blew past what we thought we were going to do on our applications. We had way more engagement and way more indirect outreach than we thought we were going to have."*

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## 4.4 ADDITIONAL CAMPAIGN LEARNINGS FOR CAMPAIGN OPTIMIZATION

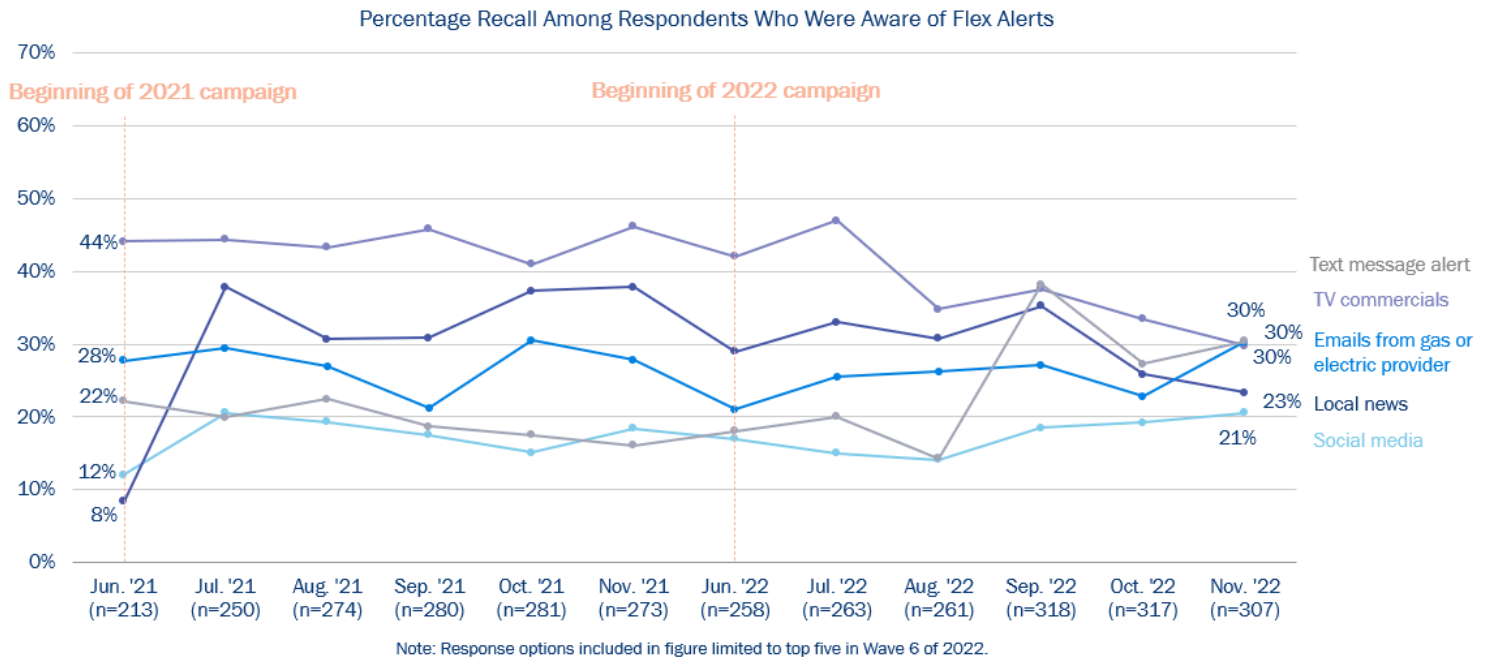
The evaluation team identified a number of learnings useful for campaign optimization that were not directly linked to the specific research questions outlined in Section 2.2. We present these additional findings in this section.

### THE ROLE OF TEXT MESSAGING IN REACHING CONSUMERS

**Future campaign marketing may benefit from increasing the use of text messaging to reach Californians for both general awareness and event days.** Results regarding general awareness messaging, event day messaging, and future event notification preferences all suggest that text messaging is a preferred and effective way to reach Californians.

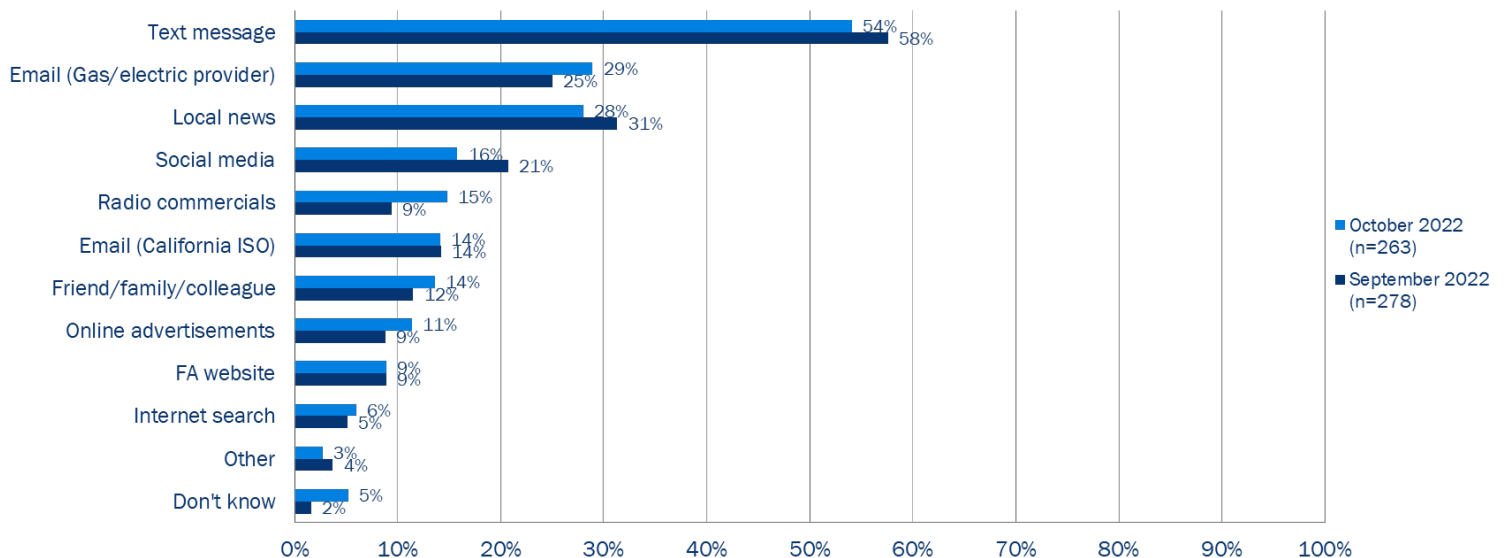
**General Awareness:** Overall, Californians most commonly reported they heard about Flex Alerts through TV commercials, local news coverage, and emails from their gas or electric provider throughout the campaign, although text messaging gained traction as another primary mode in the latter half of the campaign period (Figure 21). Before September 2022, text messaging was one the least common ways Californians reportedly heard about Flex Alerts, but this changed following the mid-summer stretch of alerts. We observed a large increase (24 percentage points), nearly tripling the proportion of Californians who reported hearing about Flex Alerts through text messaging, in September following the 10-day stretch of Flex Alerts, and it remained among the top two sources throughout the rest of the campaign.

Figure 21. Where Californians Heard About Flex Alerts Over Time



**Event Day Messaging:** When a Flex Alert was called, Californians were most commonly notified of the event via text message (Figure 22). Text event notification occurred at approximately twice the rate as other common sources, such as emails from their electric or gas provider and the local news.

Figure 22. How Californians Were Notified a Flex Alert Had Been Called



There were multiple avenues by which Californians could have received a text message notifying them of an upcoming Flex Alert event during the campaign; these included text messages from CAISO (among those who enrolled in Flex Alert text notifications through the CAISO website), text messages from their IOU (among those who enrolled in the Power Saver Rewards program on their IOU website), and text messages through Public Results by DDB (general market and

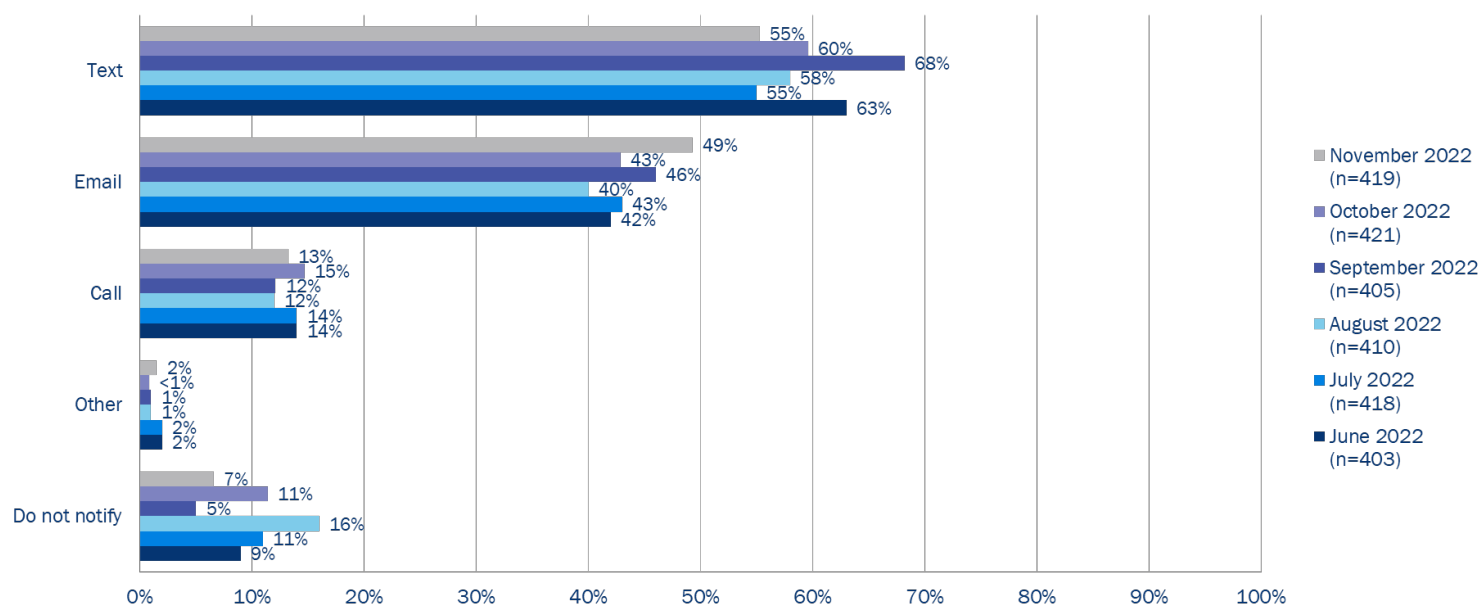
multicultural audiences with available contact data).<sup>27</sup> The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) also issued a statewide cell phone alert during a Flex Alert within the mid-summer stretch:

“Conserve energy now to protect public health and safety. Extreme heat is straining the state energy grid. Power interruptions may occur unless you take action. Turn off or reduce nonessential power if health allows, now until 9pm.”<sup>28</sup>

This emergency alert was in both English and Spanish. Some Californians may have interpreted the Cal OES cellphone alert as a text message when responding to our survey, and we are not able to disentangle this data point.

**Future Flex Alerts:** Californians prefer to be notified about upcoming Flex Alerts through text messages. We asked respondents who confirmed their electric provider was an IOU, making them potentially eligible to participate in the Power Saver Rewards program, how they prefer to be notified about upcoming Flex Alert events so they may be eligible to earn bill credits for reducing their energy use. Throughout the campaign, over half of Californians consistently reported they prefer to be notified about upcoming Flex Alerts through texts, peaking at 68 percentage points in September following the mid-summer stretch of alerts (Figure 23).

Figure 23. Californians' Preferred Way to be Notified About Upcoming Flex Alerts



## CONSUMER CONFUSION BETWEEN FLEX ALERTS AND PUBLIC SAFETY POWER SHUT-OFFS

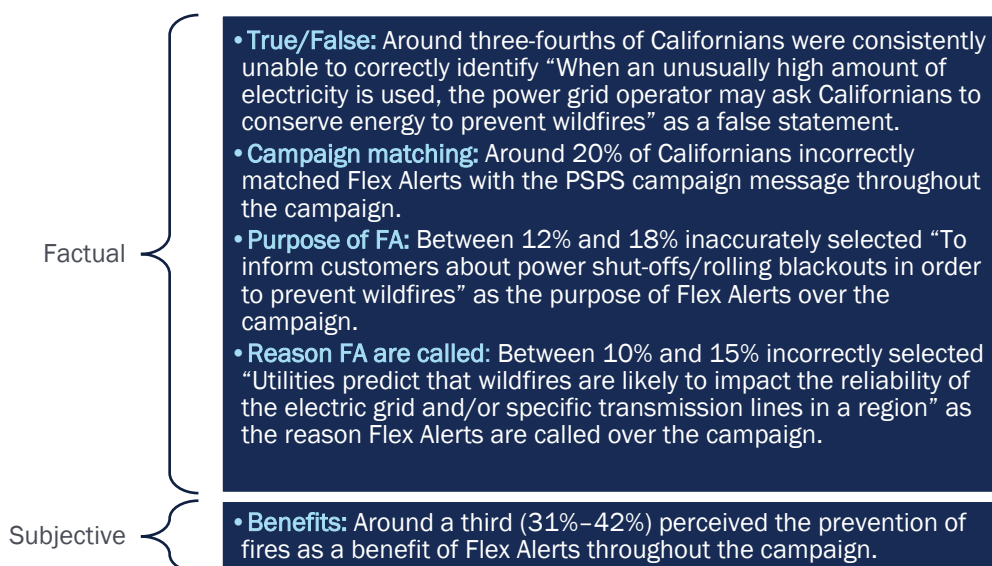
Building on the findings from the 2021 Flex Alert ME&O evaluation, the evaluation team investigated Californian’s confusion of Flex Alerts with PSPS and found that some Californians continue to have issues differentiating between Flex Alerts and PSPS, misidentify the purpose of Flex Alerts as wildfire prevention, and perceive that taking action during a Flex Alert will prevent forest fires. We aggregated correct responses across six waves for the four factual questions related to wildfires and PSPS (n=3,000). We found that only 7% of Californians answered all factual

<sup>27</sup> Public Results specialize in helping nonprofits and governments communicate with hard-to-reach communities by providing comprehensive contact data and peer-to-peer texting expertise. Overall, approximately nine million text messages were deployed through this approach during the 2022 campaign.

<sup>28</sup> California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services. “Cal OES News.” Accessed July 25, 2023. <https://news.caloes.ca.gov/state-officials-sent-cell-phone-alerts-to-protect-public-safety-amidst-ongoing-record-heat-energy-grid-shortfalls/>.

questions correctly. These questions included response options that were True/False and multiple choice and are described in more detail in Figure 24.

Figure 24. PSPS and Flex Alert Confusion



## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We synthesized key findings from the residential tracking survey, stakeholder engagement assessment, and CBO assessment to identify several conclusions and recommendations for the CPUC and DDB to consider. We summarize these conclusions and recommendations below.

■ **Conclusion: Rolling outages were avoided during the 2022 campaign cycle, even with the unprecedented 10-day stretch of Flex Alerts.** While we cannot directly link this phenomenon to campaign performance, the interplay between Californians taking action during Flex Alerts and multiple organizations working in tandem to alert Californians of the need to take action likely contributed to this positive outcome.

■ **Conclusion: Overall, the 2022 campaign performed well against its metrics, especially those related to awareness and action-taking.** Throughout the campaign period, Californians had multiple points of exposure to the campaign, whether through social media postings, radio or television ads, or trusted CBOs. There was an increase in the percentage of Californians who were aware of Flex Alerts (11 percentage points) and Power Saver Rewards (9 percentage points) compared to baseline (52% to 63% and 18% to 27%, respectively) and 95% of Californians who were aware that a Flex Alert had been called reported taking at least one action. Results regarding general awareness messaging, event day messaging, and future event notification preferences all suggest that text messaging is a preferred and effective way to reach Californians.

■ **Recommendation:** Continue building on the success from 2022 through increased use of text messaging and additional research to identify specific customer groups who remain unaware, allowing targeted messaging to those customers.

■ **Conclusion: Given current market conditions, some campaign performance metrics are outdated or need modification.** For example, the metric for action taken during a Flex Alert is measured as the percentage of Californians



who took one or more of the specified Flex Alert actions featured in the campaign. However, nearly all Californians who were aware a Flex Alert had been called reported taking at least one campaign featured action during alert events, highlighting a ceiling effect for this metric. As of the close of 2022, we had two years of tracking data on Flex Alerts and one year of data on Power Saver Rewards and we have continued collecting tracking data in 2023. This information provides valuable information for modifications to the program's metrics.

- **Recommendation:** Beginning in Q1 of 2024, the CPUC and the 2024 campaign implementer, along with the evaluation team, should meet to discuss current metrics and opportunities for improvement as metrics should be modified or adjusted with concrete goals to reach or exceed in 2024. Each year, the campaign has changed and most often these changes occur in late Q1 or Q2 of a given campaign year. Given changing campaign goals from year to year, we recommend that any adjustments to 2024 metrics occur right after the campaign plans are solidified for 2024 and are informed by discussion between the CPUC and DDB. Some possibilities for discussion include modifying the metric for action so that it aligns with the top 2 or 3 campaign actions and/or separating out metrics that will be collected monthly and reported as percentage point change over time vs metrics that are only collected when a Flex Alert is called.

■ **Conclusion: The mid-summer stretch of Flex Alerts was both an opportunity and a challenge for the 2022 campaign.** Following the mid-summer 10-day stretch of alerts, more Californians were aware of Flex Alerts than ever before, as indicated by increased unaided and aided brand awareness (11% and 61% in September, respectively, compared to baselines of 3% and 52%, respectively). Additionally, Californians' likelihood to take action during a Flex Alert and enroll in the Power Saver Reward program increased after the lengthy stretch of alerts (34% of Californians were extremely likely to sign up for Power Saver Rewards in September compared to 21% at baseline). However, this period of intense Flex Alert activity was challenging for the CBO outreach channel of the campaign. In particular, CBOs reported seeing evidence of messaging fatigue through an influx of constituent requests to be removed from CBO distribution lists. Additionally, despite positive feedback from DDC representatives, CBOs reported feeling strained during this period.

- **Recommendation: Reconsider the role that the CBO channel plays during multiple-day events.** As evidenced by the 2022 campaign, CBOs provide a valuable communication channel to reach specific types of consumers with general Flex Alert information. However, when multiple back-to-back alerts are called, CBOs may feel strained to keep up with communication efforts as well as lose constituents from their distribution lists.

■ **Conclusion: There is an opportunity to improve collaboration to optimize the alignment and saliency of campaign messaging.** DDB-facilitated biweekly stakeholder meetings were not structured in a manner that encouraged collaboration. DDB would frequently quickly share updates from a slide deck, pause for a second or two for questions and then move on or end the meetings early, which did not foster collaborative discussion. Improving collaborative discussions would be especially helpful for the Power Saver Rewards Program, where the lack of steady collaboration between the main stakeholder groups resulted in multiple names being used to describe event days, and yielded low results for awareness from the tracking survey (although low awareness is expected with a new program).

- **Recommendation:** We recommend that DDB experiment with new meeting facilitation strategies to foster more productive discussion during biweekly stakeholder meetings. For example, DDB can use polls or questions posed ahead of time to respond to in the meeting to facilitate discussion. DDB should also create space for questions or discussion, potentially through "intentional silence," where the meeting facilitator purposely pauses and embraces periods of seemingly awkward silence (five to seven seconds) to create space for stakeholders to think and respond.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, we recommend sending the agenda and slides out 24–48 hours before the stakeholder meetings.

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29 <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/intentional-silence-ux/>  
Opinion Dynamics

- **Recommendation:** Given that a focus of the 2023 Flex Alert ME&O Campaign is Power Saver Rewards and that the IOUs meet separately from the main stakeholder group, we recommend that the IOUs share their meeting notes or status updates with the Flex Alert stakeholder group to foster continued information sharing and more effective collaboration with DDB and the CPUC.

■ **Conclusion: Formal partnerships between CBOs present a viable model for maximizing outreach while reducing the strain on individual CBOs.** Case study results indicate that collaboration between Sustainable Claremont and San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance (SGVCA) was beneficial as it helped alleviate the strain of campaign responsibilities in the face of many other day-to-day tasks and opened up a more extensive network of valuable contacts (e.g., local leaders) and constituent groups. DDC staff already plan to assess the feasibility of using this model again in 2023.

- **Recommendation:** DDC should support participating CBOs in identifying opportunities to collaborate with other participating organizations in their region to maximize reach. This could include encouraging partnerships in the request for proposal (RFP) process and DDC staff connecting organizations they think may be well aligned.

■ **Conclusion: Campaign implementers should take additional steps to enhance consumer understanding of pre-cooling, given the nuances of this energy-saving behavior.** For pre-cooling to be effective, Californians must (1) run their AC cooler before 4:00 p.m. and (2) set it to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Flex Alert days. While awareness of pre-cooling fluctuated throughout the campaign period, about half of Californians are willing to run their AC cooler before 4:00 p.m. or set it to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on hot days. Despite interest, there may be challenges to pre-cooling for those who are not at home or who may be at home but are busy or forgetful unless the process is automated (set it and forget it).

- **Recommendation:** Continue building awareness around pre-cooling as a two-step action with general awareness campaign assets and event-day assets. More specifically:
  - Further develop the existing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page on the Energy Upgrade California website to include the following:
    - What is pre-cooling?
    - What does “set it and forget it” mean?
    - How can I use my smart thermostat to pre-cool my home on event days?
  - Add links to the FAQ page to direct customers to their utility-sponsored smart thermostat program/rebate webpage.



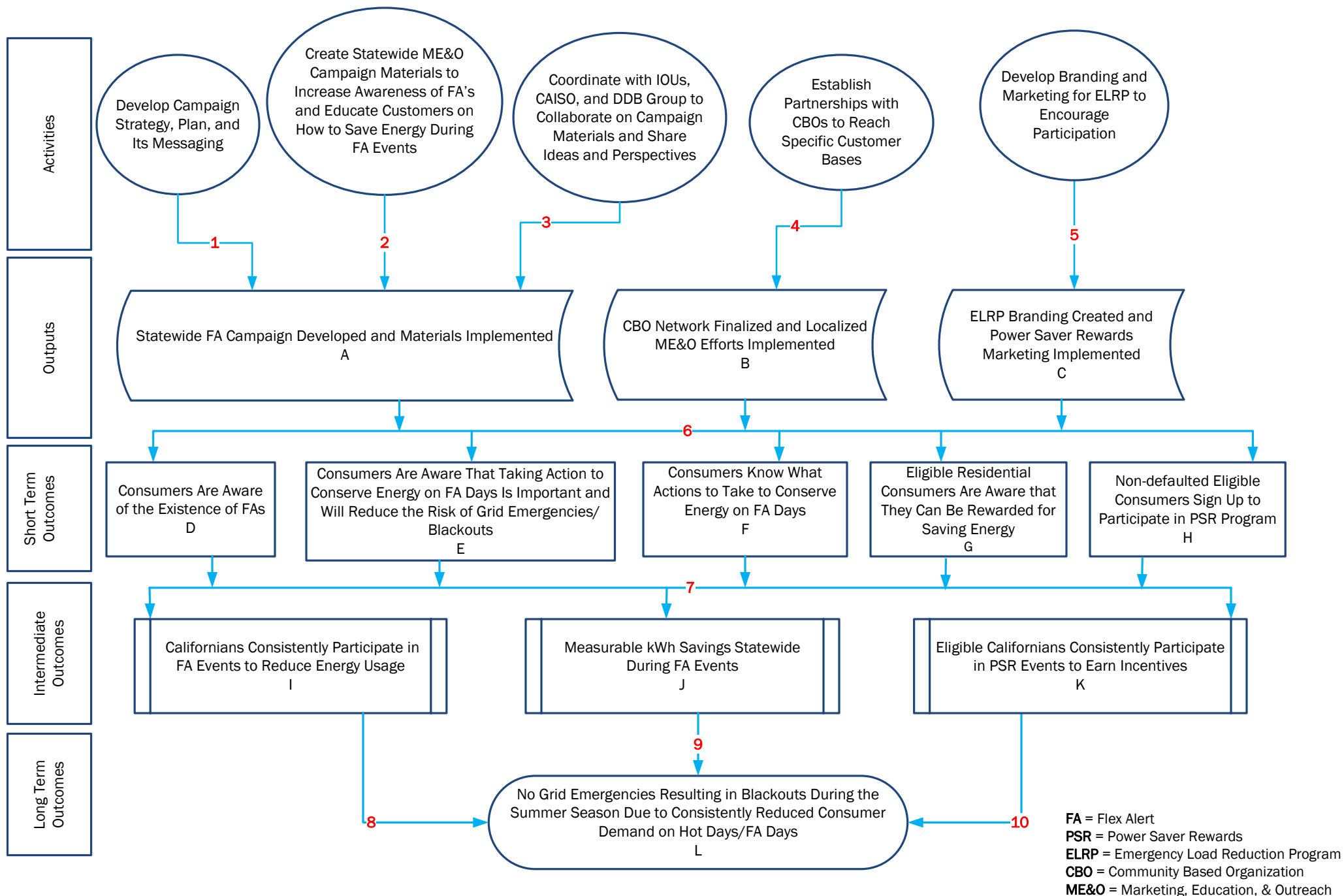
Opinion **Dynamics**

# 2022 FLEX ALERT MARKETING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

## APPENDIX A



## 2022 Flex Alert Campaign ME&O Logic Model



# CPUC Flex Alert Campaign Monthly Tracking Survey – Wave 6, DRAFT

November 4, 2022

## Instrument Information

Table 1. Overview of Data Collection Activity

Descriptor	This Instrument
Instrument Type	Web survey
Estimated Time to Complete	10 minutes
Population Description	California 18+ population, 15% Spanish speaking households
Sampling Strata Definitions	NA
Population Size	NA
Contact List Size	NA
Completion Goal(s)	500
Contact List Source and Date	YouGov
Type of Sampling	Other: YouGov panel sample
Fielding period	TBD

Table 2. Core Flex Alert Score Card Metrics

Metric	Measurement Approach	Question Number
FAMILIARITY Objective: Increase Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards recognition through awareness and familiarity		
Unaided Awareness	% of Californians who are aware of Flex Alerts Unaided % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards Unaided	Q4 Q4
Aided Awareness	% of Californians who are aware of Flex Alerts aided (% of Californians who have heard the Flex Alert name) % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards aided (% of Californians who have heard the Power Saver Rewards name)	Q5_G Q5_H
	% of Californians who are aware a Flex Alert that has been called after alert (we would assess this for respondents that are signed up for Flex Alert and respondents overall)	N/A for baseline
	% of Californians who are aware of the actions they can take to save energy during Flex Alerts (we would assess this for respondents who are signed up for Flex Alerts and respondents overall)	Q12
Flex Alert/Power Saver Familiarity	% of Californians who correctly associate Flex Alerts with goal and campaign message % of Californians who are aware of Power Saver Rewards with goal and campaign message	Q6 Q7 Q6A Q7

Metric	Measurement Approach	Question Number
<b>UNDERSTANDING</b> Objective: Increase understanding of the reason behind the need to take action during Flex Alerts		
Understanding of the connections between grid conditions and Flex Alerts	% of Californians who correctly answer a series of True/False statements that make connections between heatwaves, electricity supply, and power outages % of Californians who are able to pick out the correct definition of Flex Alerts % of Californians who are able to select the correct definition of Power Saver Rewards	Q10 Q11 Q11A
<b>BUGs</b> Objective: Discourage use of BUGs		
Likelihood to use BUGs	% of Californians who currently own a backup generator (BUG) % of Californians who do not own a BUG but are considering purchasing in near future	Q36A Q36C
<b>INTENT TO ACT AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE</b> Objective: Increase intent to sign up for Power Saver Rewards and take action during a Flex Alert		
Likelihood to take action during a Flex Alert	% of Californians who would be likely to take the specified Flex Alert actions featured in the campaign (we would assess this for respondents that are signed up for Flex Alert and respondents overall)	Q35
Likelihood to sign up	% of Californians who have signed up/intend to sign up for Power Saver Rewards program with their IOU	Q32A

Table 3. Explanatory Flex Alert Study Questions

Prioritization level	Question topic	Description	
1	Screening	Respondent's preferred language for taking the survey	Q1
1	Demographics	We ask a core set of demographic questions on all tracking surveys, YouGov generally already collects most of this information from their panelists	Q37 - Q41
1	Media channel effectiveness	Where did you hear about the Flex Alerts? Where did you hear about Power Saver Rewards?	Q8 Q8A
		How do Californians prefer to be contacted about Flex Alerts so they have a chance to earn Power Saver Rewards (e.g., phone call, text, email, etc.)?	Q32B
1	Knowledge	% of Californians who are aware of the time period when it is most important to conserve electricity on days when a Flex Alert is called	Q9
		What actions do Flex Alerts ask you to do?	Q12
2	Potential conflation with PSPS	Do Californians understand the differences between Public Safety Power Shutoffs and Flex Alerts?	Q7
2	Barriers	What barriers exist to performing requested Flex Alert Actions?	Q34
2	Pre-cooling	Are Californian's aware of pre-cooling? What do Californian's know about the energy source used during pre-cooling?	Q13 Q16 Q36



## Instrument

### Introduction (Landing Page)

Q1. [SL] What is your preferred language to take this survey? [FORCE RESPONSE]

¿Cuál es su idioma preferido para realizar esta encuesta?

1. English
2. Spanish (Espanol)

### Electric and Gas Utilities

[ASK ALL] [DO NOT FORCE RESPONSE]

Q2. [D5] Who provides electric service to your home?

1. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
2. Southern California Edison (Edison/SCE)
3. San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E)
96. Another provider, please specify: [OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]
98. Don't know

[ASK ALL] [DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

Q3. [D6] Who provides gas service to your home?

1. Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)
2. Southern California Gas (SoCalGas/SCG)
3. San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E)
4. Southern California Edison (Edison Catalina)
96. Another provider, please specify: [OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]
97. None / don't have gas
98. Don't know

### Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards General Awareness

[ASK ALL]

Q4. [BAW1] When you think of brands, campaigns, or initiatives that encourage Californians to save energy, which ones come to mind? *Please provide up to 3 responses.* [DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

1. [OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]

[ASK ALL]

Q5. [BAW2] Below is a list of several brands, organizations, or campaigns. For each one, please tell us if you have heard of it before today. [FORCE RESPONSE]

[DISPLAY AS A MATRIX, RANDOMIZE ALL ITEMS]

[LOGIC]	Response Text	1 Yes	2 No
	A. Energy Upgrade California	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	B. [2021 Response option deleted]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	C. ENERGY STAR	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	D. Save Our Water	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	E. Flex Your Power	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	F. [2021 Response option deleted]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	G. Flex Alert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	H. Power Saver Rewards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards Familiarity

Q6. [FAF1] [IF Q5G =1: To the best of your knowledge] [IF Q5G=2: If you had to guess], what is the purpose of **Flex Alerts**? [SINGLE RESPONSE, RANDOMIZE LIST] [DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

1. To prevent an outage by reducing electricity use when energy is most in demand
2. To reduce emissions
3. To inform customers about power shut-offs/rolling blackouts in order to prevent wildfires
4. To notify customers when their electricity usage is high
5. To save money for my electric utility
6. To inform customers about the best times to use more electricity to help them save money
7. Other, please specify: [OPEN END] [ANCHOR]
98. Don't know [ANCHOR]

Q6A. [PSRF1] [IF Q5H =1: To the best of your knowledge] [IF Q5H=2: If you had to guess], what is the purpose of the **Power Saver Rewards Program**? [SINGLE RESPONSE, RANDOMIZE LIST] [DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

1. To reward customers for reducing their electricity use when energy is most in demand
2. To reduce emissions
3. To inform customers about power shut-offs/rolling blackouts in order to prevent wildfires
4. To notify customers when their electricity usage is high
5. To save money for my electric utility
6. Other, please specify: [OPEN END] [ANCHOR]
98. Don't know [ANCHOR]

Q7. [FAF2] We have listed a few different campaign messages. Please use the drop-down menu to select the campaign name that best matches each campaign message. [DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

If you don't know or have never heard of that campaign, please make your best guess. *Each message corresponds to only one campaign.*

[Response options: Flex Alerts, [2021 response option deleted], Public Safety Power Shutoffs, One Less Spark, Keep it Golden, Power Saver Rewards]

1. Temporarily reduce your electricity use to prevent outages on hot days when demand for electricity is high

2. [Response option removed: *Take action to be healthy...*]
3. Prepare for a potential power outage in your area to prevent wildfires
4. Take action to help prevent wildfires
5. Sign up to join the movement of Californians that are saving energy and fighting climate change
6. Help make our energy grid stronger and more reliable for all Californians—and get paid for it too

[ASK IF Q5G =1]

Q8. [FAF3] Where have you heard about ***Flex Alerts***? Please select all that apply. [RANDOMIZE, DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

Information Source	Select all that apply
1. Radio commercials	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. TV commercials	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Online advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ads in my community, such as billboards or on buses	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. A text message alert	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. A friend, family member, or colleague	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Local news coverage (television, print or online)	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Emails from my gas or electric provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Emails from California ISO	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internet search	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Flex Alert website	<input type="checkbox"/>
96. [ANCHOR] Other (please specify) [OPEN END]	<input type="checkbox"/>
97. [ANCHOR] I do not recall [EXCLUSIVE]	<input type="checkbox"/>

[ASK IF Q5H =1]

Q8A. [PSRF3] Where have you heard about ***Power Saver Rewards***? Please select all that apply. [RANDOMIZE, DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE]

Information Source	Select all that apply
1. Radio commercials	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. TV commercials	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Online advertisements	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Ads in my community, such as billboards or on buses	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. A text message alert	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. A friend, family member, or colleague	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Local news coverage (television, print or online)	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Emails from my gas or electric provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Emails from California ISO	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internet search	<input type="checkbox"/>

Information Source	Select all that apply
12. Flex Alert website	<input type="checkbox"/>
96. [ANCHOR] Other (please specify) [OPEN END]	<input type="checkbox"/>
97. [ANCHOR] I do not recall [EXCLUSIVE]	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Flex Alert Understanding

[FOR ENTIRE SECTION: DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE unless otherwise indicated]

Q9. [FAU1] [IF Q5G =1: To the best of your knowledge] [IF Q5G=2: If you had to guess], on days when a Flex Alert is called, during what time period is it most important for Californians to conserve electricity? *Please select one.*

1. 6 a.m. to 11 a.m.
2. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
3. 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.
4. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.
98. Don't know

Q10. [FAU2] Please select whether you think the following statements *about California* (CA) are true or false. If you don't know, it's fine to guess. [RANDOMIZE]

	1. True	2. False
A. On hot sunny days, when many people use their air conditioners, CA's electricity demand may exceed its supply		
B. In CA, innovations in battery storage have made it possible to store enough energy generated by solar panels when the sun is shining to completely power our electricity grid when it gets dark (FALSE)		
C. CA's electricity supply is most limited in the evening hours when solar panels start to generate less electricity and Californians are using more electricity		
D. CA's electricity supply is most limited in the morning hours when solar power plants are not fully up and running yet and Californians are using more electricity (FALSE)		
E. When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, there is a risk that there will not be enough electricity for all Californians and the power grid operator may need to create localized power outages to protect the grid		
F. [2021 option deleted for length]		
G. When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, the power grid operator may ask Californians to conserve energy to prevent wildfires (FALSE)		
H. [2021 option deleted for length]		

Q11. [FAU3] [IF Q5G =1: To the best of your knowledge] [IF Q5G=2: If you had to guess], which statement is true about *Flex Alerts*? *Please select one.* If you don't know, it's fine to guess [CORRECT ANSWER IS 1] [RANDOMIZE]

**Flex Alerts are called when..**

1. the power grid operator predicts an increased demand for electricity due to high temperatures which could result in power outages.
2. the power grid operator predicts a decreased demand for electricity, which interrupts the usual balance of electricity supply and demand and could result in power outages.
3. the investors of California utilities are concerned about electricity variations that could reduce positive returns to ratepayers, thus negatively impacting their stock investments.
4. utilities predict that wildfires are likely to impact the reliability of the electric grid and/or specific transmission lines in a region.

Q11A. [PSR\_FAU5] [IF Q5H =1: To the best of your knowledge] [IF Q5H=2: If you had to guess], which statement is true about **Power Saver Rewards**? Please select one. If you don't know, it's fine to guess [CORRECT ANSWER IS 1] [RANDOMIZE]

**Power Saver Rewards are...**

1. part of a statewide program designed to help electricity consumers earn credits in a future bill statement for reducing energy consumption or increasing electricity supply during periods of electrical grid emergencies.
2. part of a statewide program designed to help electricity consumers earn credits for shutting all power off indefinitely upon electrical grid emergencies.
3. offered to all Californians on a "first come, first serve" basis by California utilities regardless of customer status.
4. only offered in the event of a wildfire impacting the reliability of the electric grid and/or specific transmission lines in a region.

**[ASK IF Q5G =1 (HEARD OF FLEX ALERTS)]**

Q12. [FAU4] Flex Alerts ask Californians to take specific actions. Below is a list of actions. Please select all the actions that Flex Alerts ask you to take. [RANDOMIZE LIST; MULTIPLE CHOICE]

1. Set thermostat to 78 degrees or higher between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
2. [Removed option from 2021 - close window coverings]
3. [Removed option from 2021 - using fans]
4. Run your AC cooler before 4 p.m.
5. Turn off all unnecessary lights between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
6. [Removed option from 2021 - major appliances]
7. Unplug unused items between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
8. Do your dishes and/or laundry before 4 p.m. or after 9 p.m.
9. [Removed option from 2021 - charge devices]
10. [Removed option from 2021 - charge EVs]
11. [Removed option from 2021 - all of the above]
12. Turn off AC between 4p.m. and 9 p.m.
13. Air dry clothes between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
96. None of the above actions [ANCHOR] [EXCLUSIVE]
98. Don't know [ANCHOR] [EXCLUSIVE]

**[ASK IF Q12\_4=0 OR Q5G =2 (NOT AWARE OF PRE-COOLING)]**

Q13. [FAU11] Pre-cooling is the process of both setting your AC a few degrees lower than usual in the morning and early afternoon and a few degrees higher than usual between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. on hot days.

Before today, had you heard of pre-cooling?

1. Yes
2. No
98. Don't know

Q14. [FAU12] [Removed during 2021 tracking survey]

Q15. [FAU13] [Removed]

Q16. [FAU14] [IF Q12\_4=1 OR Q13=1: "To the best of your knowledge"] [IF Q13=2 OR Q13=98: "If you had to guess"], which of the following statements is true about pre-cooling? [RANDOMIZE LIST]

1. Pre-cooling before 4 p.m. uses more clean energy from solar panels as compared to regular cooling from 4 – 9 p.m.
2. Pre-cooling before 4pm uses the same energy resources as regular cooling from 4 – 9 p.m.
3. Pre-cooling before 4 p.m. uses more energy from "dirty sources" as compared to regular cooling from 4 – 9 p.m. which uses more clean energy from the sun.
4. None of the statements are true.

Q17. [FAU5] *[Deleted 2021 question – are you currently signed up for Flex Alerts? If not, how likely are you...]*

Q18. [FAU6] *[Deleted 2021 question - how would you prefer to be notified]*

Q19. [BAT1] *[Deleted 2021 question - how relevant are Flex Alerts for you?]*

Q20. [BAT2] *[Deleted 2021 question - how much do you think the people of California need a campaign like Flex Alerts?]*

## Flex Alert Awareness Post Flex Alert

Q21. [FAU7] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

Q22. [FAU8] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

Q23. [FAU9] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

Q24. [FAU10] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

## Psychographics

Q25. [P1] *[Deleted 2021 question – to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?]*



Q26. [P2] *[Deleted 2021 question – if a power outage due to a heat wave were to occur in your local area, how much, if at all, do you think it would....?]*

Q27. [P3] *[Deleted 2021 question – how worried, if at all, were you about the effects...?]*

## Equity

Q28. [E1] *[Deleted 2021 question – heat waves can affect households in multiple ways. Please indicate...]*

Q29. [E2] *[Deleted 2021 question – power outages can affect households in multiple ways. Please indicate...]*

## Intent

Q30. [I1] *[Deleted 2021 question – if the state of California asked you to temporarily reduce...?]*

Q31. [I2] *[Deleted 2021 question – if your electricity provider asked you to temporarily reduce...?]*

Q32. [I3] *[Deleted 2021 question – the state of California will be rolling out their Flex Alert Campaign early this summer...]*

[FOR ENTIRE SECTION: DO NOT FORCE RESPONSE]

### [ASK IF Q2= 1, 2, OR 3 – (electric provider is an IOU)]

Q32A. [I6] Some electric utilities, including yours, have begun offering the Power Saver Rewards Program, where Californians who are customers of those utilities have the opportunity to enroll to receive bill credits for reducing their energy use when a state-wide Flex Alert event is called.

How likely are you to enroll in the Power Saver Rewards program in the next couple of months?

1. Extremely likely
2. Very likely
3. Somewhat likely
4. A little likely
5. Not at all likely
99. I am already enrolled

### [ASK IF Q2= 1, 2, OR 3 – (electric provider is an IOU)]

Q32B. [I7] How would you prefer to be notified about an upcoming Flex Alert event, if at all, so that you might have a chance to earn Power Saver Rewards? *Please select all that apply.* [MULTIPLE RESPONSE; RANDOMIZE]

1. Phone call
2. Text message
3. Email
5. Other [Open end, Anchor]
4. I would not want to be notified [ANCHOR; EXCLUSIVE]

Q33. [I4] What benefits, if any, do you see resulting from taking action during a Flex Alert? *Please select all that apply.* [RANDOMIZE LIST; MULTIPLE CHOICE]

- 1 It helps avoid blackouts
- 2 It helps me save energy
- 3 It helps me save money
- 5 It helps prevent forest fires
- 6 It helps the community by making energy available for those in need
- 8 It helps save the environment
- 96 I do not see any benefits [ANCHOR; EXCLUSIVE]
- 99 Don't know [ANCHOR; EXCLUSIVE]
- 0. Other, please specify: [OPEN END] [ANCHOR]

Q34. [I5] What barriers or challenges, if any, do you see that would make it hard for you to reduce your electricity use during a Flex Alert?

Please select all that apply. [RANDOMIZE LIST; MULTIPLE CHOICE]

- 1 I work from home
- 2 The heat would be too uncomfortable
- 3 My energy use is already too low
- 4 I am concerned about my health or another household member's health
- 5 [Removed option from 2021 – other people not taking action]
- 6 There are some electricity uses I cannot delay
- 97 [Removed option from 2021 – not interested]
- 98 There have already been too many Flex Alerts called for me to take action every time [ANCHOR]
- 0. Other, please specify: [OPEN END] [ANCHOR]
- 96 No barriers [EXCLUSIVE; ANCHOR]
- 99 Don't know [EXCLUSIVE; ANCHOR]

## Behavior Change

[FOR ENTIRE SECTION: DO NOT FORCE RESPONSE]

[RANDOMIZE RESPONSE ITEMS 1-10]

Q35. [BC2] Below is a list of household actions. Please rate how likely you would be to take each action on hot days, if asked by the state of California. Choose “n/a” if the action does not apply to you. How likely would you be to do the following on hot days? [1 to 5 scale 1= Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, A little likely, 5=Not at all likely, 96= N/A]

- 1. Set thermostat to 78 degrees or higher between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- 2. [Removed option from 2021 - close window coverings]
- 3. [Removed option from 2021 - using fans]
- 4. Run your AC cooler before 4 p.m.
- 5. Turn off all unnecessary lights between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- 6. [Removed option from 2021 - major appliances]
- 7. Unplug unused items between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- 8. Do your dishes and/or laundry before 4 p.m. or after 9 p.m.
- 9. [Removed option from 2021 - charge devices]
- 10. [Removed option from 2021 - charge EVs]
- 11. Turn off AC between 4p.m. and 9 p.m.
- 12. Air dry clothes between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Q36. As a reminder, pre-cooling is the process of both setting your AC to be a few degrees lower than usual in the morning and early afternoon, and a few degrees higher than usual between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. on hot days.

[BC4] **How likely** would you be to pre-cool your home on hot days, if asked by the state of California? [1 to 5 scale 1= Extremely likely, Very likely, Somewhat likely, A little likely, 5=Not at all likely, 96= Does not apply]

Thank you for your answers so far, you're close to the end of the survey!

## BUGs

Q36A. [Bugs1] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

Q36B. [Bugs2] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

Q36C. [Bugs3] [REMOVED OPTION IN W6 2022]

## Demographics

[FOR ENTIRE SECTION: DO NOT FORCE A RESPONSE unless otherwise indicated]

[ASK ALL]

Q37. [D8] Which of the following best describes your home/residence?

[SINGLE RESPONSE]

1. Single-family detached home (not a duplex, townhome, or apartment; attached garage is OK)
2. Single-family attached home (includes townhome)
3. Mobile home
4. Apartment or condominium with 1 unit
5. Apartment or condominium with 2-3 units
6. Apartment or condominium with 4-9 units
7. Apartment or condominium with 10 or more units
96. Other, please specify: [OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]
98. Don't know

[ASK ALL]

Q38. [D2] Do you rent or own your home? [FORCE RESPONSE]

1. Rent
2. Own
3. Other (specify) [OPEN ENDED RESPONSE]

[ASK IF Q38=1]

Q39. [D3] Do you pay your own electric bill or is it included in your rent?

1. Pay bill
2. Included in rent

[ASK IF Q38=1]

Q40. [D4] Do you pay your own gas bill or is it included in your rent?

1. Pay bill
2. Included in rent
3. Don't have gas service to my home

Q41. [bilingual] What level of Spanish/English is spoken in your home? [FORCE RESPONSE]

1. Spanish only
2. Mostly Spanish but some English
3. Spanish and English equally
4. Mostly English but some Spanish
5. English only
0. Other, please specify: [OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE]
97. Not applicable
99. Prefer not to say

CL1. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We appreciate your responses.

# Flex Alert ME&O Campaign Evaluation: DDC In-Depth Interview Guide

December 8, 2022

## Instrument Information

Table 1 includes key characteristics about the instrument.

Table 1. Overview of Data Collection Activity

Descriptor	This Instrument
Instrument Type	In-depth interview
Estimated Time to Complete	45-60 minutes
Population Description	DDC Staff closely involved with CBOs
Completion Goal(s)	1 Interview with pertinent DDC staff
Outreach Methods	Email

## Research Objectives Information

Table 2 maps the research objectives and questions to specific questions in the instrument.

Table 2. Research Objectives and Associated Questions

Research Objective/Question	Associated Instrument Questions
How do CBOs work with DDB Group to execute campaign responsibilities?	Q3 - Q5
How is DDC utilizing CBOs within the Flex Alert campaign?	Q2, Q7 - Q9
Who are CBOs reaching? Does that align with campaign targets?	Q6, Q8
Do CBO partners have the capacity to support the campaign's objectives?	Q6 - Q9
How effective have CBOs been in supporting campaign calls to action?	Q9
What did/did not work well? Why?	Q5, Q6 - Q9
What lessons could be learned for future campaign cycles?	Q10 - Q9

## Program Description

The Flex Alert campaign is an annual marketing strategy deployed by the CPUC and stakeholders to encourage Californian's to reduce their energy usage when Flex Alerts are called by the California Independent System Operator (CAISO). Flex Alerts are statewide and encourage participation for all Californian's. Alongside this statewide approach, the three main Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) in California are responsible for notifying their customers of Flex Alert days and providing them with details on how to enroll in their Emergency Load Reduction Program (ELRP), now branded as Power Saver Rewards. This program enables customers to collect

rebates in exchange for decreasing their energy usage during Flex Alerts. After some new adjustments were made to the program in 2021, the ELRP now covers IOU commercial and residential customers, increasing the number of individuals available to ease the strain on the grid during peak usage days.

## Instrument

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us today about DDC's experiences and perspectives collaborating with the CBOs participating in the Flex Alert ME&O campaign. My questions will ask some specifics about the collaboration process with CBOs, DDC's perceived effectiveness of CBO work, and any lessons learned in using CBOs as a channel to support the campaign. Before we begin, do you mind if we record this interview so that we don't need to take notes? Thank you.

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

## Background Questions

I would like to start with a few preliminary questions.

Q1. First, please describe your role is at DDC and specifically your involvement in the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards ME&O Campaign.

1. How long have you been in this position and involved with the campaign?

## Management and Support of CBO Network

Now, I'd like to walkthrough DDC's management and support of CBOs during the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards ME&O campaign, as well as any collaboration.

Q2. First, walk me through the RFP process and what DDC was looking for in its selection of CBOs.

1. What were the main criteria used to evaluate CBOs applying for grant funds to support the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign?
2. To what degree did the CBO responses meet those criteria? [PROBE: overall selection rate]
3. How many CBOs applied for grant funding to support the campaign?

Q3. What did the onboarding process look like for the selected CBOs?

1. [PROBE]: What kind of training or orientation did CBOs receive (if any) about the campaign and its goals for the 2022 Flex Alert event season?



- Q4. Please describe how DDC worked with grant recipients in executing their scope.
1. Were there any requirements around the marketing, education, and outreach activities or strategies that CBOs implemented in their support of the campaign's objectives? If so, what were they? [PROBE: differences across CBOs]
  2. Throughout the campaign, what was communication like between CBOs and DDC? [PROBE: topics, frequency, challenges, effectiveness]
  3. How would you characterize any collaboration that took place between DDC and participating CBOs? [PROBE: type and nature of collaboration, and effectiveness]
  4. Outside of any regular meetings, what additional support did DDC offer to CBOs? [PROBE: FAQ sheets, flyers, utilization of existing relationships, ad hoc check-ins, etc.]
- Q5. How satisfied were you with the level of communication and progress reporting you received from CBOs? Why do you say that?

## CBO Performance and Effectiveness

Now I'd like to discuss DDC's perspective on CBO effectiveness and performance in relation to the campaign's objectives.

- Q6. What data sources and methods did DDC use to track overall CBO performance?
1. [IF NEEDED]: What key performance indicators did DDC track to measure CBO performance across campaign objectives?
- Q7. From your perspective, how well did CBOs help aid the campaign in executing its overarching objectives? Why do you say that?

[PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED]

- Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards Awareness?
- Knowledge and Understanding of Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards?
- Promoting sign-ups for Power Saver Rewards?
- Getting residents to participate in Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards events?

1. What CBO activities were the most effective at supporting these objectives?
2. What CBO activities were the least effective at supporting these objectives?

- Q8. From your perspective, how well did CBOs reach the campaign's core customer groups?

[PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED]

- Low-Income?
- Seniors?
- Multicultural?
- Residents with Disabilities?

- Rural and Agricultural Residents?
- High-energy Users?

1. Which core customer groups were not reached as effectively as the others (if at all)? Why do you think those groups in particular were hard to reach?
2. Which activities do you feel were the most successful at reaching core customer groups? Why do you say that?
3. How do you think CBOs could better connect with core customer groups about Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards (if at all)?

Q9. How effective do you think the CBOs were at supporting Flex Alert **calls to action** among your target communities?

1. What activities do you feel were the most effective/successful at supporting Flex Alert calls to action? Why do you say that?
2. How do you think CBOs could better support Flex Alert calls to action (if at all)?

## Future Improvements

Q10. What have been the biggest challenges in working with CBOs to achieve campaign objectives?

1. What strategies are being considered or have been implemented to overcome them? [PROBE: How well are they working? How do you know that?]
2. [PROBE]: What additional resources or support (if any) could DDC provide to CBOs?
3. [PROBE]: What specific actions could CBOs take (if any) to better support the campaign?

Q11. Based on your experience with the 2022 campaign, what do you think the future prospects are for successful CBO engagement?

Q12. Thinking back over the past year, where has DDC done especially well with the management of the CBO grant program that should be carried over into the next campaign cycle? [PROBE: RFP process, management and support, data tracking and reporting, communications, etc.]

1. Why do you think they were successful?

Q13. What specific areas of processes in the CBO grant program do you feel DDC should focus on improving moving forward? [PROBE: RFP process, management and support, data tracking and reporting, communications, etc.]

1. Why do you think they need improving?
2. [PROBE:] What changes can be made to attract more CBOs to the campaign?
3. [PROBE:] What are some ways DDC can better manage and support CBOs in the future?

## Closing [ASK ALL]

Q14. Is there anything else about DDC's collaboration with CBOs and the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards Campaign that you'd like to share?

Q15. Is there anything else we haven't covered that you'd like to discuss?

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with us. This information has been extremely helpful to our work and for the campaign going forward. We will be in touch if we have any further questions.

# Flex Alert ME&O Campaign Evaluation: CBO In-Depth Interview Guide

December 8, 2022

## Instrument Information

Table 1 includes key characteristics about the instrument.

Table 1. Overview of Data Collection Activity

Descriptor	This Instrument
Instrument Type	In-depth interview
Estimated Time to Complete	45 minutes
Population Description	CBOs who receive approved funding to conduct Flex Alert Campaign ME&O
Population Size	16 partnering CBOs
Completion Goal(s)	8-10 CBOs
Outreach Methods	Email

## Research Objectives Information

Table 2 maps the research objectives and questions to specific questions within the instrument.

Table 2. Research Objectives and Associated Questions

Research Objective/Question	Associated Instrument Questions
What motivated CBOs to participate in the campaign?	Q3
How do CBOs work with DDB Group to execute campaign responsibilities?	Q4, Q5
What outreach strategies are used by CBOs to educate their constituents?	Q8
Who are CBOs reaching? Does that align with campaign targets?	Q6, Q7
Do CBO partners have the capacity to support the campaign's objectives?	Q9 - Q12
How effective have CBOs been in supporting campaign calls to action?	Q12
What did/did not work well? Why?	Q9 - Q12
What lessons could be learned for future campaign cycles?	Q13 - Q17

## Program Description

The Flex Alert campaign is an annual marketing strategy deployed by the CPUC and stakeholders to encourage Californian's to reduce their energy usage when Flex Alerts are called by the California Independent System Operator (CAISO). Flex Alerts are statewide and encourage participation for all Californian's. Alongside this

statewide approach, the three main Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) in California are responsible for notifying their customers of Flex Alert days and providing them with details on how to enroll in the Emergency Load Reduction Program (ELRP), now branded as Power Saver Rewards. This program enables customers to collect rebates in exchange for decreasing their energy usage during Flex Alerts. After adjustments were made to the program in 2021, the ELRP now covers IOU commercial and residential customers, increasing the number of individuals available to ease the strain on the grid during peak usage days.

## Instrument

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today about [ORGANIZATION NAME]'s role in the Flex Alert /Power Saver Rewards ME&O Campaign for 2022. My questions cover your partnership with the campaign, specifically how your organization reaches and interacts with its key constituencies, how your activities support the Flex Alert campaign, and what did and didn't work well over the summer campaign period. Your answers won't be tied to your name or your organization name in what we report to the CPUC. Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

Before we begin, do you mind if we record this interview to support my notetaking? Thank you.

### General Questions

I would like to start with some general questions about your organization's mission, as well as your role.

- Q1. First, what is your title and role within the organization?
1. How long have you been in this position?
- Q2. Tell me about what your organization does and who it serves. [PROBE: mission, constituents, services, and service territory/reach]
- Q3. What were the main reasons your organization decided to apply for grant funds to support the state's Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards marketing, education, and outreach campaign?
1. [PROBE]: What opportunities or benefits did you see for your organization in contributing to this campaign?

### Campaign Partnership and Involvement

Now, I'd like to ask you some more detailed questions about your involvement in and partnership with the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign.

- Q4. First, please describe your organization's experience responding to the RFP to partner with the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign.

1. How did you hear about this opportunity?
  2. How easy or difficult was it for your organization to complete the application? [PROBE: ease or difficulty of meeting qualifying criteria]
  3. Was communication and follow-up from the DDB Group clear and timely?
- Q5. Please describe how your organization worked with the DDB Group in executing your agreed upon scope of work.
1. [PROBE]: What type of administrative or other support did they provide?
  2. [PROBE]: What were your ongoing interactions like?
  3. [PROBE]: How would you describe the general nature of the partnership?
- Q6. What types of communities and individuals did you target through your campaign-related activities? [PROBE: Core Customer Groups: low-income residents, senior residents, multicultural residents, high-energy users, residents with disabilities, rural and agricultural residents, etc.]
1. How were these groups different or similar to who you normally serve?
  2. How did receiving grant funds impact your ability to serve these groups of people?
- Q7. How would you describe your organization's objectives when it comes to supporting the state's Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign? [PROBE: raising awareness, increasing knowledge and understanding, encouraging/facilitating program participation]
- Q8. What activities did your organization conduct to achieve these objectives?
- [IF NOT MENTIONED]
1. What activities raised awareness around Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards?
  2. What activities increased knowledge and understanding of Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards?
  3. What activities promoted signups for Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards?

## Successes and Challenges

I'm going to transition to asking about the successes and challenges your organization faced over the course of the campaign period.

- Q9. Overall, how impactful was the grant money you received on your organization's operations to support the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign?
- Q10. What specific activities have been the most successful in achieving your organization's campaign objectives as it relates to supporting the state's Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign? Why do you say that?
1. [PROBE:] What resources helped you with your success? *[If unclear: pre-established relationships with community, collaborations, people, program support, timing, money, interest]*
  2. Which objectives were achieved more than others (if any)?



- Q11. Overall, how effective do you think your organization was at **promoting** Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards among your target communities?
1. Why do you say that?
  2. How did you measure this effectiveness/success?
  3. What barriers or challenges did your organization encounter with respect to promoting Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards?
  4. How did these barriers affect your ability to promote Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards (if at all)?
- Q12. Overall, how effective do you think your organization was at **supporting** Flex Alert calls to action among your target communities?
1. Why do you say that?
  2. How did you measure this effectiveness/success?
  3. What barriers or challenges did your organization encounter with respect to supporting Flex Alert calls to action?
  4. How did these barriers affect your ability to support Flex Alert calls to action (if at all)?

## Lessons Learned for Future Improvement

For the final portion of our conversation, I'd like to reflect upon your organization's overall experience partnering with the campaign and any lessons learned that can be used to inform future improvements.

- Q13. How satisfied are you with the level of support that was provided by the DDB Group throughout the duration of the campaign? Why do you say that?
1. What could have DDB done better to support your organization's Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign activities and objectives? [PROBE: more check-ins or meetings, additional supporting material or resources, increased funding, feedback on activities, etc.]
- Q14. What resources (if any), either from DDB or elsewhere, would have helped your organization be more successful? [If unclear: pre-established relationships with community, collaborations, program support, timing, money, interest]
- Q15. How do you think your organization could better connect with target groups about Flex Alerts/Power Saver Rewards (if at all)?
- Q16. What could campaign stakeholders like DDB [and the CPUC] do to get more CBOs involved in the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign?
1. What do you see as the biggest barriers to CBOs getting involved in and partnering with this campaign?
- Q17. What recommendations, if any, do you have for future CBOs that participate in the Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards campaign?

Q18. If funding were available, would you apply again to be a part of the Flex Alert;/Power Saver Rewards ME&O campaign next year? Why or why not?

### Closing [ASK ALL]

Q19. Is there anything else about your partnership with the Flex Alert ME&O campaign that you'd like to share or that we haven't discussed?

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with us about the campaign and your organization's involvement. This information has been extremely helpful to our work and for the campaign going forward. We will be in touch if we have any further questions.



Opinion **Dynamics**

# 2022 FLEX ALERT MARKETING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

## APPENDIX B





Opinion **Dynamics**

# 2022 FLEX ALERT MARKETING EVALUATION

Deliverable in Milestone 2:  
Summary of Survey Results  
(Waves 1–6)

February 10, 2023

***Flex together.  
Save together!***

During a Flex Alert, we  
can save more than just  
our power, with Power  
Saver Rewards.

***The Power is Ours***



ME&O

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# Background

- A Flex Alert is a call to consumers to voluntarily cut back on and shift electricity use to off-peak hours (i.e., before 4:00 p.m. or after 9:00 p.m.).
  - In the summer of 2021, the CPUC charged DDB, the campaign implementer, with developing a media campaign to educate consumers about Flex Alerts and associated energy saving actions.
  - The Flex Alert campaign was needed to increase grid reliability and reduce potential power outages on hot summer days, like those experienced in August 2020.
- The Power Saver Rewards program allows enrolled IOU customers to earn bill credits when they decrease their energy use during a Flex Alert.
  - For the summer of 2022, the CPUC expanded the Flex Alert campaign to include the Power Saver Rewards program.
  - Customers who are enrolled or defaulted into the Power Saver Rewards program can earn bill credits for decreasing their energy use when a Flex Alert or other emergency alerts are called.
- Opinion Dynamics is evaluating the performance of the Flex Alert campaign (including Power Saver Rewards) in meeting its stated objectives and program performance metrics.
- This report provides summary findings from the residential Flex Alert tracking survey conducted from June 2022 to November 2022.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES*	KEY METRICS	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
Increase Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards recognition through awareness and familiarity	Unaided awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand Californians’ awareness of Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards and sources of awareness</li> <li>Understand Californians’ awareness that a Flex Alert has been called</li> <li>Understand Californians’ familiarity with the goals of Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards</li> </ul>
	Aided awareness	
	Flex Alert/Power Saver Rewards familiarity	
Increase understanding of the reason behind the need to act during Flex Alerts and what actions to take	Understanding of the connections between grid conditions and Flex Alerts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess Californians’ understanding of the times during which they should reduce their energy use when a Flex Alert is called</li> <li>Understand Californians’ understanding of the relationship between heatwaves, electricity supply, and power outages</li> <li>Understand Californians’ awareness of the actions they can take to save energy during a Flex Alert</li> </ul>
	Understanding what actions can be taken	
Increase intent to sign up for Power Saver Rewards and take action during a Flex Alert	Likelihood to reduce usage during a Flex Alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand Californians’ likelihood of enrolling in the Power Saver Rewards program through their IOU</li> <li>Understand Californians’ likelihood of taking actions to delay their energy use during peak hours</li> <li>Understand the extent to which Californians are taking actions during a Flex Alert</li> </ul>
	Likelihood to sign up for Power Saver Rewards	
	Action	

\* Discouraging use of back-up generators (BUGs) was an initial campaign objective with associated metrics but was removed as an objective mid-campaign upon direction by the CPUC. Therefore, we do not report any key metrics or results for BUGs. Please see the individual reports for Waves 1–4, if interested.

# Survey Methodology

- Opinion Dynamics conducted a bilingual online survey of 500 Californians in each wave with a sample drawn from YouGov's non-probability opt-in panel.
- Results are weighted to be representative of the State of California's population based on gender, age, race, home-ownership, education, whether the respondent is Spanish-speaking, and income using propensity score matching and post-stratification.
- Respondents could complete the survey in either English or Spanish, with the majority choosing English.
  - **English:** 2,513 (84%)
  - **Spanish:** 487 (16%)
- The six waves of the tracking survey were fielded between June 10 and November 21

# History of 2022 Flex Alerts

11 Flex Alerts were called over the duration of the campaign period.

August 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

September 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

**Note:** Throughout this report “FA<sup>10</sup>” refers to the consecutive 10-day stretch of Flex Alerts that were called between August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 9<sup>th</sup>.













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## EVALUATION SUMMARY



2022 Campaign Objectives	2022 Key Metrics Tracker	2022 Campaign Outcomes
Increase Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards recognition through awareness and familiarity	<b>Unaided awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flex Alert </li> <li>Power Saver Rewards </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Californians’ unaided awareness of Flex Alerts increased throughout the summer period of the campaign and remained higher than historical results by end of campaign</li> <li>Californians’ unaided awareness of Power Saver Rewards remained consistent throughout the campaign</li> <li>Californians’ aided awareness of Flex Alerts increased throughout the campaign and remained higher than historical results by end of campaign</li> <li>Californians’ aided awareness of Power Saver Rewards increased throughout the campaign</li> <li>Californians’ ability to accurately select the purpose of both Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards increased throughout the summer period, but decreased back to initial levels in the second half of the campaign</li> <li>The share of Californians that recalled Flex Alert events remained consistent throughout the campaign; however, this was a greater share than historically observed</li> </ul>
	<b>Aided awareness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flex Alert </li> <li>Power Saver Rewards </li> </ul>	
	<b>Familiarity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flex Alert </li> <li>Power Saver Rewards </li> </ul>	
Increase understanding of the reason behind the need to act during Flex Alerts and what actions to take	<b>Understanding of the connections between grid conditions and Flex Alerts</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The percentage of Californians that could accurately identify why Flex Alerts are called initially increased, but returned to baseline levels</li> <li>Californians’ ability to identify the correct time period to conserve energy during a Flex Alert fluctuated throughout the campaign</li> <li>Californian’s understanding of the connections between grid conditions and Flex Alerts remained fairly stable throughout the campaign</li> <li>Awareness of specific actions to take generally increased over the campaign, for those already aware of Flex Alerts</li> </ul>
	<b>Understanding what actions can be taken</b> 	
Increase intent to sign up for Power Saver Rewards and take action during a Flex Alert	<b>Likelihood to reduce usage during a Flex Alert</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Californians’ likelihood to take actions and reduce usage during a Flex Alert generally peaked in the summer but fell back in the fall</li> <li>Californians’ likelihood of enrolling in the Power Saver Rewards program fluctuated throughout the campaign, peaking in September following the 10-day stretch of alerts</li> <li>Nearly all Californians who were aware a Flex Alert had been called took</li> </ul>
	<b>Likelihood to sign up for Power Saver Rewards</b> 	

# Summary of Key Findings

## Flex Alert awareness and knowledge increased since the beginning of the 2022 campaign

- Unaided awareness increased over campaign (3% baseline, 9% in November).
- Aided awareness increased throughout the campaign (52% baseline, 63% in November).
- Californians' ability to accurately identify the correct time period in which to conserve energy during a Flex Alert increased over the campaign, peaking in October at 67% from a baseline of 60%.



# Summary of Key Findings

Californians' aided awareness of PSR grew, while unaided awareness remained low and consistent over the campaign period, and familiarity and understanding decreased in second half of campaign.

- Fewer than 1% of respondents provided PSR when asked to name an energy brand or campaign (no change in unaided awareness).
- At the end of the campaign year, 27% of respondents recognized PSR (9 percentage point increase in aided awareness).
- Californians' ability to correctly identify the purpose of the PSR campaign increased over the summer period of the campaign (peaking at 65% in August) but decreased back down below baseline by end of campaign (54% at baseline, 51% in November).
- The ability to match the PSR name with its campaign message decreased for Californians over the campaign (61% at baseline, 54% in November).
- Californians' ability to correctly identify what Power Savers Rewards are decreased over the campaign (65% at baseline, 58% in November).

# Summary of Key Findings

- Californians' awareness of energy saving actions to take during Flex Alerts generally increased over the summer period of the campaign, most remaining higher than baseline levels. Contrastingly, the likelihood to take action peaked over the summer but returned to levels similar to baseline for most actions.
  - Largest action awareness increase was for turning off AC between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m., which increased from baseline of 43% in June to a high of 57% in November.
  - Findings suggest active media results in highest awareness and likelihood, but as the campaign media slows in the fall, Californians' recall of actions fades as campaign media efforts decrease.
- Awareness and knowledge of pre-cooling, as well as Californians' likelihood to pre-cool remains low.
  - Awareness of pre-cooling increased over the summer period of the campaign but returned to the 2021 baseline in November (33%).
    - It is not common knowledge that pre-cooling uses more clean energy from solar panels as compared to regular cooling from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. (39% baseline, 35% in November).

# Summary of Key Findings

- **Nearly all Californians who were aware a Flex Alert was called took at least one action.**
  - Of Californians who recalled a Flex Alert had been called, about 93% took at least one energy-saving action.
    - When only one action was reported taken during an alert, respondents most commonly reported they had set their thermostat to 78 degrees or higher between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.
    - 2/3rds of those who took action (66%) reported taking three or more actions.
  - Some survey respondents may be enrolled in programs that aim to influence their behavior related to energy use (e.g., TOU, DR), so caution is needed when interpreting these results (i.e. we cannot infer causation).
- **The number of Californians who were aware a Flex Alert was called notably increased since the 2021 campaign.**
  - Those who reported they were aware a Flex Alert had been called increased from a high of 38% in the 2021 campaign, to more than half in the 2022 campaign (range from 51-54%); a max increase of 16 percentage points.
  - Key differences between the campaign years may have affected Californians' ability to recall past alerts. For instance, the 10-day consecutive stretch of alerts called in 2022 likely influenced Californians' high rate of recall.

# Summary of Key Findings

## Californians were most likely to enroll to receive PSRs following Flex Alert events.

- Likelihood to enroll in the Power Saver Rewards Program fluctuated throughout the campaign, peaking in September following the 10-day stretch of alerts.
- Californians appear to see greater value in enrolling to receive PSRs following Flex Alert events where the opportunity for them to earn credits is presented to them.
  - For those eligible for PSR, text messages continues to be the preferred method of communication for Flex Alert notifications (so they may have a chance to earn PSRs).

# Summary of Key Findings

- **Text message alerts were essential to the 2022 campaign.**
  - Following the 10-day consecutive stretch of Flex Alerts, the number of Californians who were aware of Flex Alerts and reported they had heard about Flex Alerts through text message alerts nearly tripled (14% in August, 38% in September).
    - Text message alerts remained among the top two ways that Californians heard about Flex Alerts through the end of the campaign.
  - Texts message alerts were the most common way that Californians (who recalled recent Flex Alerts) were notified about Flex Alerts (58% in September, 54% in October).
    - Although text messages were also the most common type of notification at the end of the 2021 campaign, we did see a notable increase in text message notifications in the 2022 campaign (max increase of 15 percentage points).

# Summary of Key Findings

- Californians continue to have issues differentiating between Flex Alerts and PSPS and misidentifying the purpose of Flex Alerts as wildfire prevention.

- Across respondents from all waves (n=3,000), only 7% *correctly* answered all *factual* questions related to wildfires, while approximately 15% answered all questions related to wildfires *incorrectly*.

Factual

- **True/False:** Around three-fourths of Californians were consistently unable to correctly identify “When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, the power grid operator may ask Californians to conserve energy to prevent wildfires” as a false statement.
- **Campaign matching:** Around 20% of Californians incorrectly matched Flex Alerts with the PSPS campaign message throughout the campaign.
- **Purpose of FA:** Between 12% and 18% inaccurately selected “To inform customers about power shut-offs/rolling blackouts in order to prevent wildfires” as the purpose of Flex Alerts over the campaign.
- **Reason FA are called:** Between 10% and 15% incorrectly selected “Utilities predict that wildfires are likely to impact the reliability of the electric grid and/or specific transmission lines in a region” as the reason Flex Alerts are called over the campaign.

Subjective  
/Opinion

- **Benefits:** Around a third (31%–42%) of respondents perceived the prevention of fires as a benefit of Flex Alerts throughout the campaign.

- Most respondents answered between one and three questions related to wildfires correctly (78%), indicating a notable level of confusion differentiating Flex Alerts and PSPS. Findings also suggest that the way questions are formatted (true/false vs. multiple choice) may have an effect. Multiple choice forces respondents to select one correct answer and weigh between alternate options, while a series of true/false allows respondents to provide answers that sometimes contradict one another when gauging respondent understanding behind the purpose of Flex Alerts.





# Recommendations

- Although the majority of Californians who were aware of recent Flex Alerts took at least one action, the likelihood to take action among the general population decreased for most actions; thus future ME&O efforts should continue to build motivation for Californians to follow through with actions.
  - This could include highlighting the potential to earn energy bill credits through Power Saver Rewards.
- Despite 10-consecutive days of Flex Alerts, nearly half of Californians did not know a Flex Alert had been called. Future research could focus on identifying demographics of these Californians to target messaging and increase awareness.
- Californians continue to confuse PSPS and Flex Alerts, thus future ME&O efforts should focus on providing clarification between the purpose of the two campaigns.
  - Other points of clarification can also focus on the current limits of battery storage and cleaner energy use with pre-cooling.
- Although many Californians can intuitively understand the purpose or campaign goal of PSR from the name, future ME&O efforts should continue building brand awareness.

# Recommendations

- Similar to findings from the 2021 campaign, Californians prefer to be notified about upcoming Flex Alerts via texts for Power Saver Rewards; thus, texting should remain a primary mode for ME&O efforts for the 2023 campaign.
- Californians appear to be more likely to perceive value in enrolling in the Power Saver Rewards Program following Flex Alert events. In the future, the campaign should take advantage of these windows of opportunity when Californians are most likely to enroll and increase media efforts related to PSRs, including how eligible customers can easily enroll in the program and how they can benefit from participating (i.e., receive bill credits for reducing energy use during FAs).



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## DETAILED FINDINGS





Opinion **Dynamics**

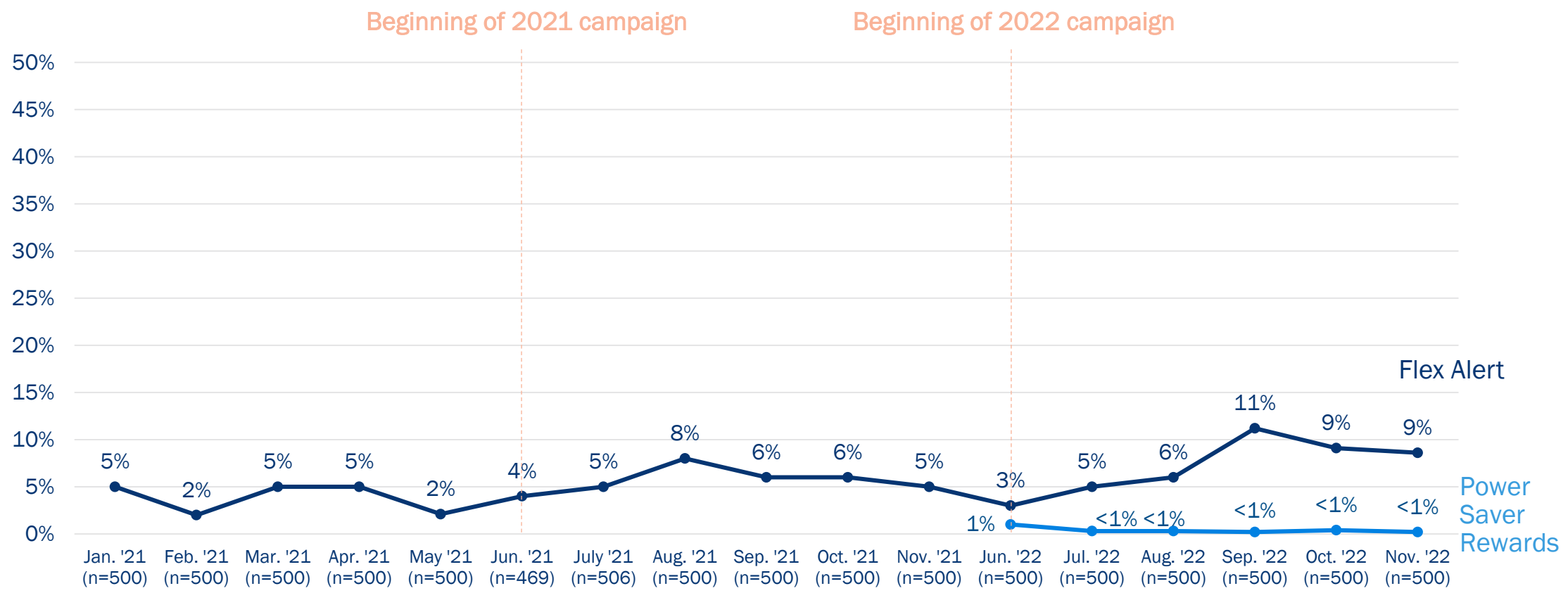


## FLEX ALERT AWARENESS & FAMILIARITY



Californians' unaided awareness of FAs increased in September following FA<sup>10</sup> and has remained higher than that observed since January 2021; although unaided awareness of PSRs remained low over the campaign period.

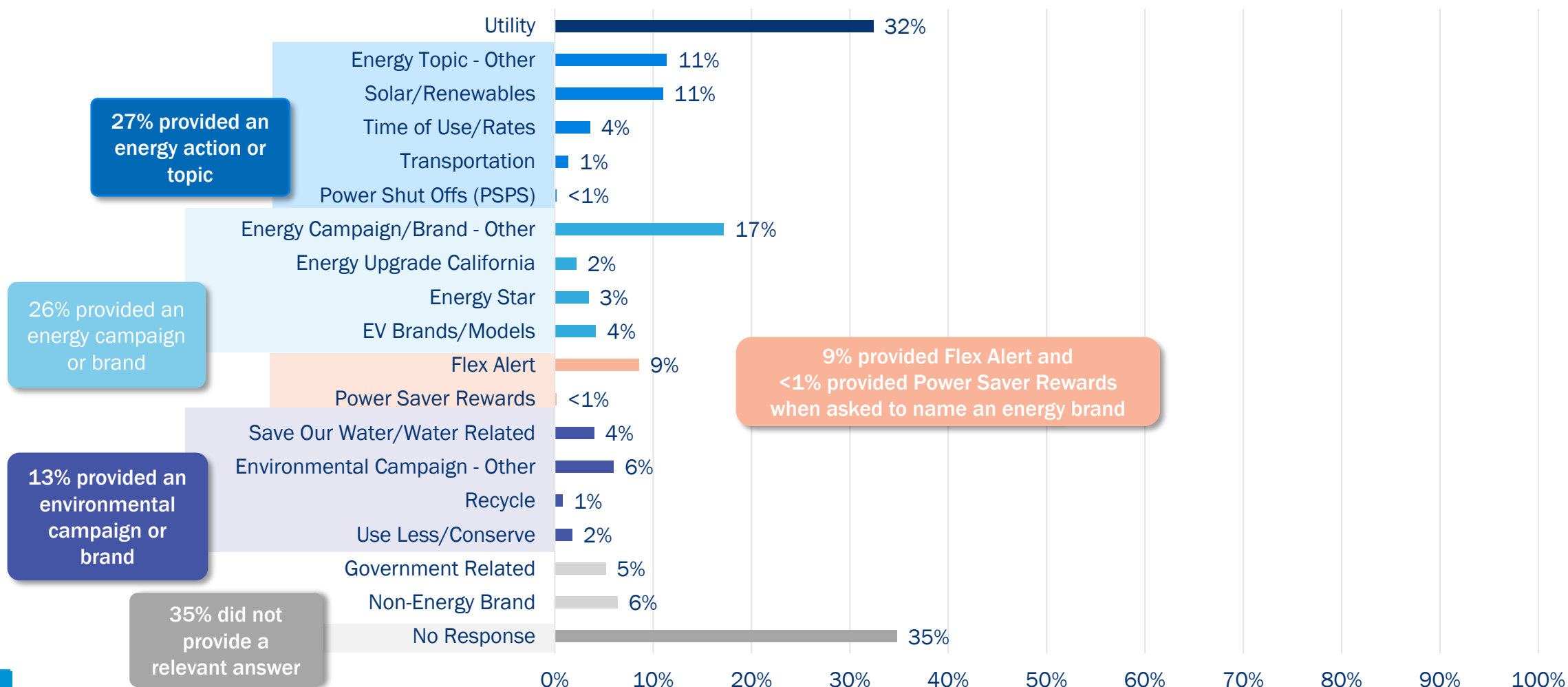
When you think of brands, campaigns, or initiatives that encourage Californians to save energy, which ones come to mind? (open-ended)



Percentage of participants who indicated Flex Alerts and Power Savers unaided

# Californians' unaided awareness of Flex Alerts has remained above that of other identified energy brands since July 2022.

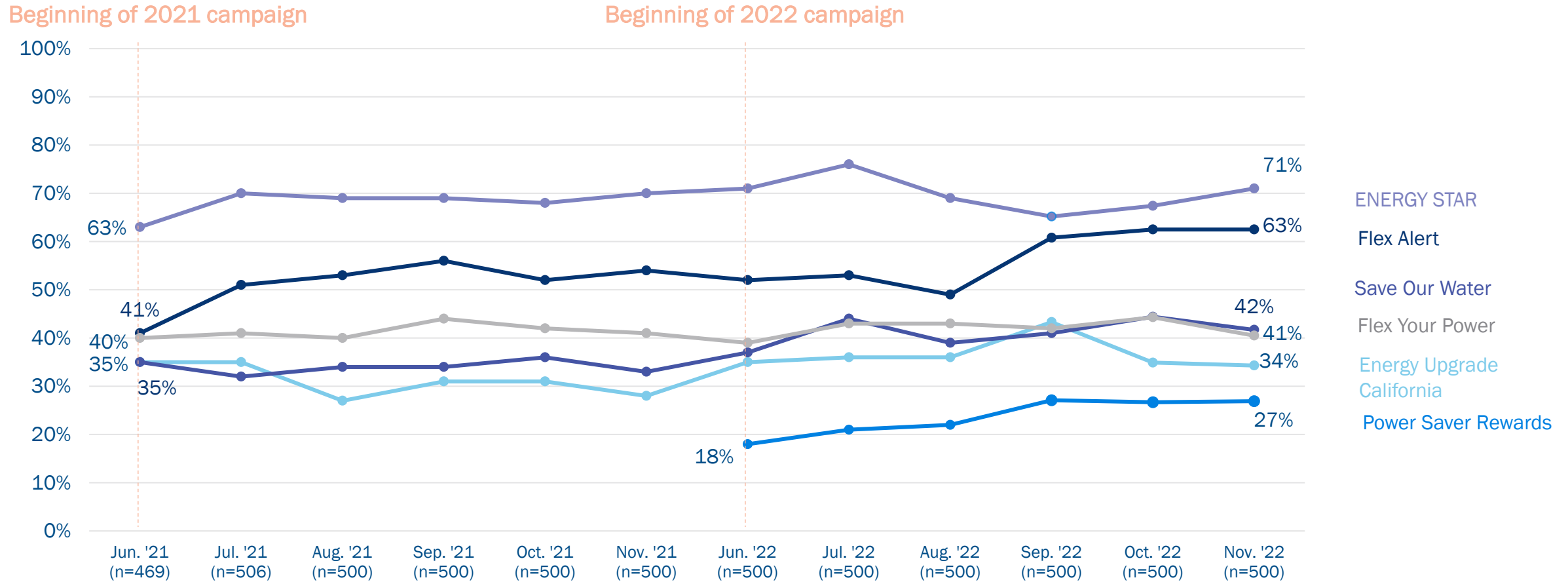
When you think of brands, campaigns, or initiatives that encourage Californians to save energy, which ones come to mind? (Multiple open-ended responses allowed)





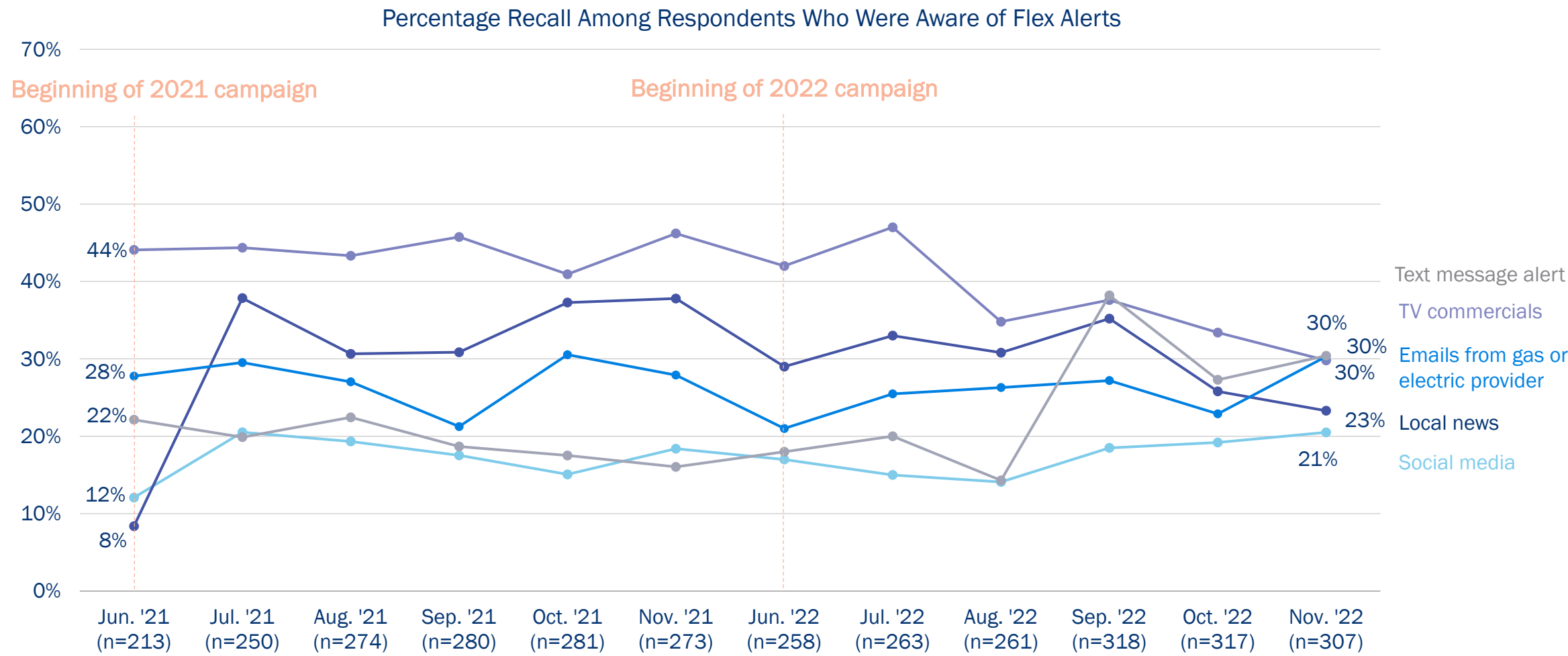
# Californians' aided awareness of both Flex Alerts and PSR have remained stable after increasing in September 2022; both are the highest they have been historically.

For each one, please tell us if you have heard of it before today.



On average, Californians most commonly heard about Flex Alerts through TV commercials, local news coverage, and emails from their gas or electric provider. In September following FA<sup>10</sup>, reporting of text message alerts dramatically increased and have since remained another top mode.

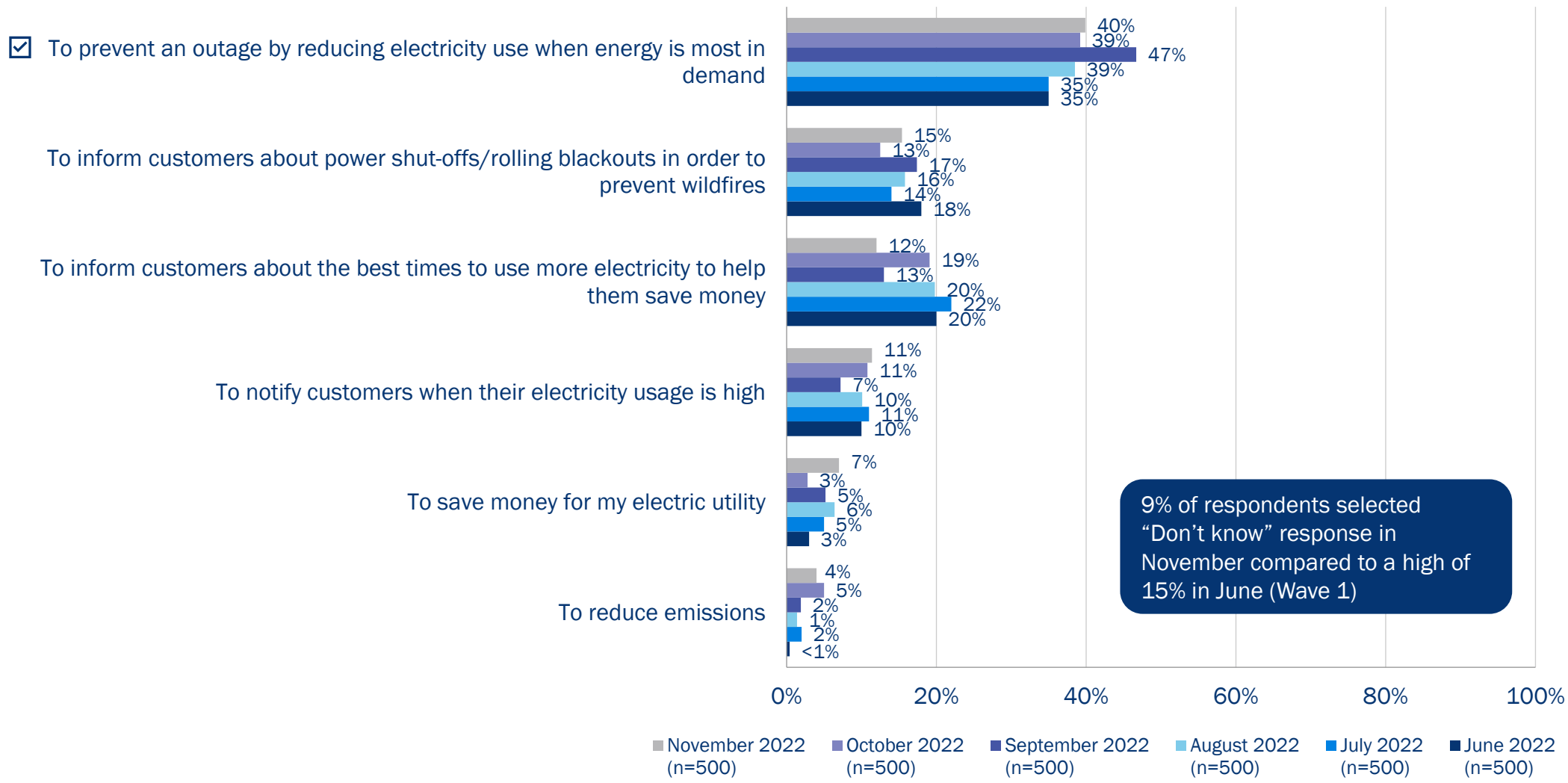
Where have you heard about Flex Alerts?



Note: Response options included in figure limited to top five in Wave 6 of 2022.

Respondents’ ability to accurately select the purpose of FAs remained fairly consistent over the campaign period, although a spike was observed in September following FA<sup>10</sup>.

What is the purpose of Flex Alerts?



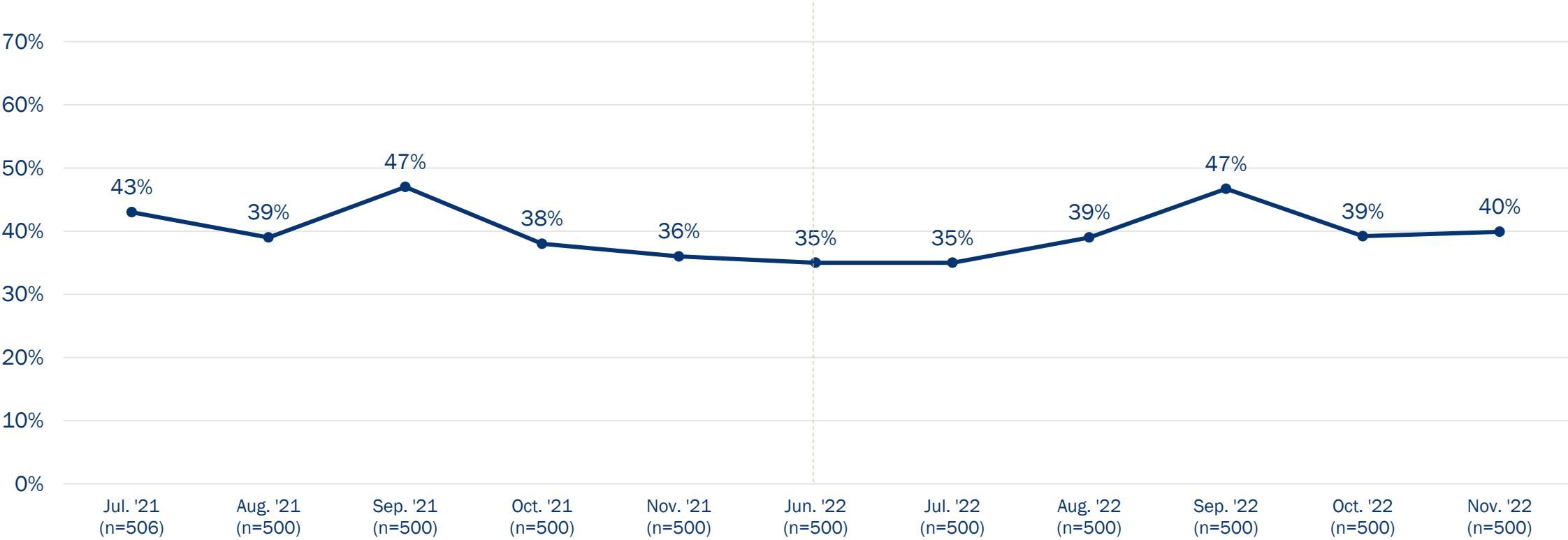
Note: Only 2% of respondents selected “Other” response. Response option removed from figure in Wave 5 of 2022.

Californians’ ability to accurately select the purpose of Flex Alerts in 2022 was similar to that observed in 2021; a single notable increase was observed in September, but otherwise has remained in the historically normal range.

What is the purpose of Flex Alerts?

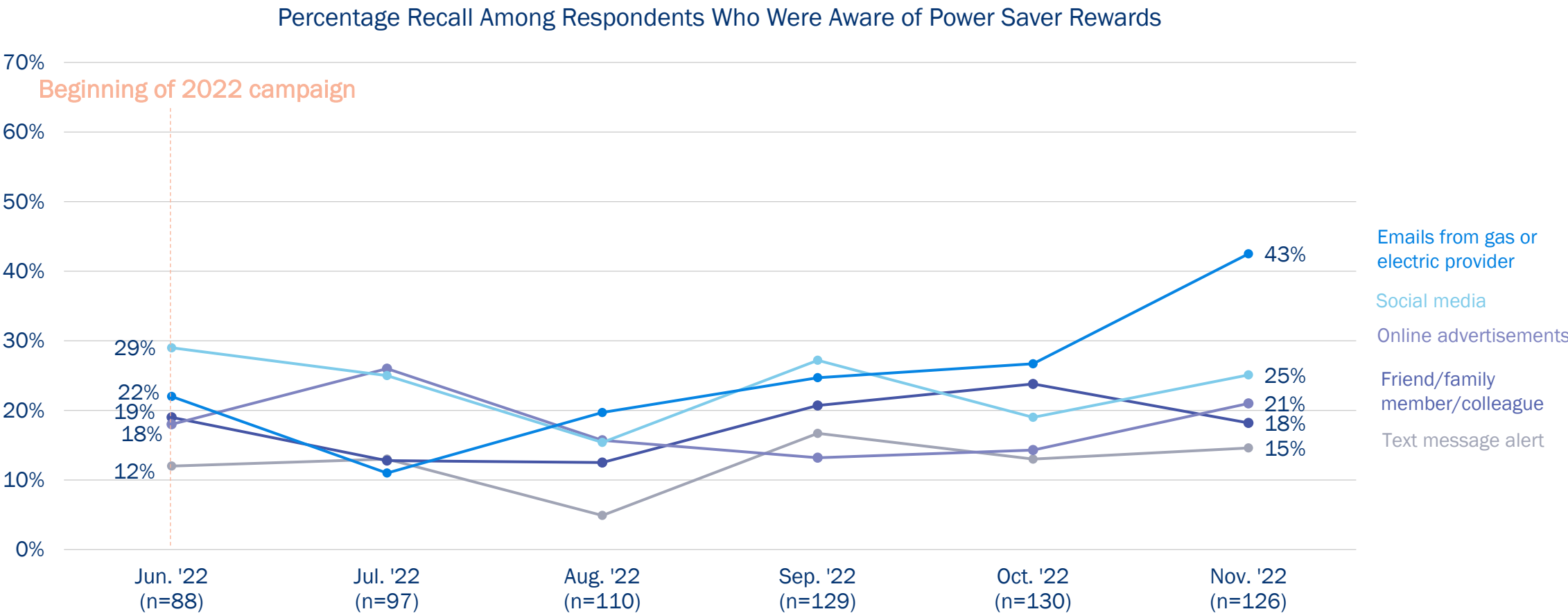
Percentage of Participants Who Correctly Selected the Purpose of Flex Alerts

Beginning of 2022 campaign



# Common ways Californians heard about Power Saver Rewards varied throughout the campaign. Emails from their utility was a top mode, with a sizeable increase in November.

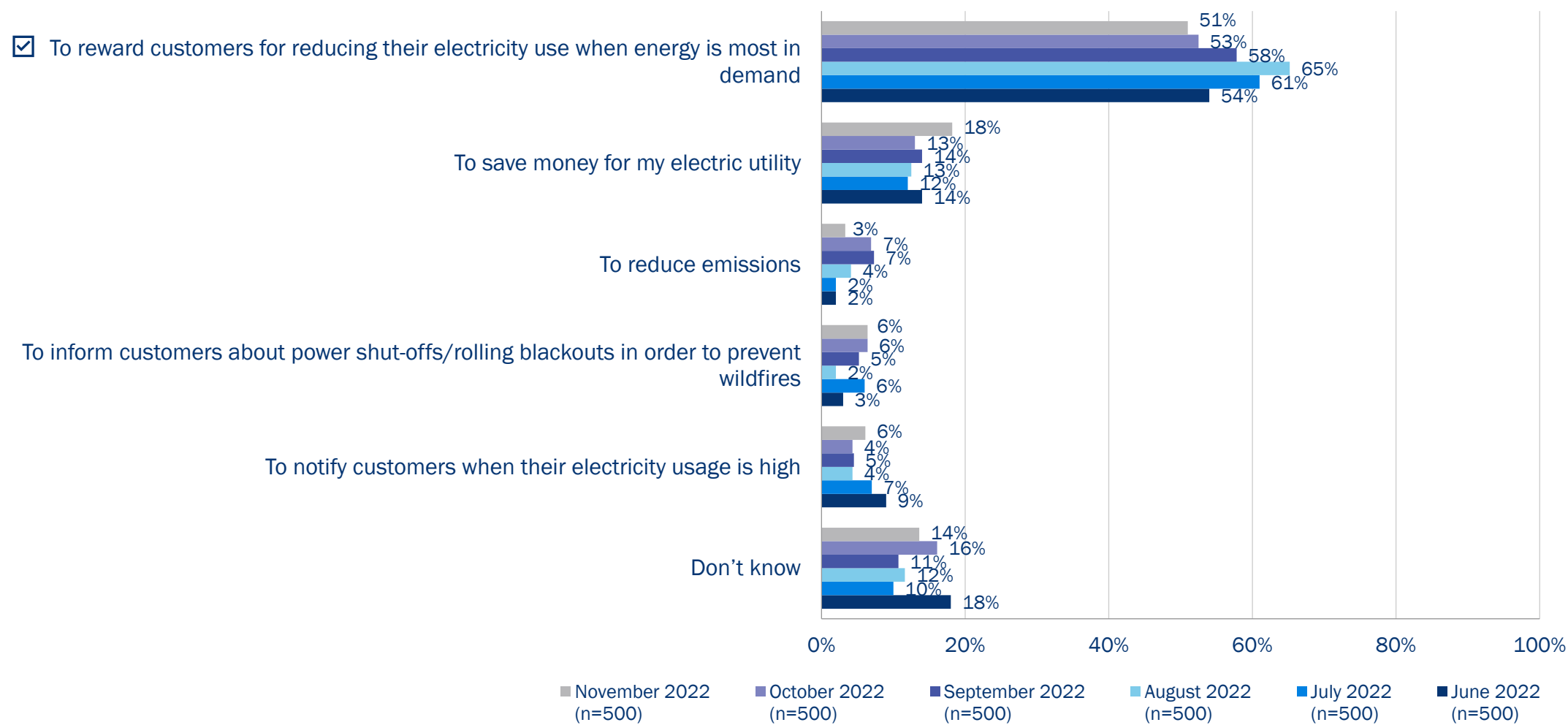
Where did you hear about Power Saver Rewards?



Note: Response options included in figure limited to top five in Wave 6 of 2022.

# More than half of respondents were able to accurately select the purpose of Power Saver Rewards consistently over the campaign period.

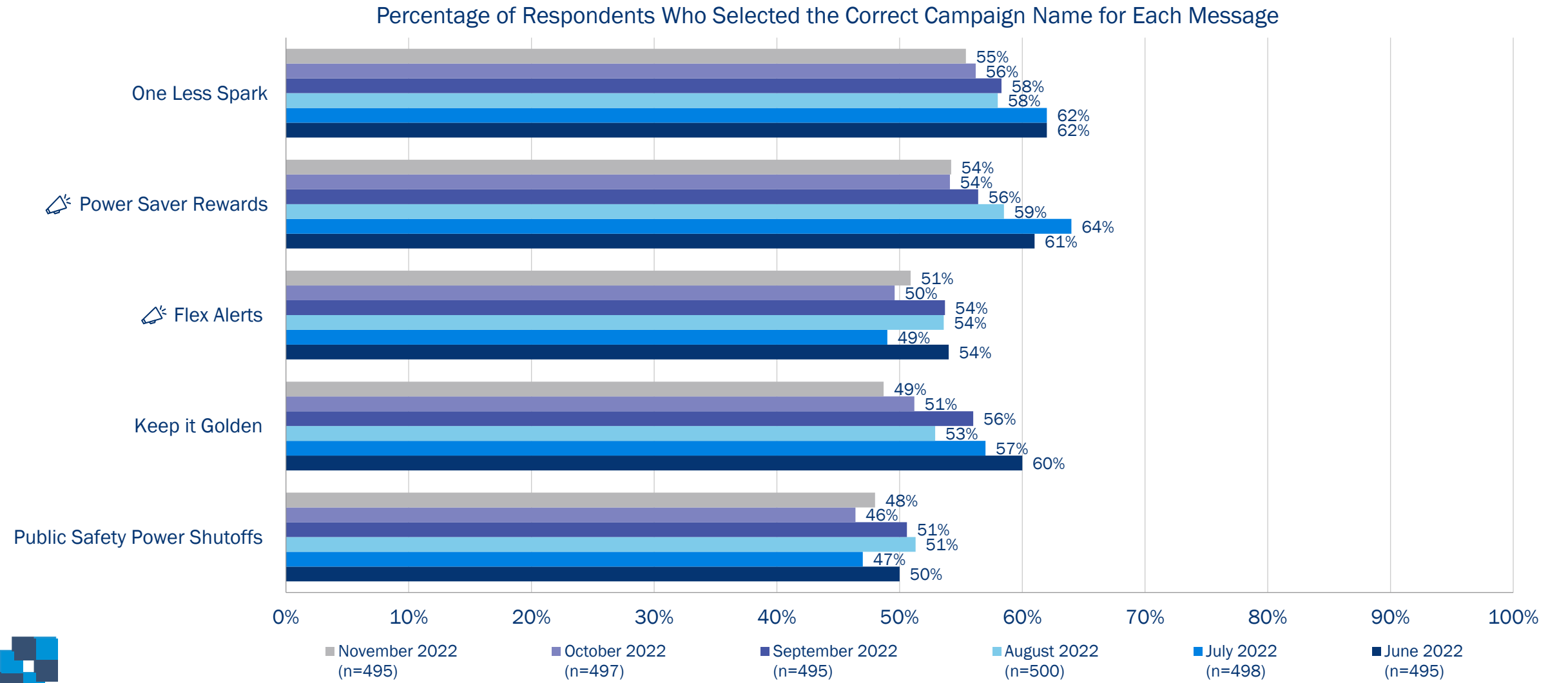
What is the purpose of Power Saver Rewards?



Note: Only 1% of respondents selected the “Other” response. Response option removed from figure in Wave 5 of 2022.

Californians’ ability to associate the campaign names and messages for Flex Alerts stayed mostly consistent over the campaign period, while Power Saver Rewards decreased slightly throughout.

Please match each campaign with its campaign message.

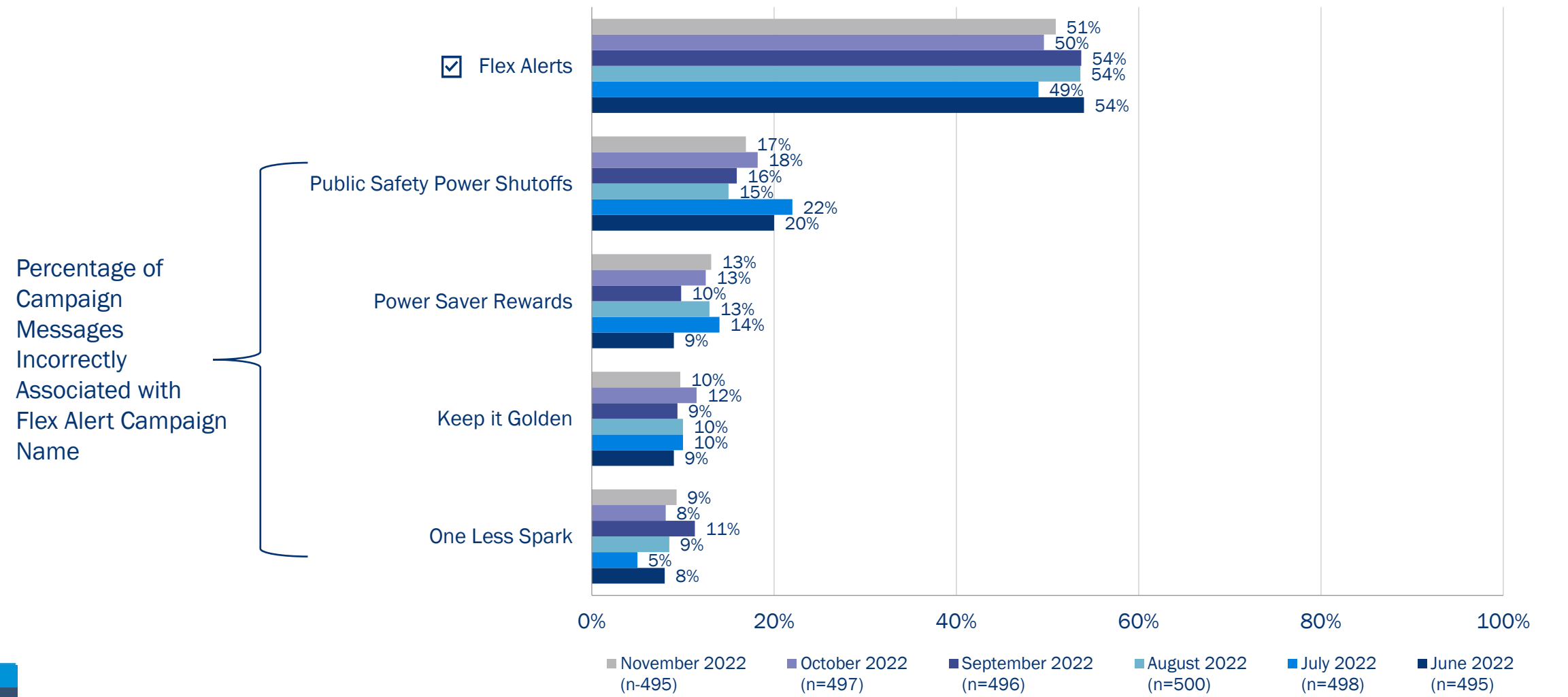


Note: Although question was asked of all respondents, n values may be less than 500 due to respondents’ ability to skip question (only soft force on question).



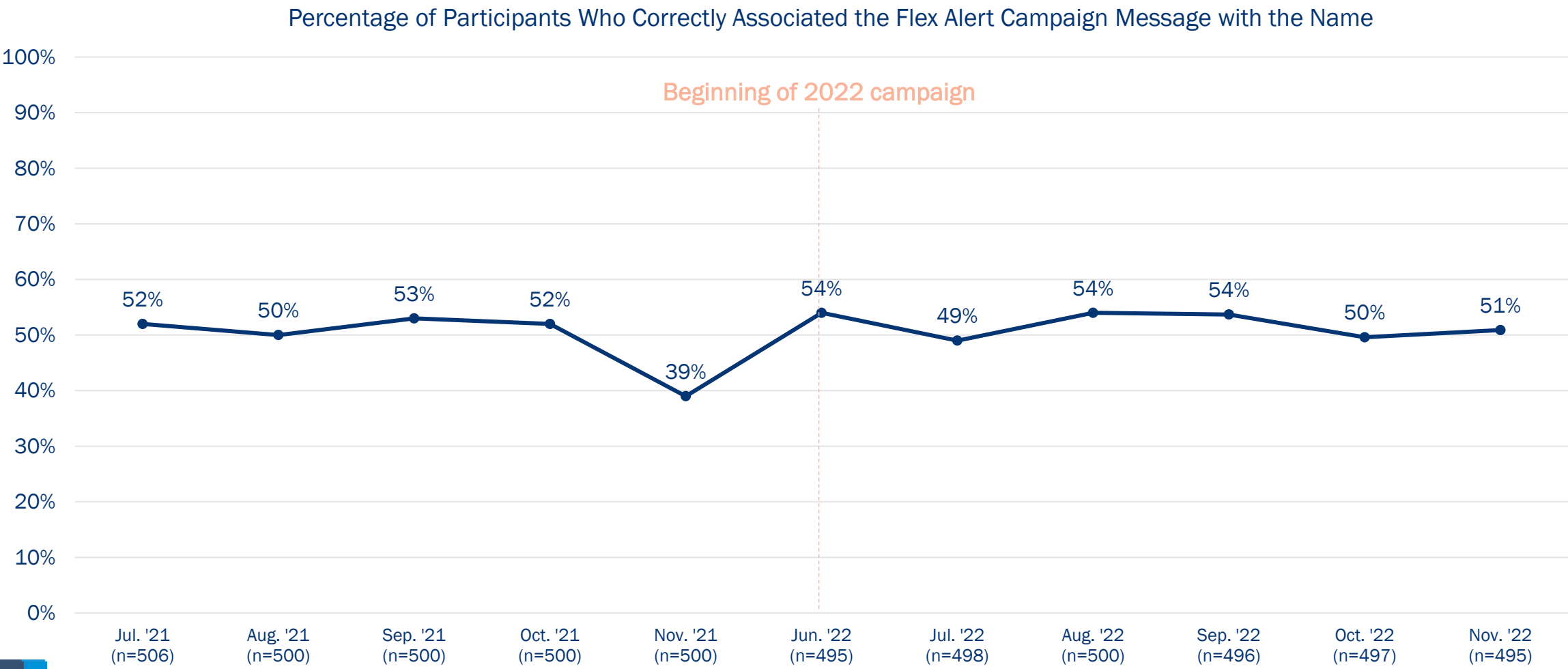
# About half of Californians continue to confuse Flex Alerts with Public Safety Power Shutoffs, similar to levels observed over the 2021 campaign period.

Please match each campaign with its campaign message.



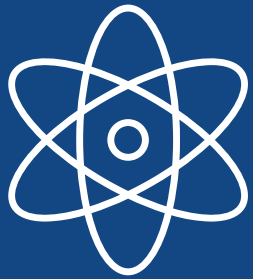
# Californians’ ability to associate the campaign name and message for Flex Alerts has remained fairly constant across both 2021 and 2022 campaign periods.

Please match each campaign with its campaign message.





Opinion **Dynamics**

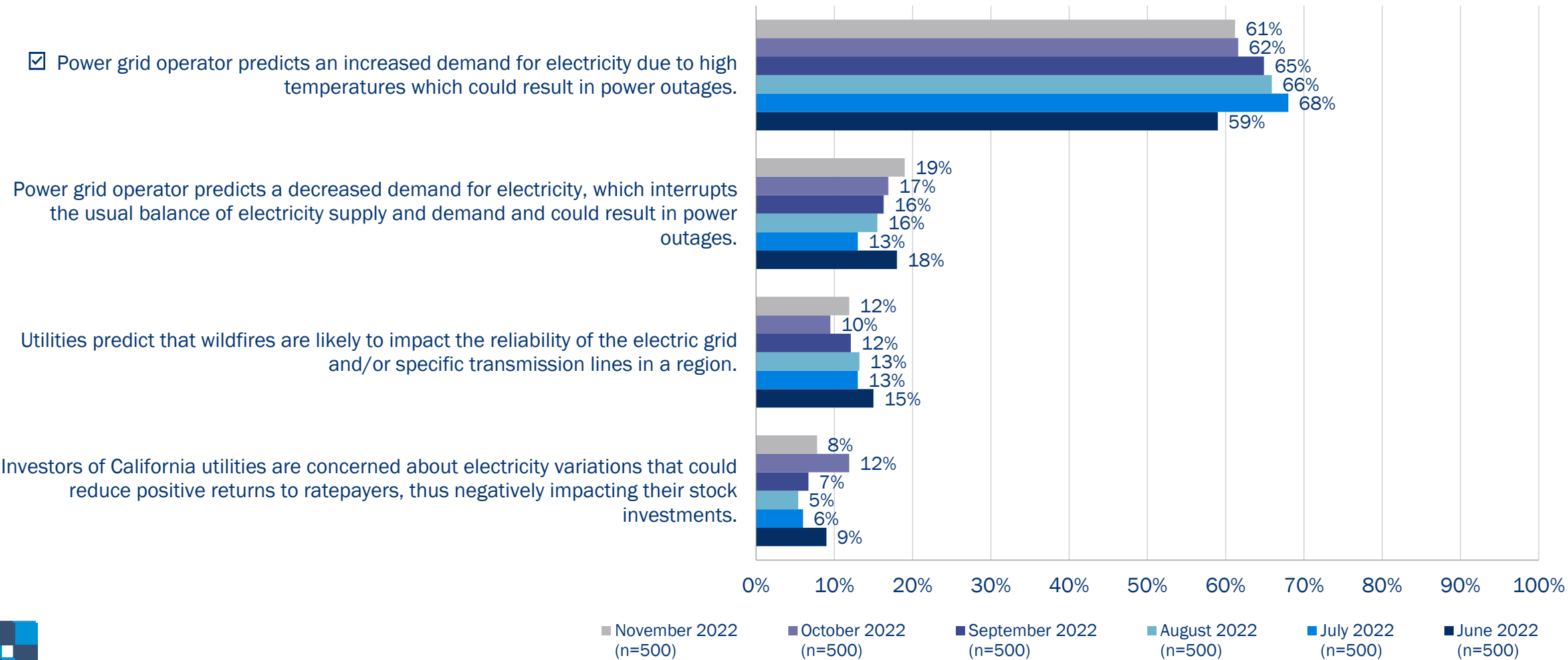


# FLEX ALERT UNDERSTANDING



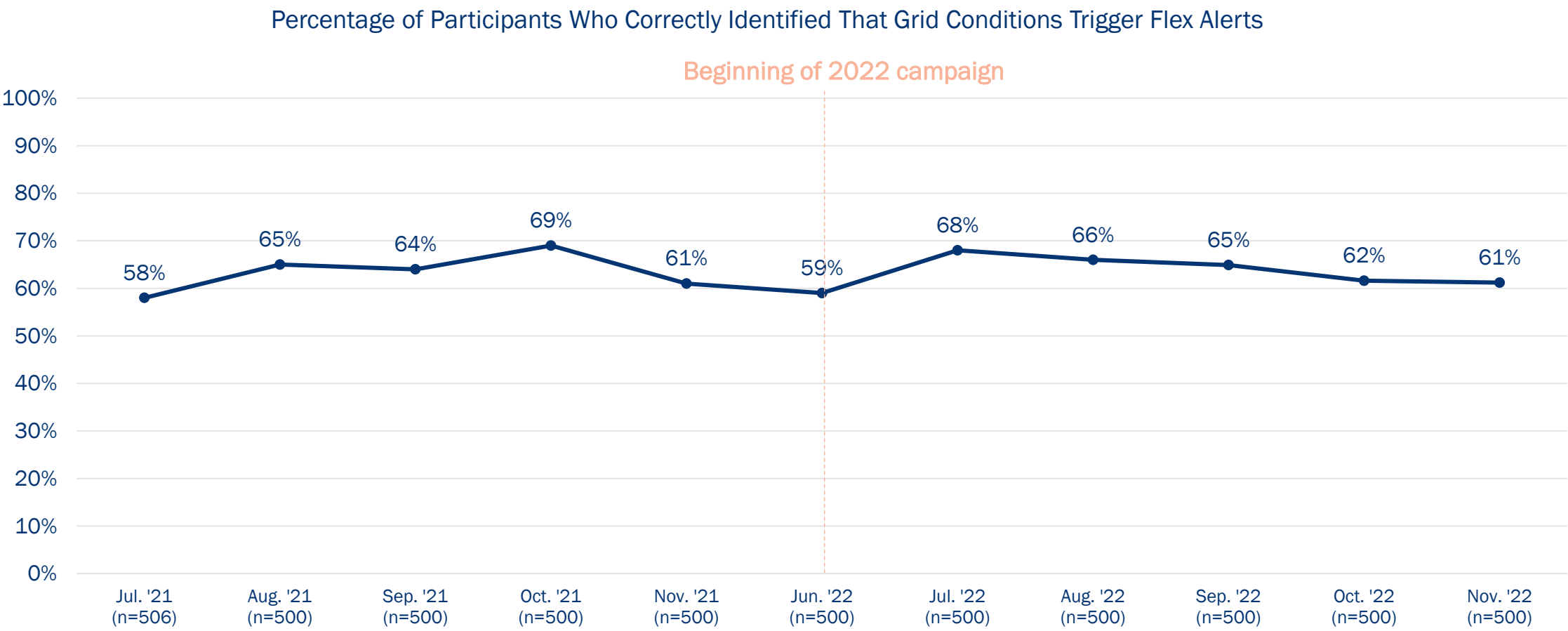
# The percentage of Californians who could accurately identify why Flex Alerts are called remained fairly consistent, although it has slowly decreased increased since July.

Please select one. Flex Alerts are called when...



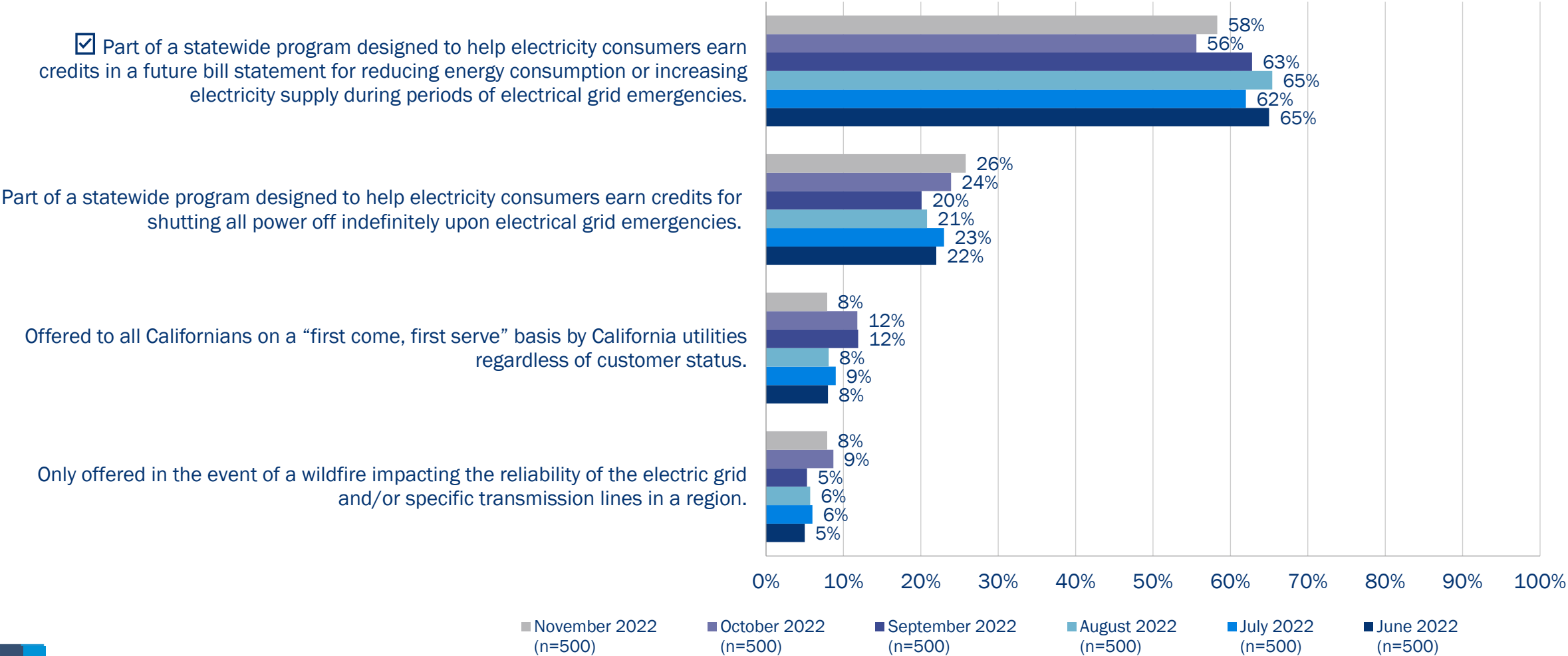
# The percentage of Californians who could accurately identify why Flex Alerts are called has remained within a 10-percentage point range since the beginning of the 2021 campaign.

Please select one. Flex Alerts are called when...



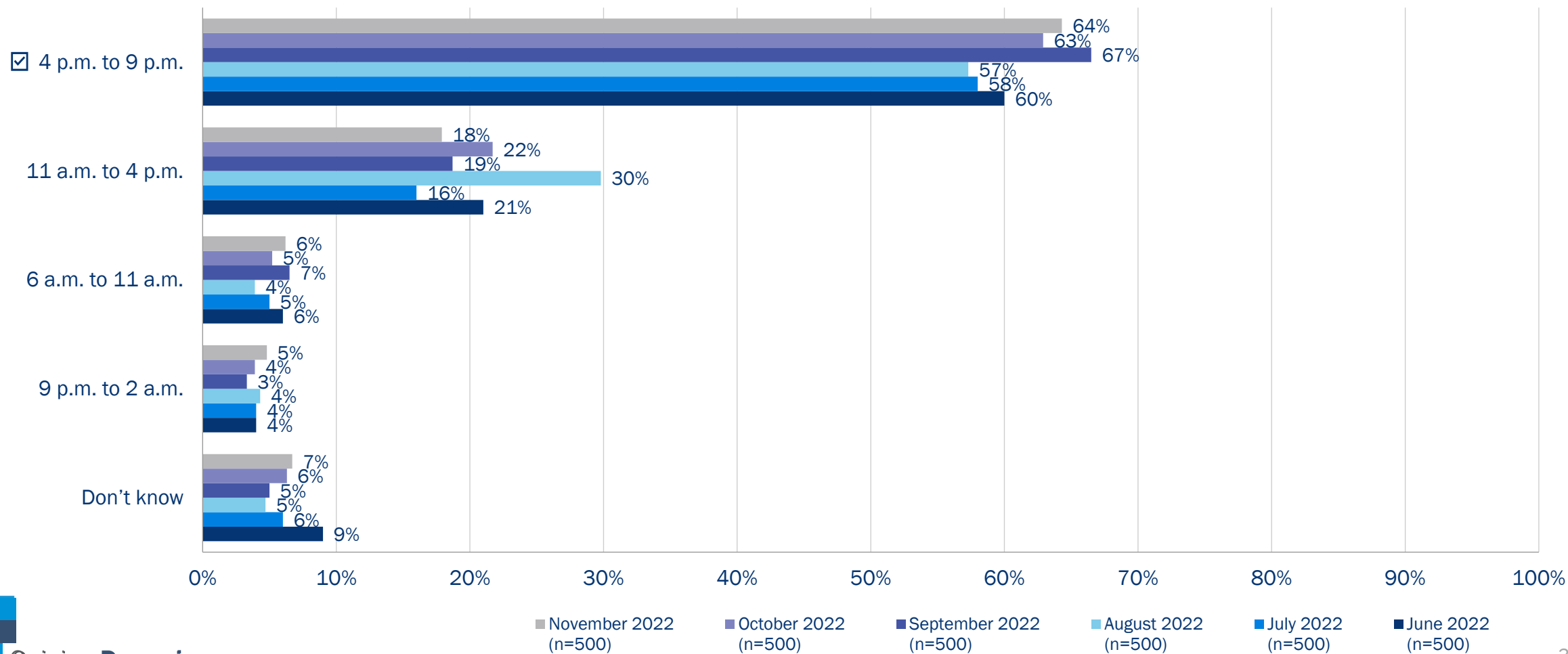
# The percentage of Californians’ able to accurately identify what Power Saver Rewards are persisted with little change over the campaign period.

Please select one. Power Saver Rewards are...



The percentage of Californians who could accurately identify the correct time period to conserve energy during a Flex Alert (4:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.) increased in September following FA<sup>10</sup> and remained higher than previous months for the remainder of the campaign.

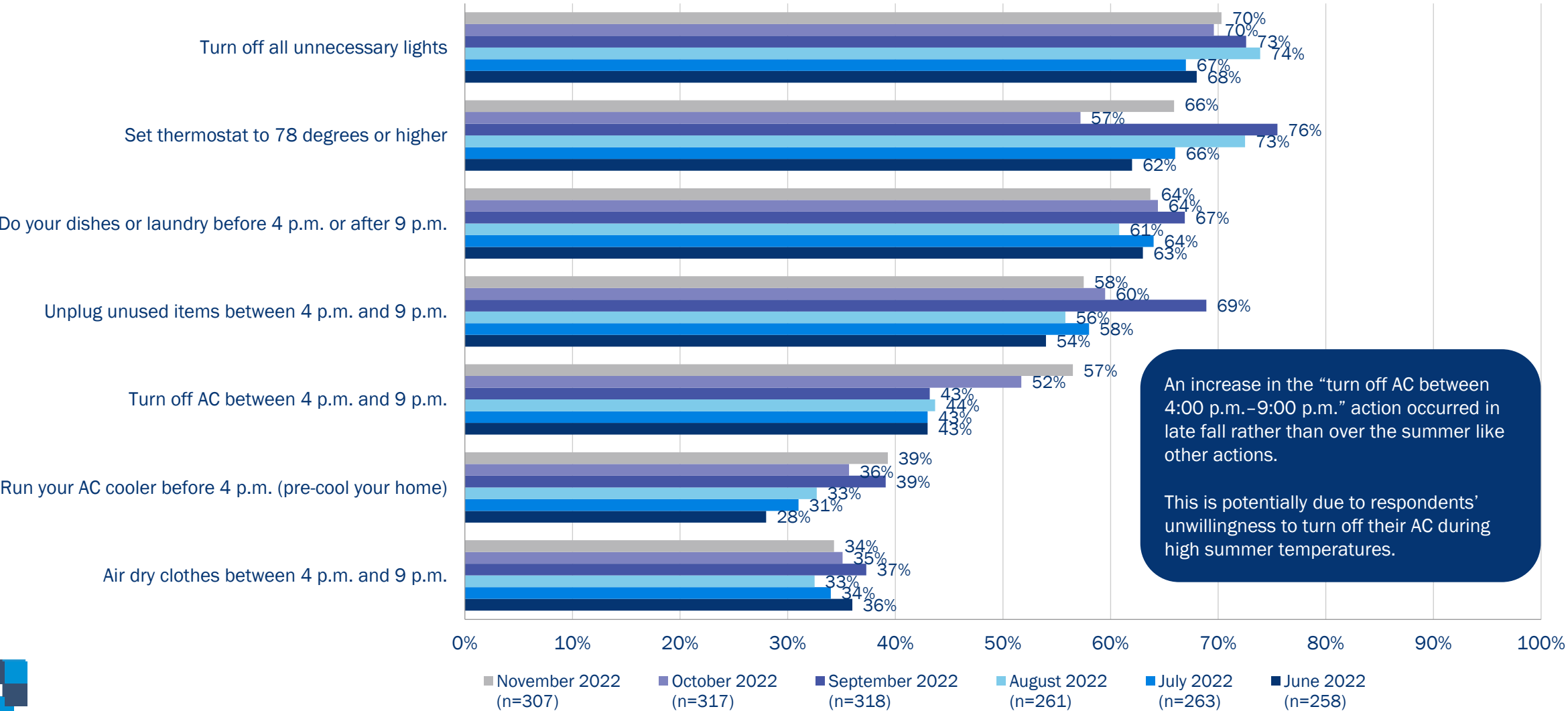
When a Flex Alert is called, during what time period is it most important for Californians to conserve electricity?





Awareness of promoted actions generally increased among those aware of Flex Alerts in September following FA<sup>10</sup>. Please select all the actions that Flex Alerts ask you to take.

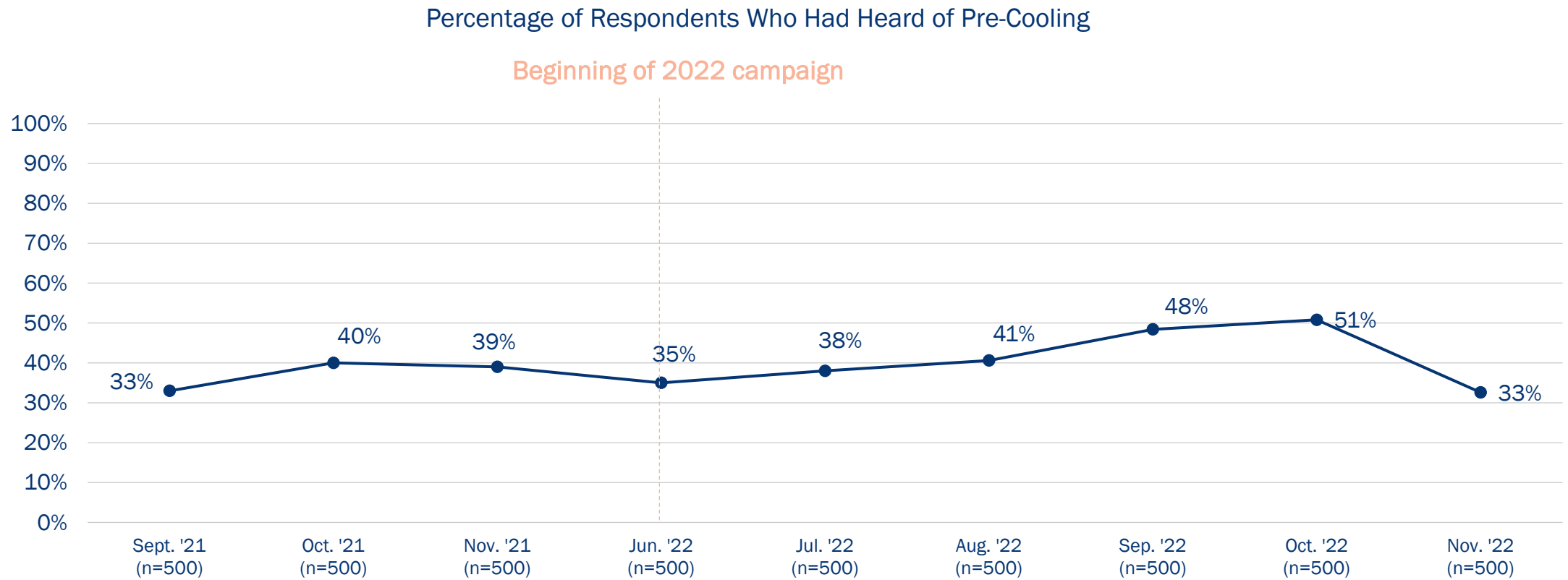
Percentage Recall Among Respondents Who Were Aware of Flex Alerts



Note: 4% of respondents selected “Don’t know” response, and only 1% recalled none of the above actions. Response options removed from figure in Wave 6 of 2022.

# The percentage of Californians who are aware of pre-cooling increased throughout the campaign period but dropped back down to the original 2021 range in November.

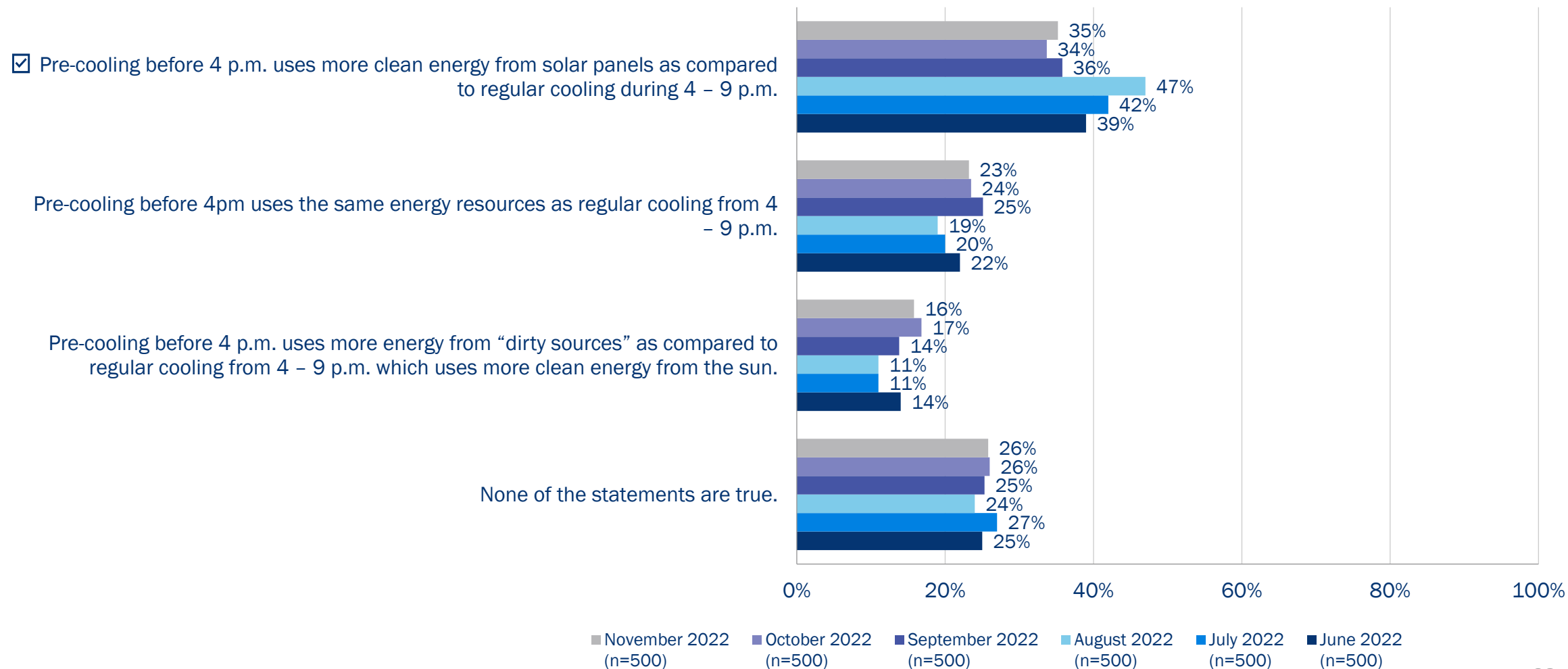
Before today, had you heard of pre-cooling?



Note: Although the results are based on the entire sample, only those who were not aware of pre-cooling as a Flex Alert action were asked this question. It was assumed that if someone selected pre-cooling as a Flex Alert action, then they were aware of pre-cooling and were added to the yes category.

# Despite early gains, approximately two-thirds of Californians remain unable to identify that pre-cooling uses more clean energy compared to regular cooling from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Which statement is true about pre-cooling?



## Californians continued to confuse the underlying reason for Flex Alerts with PSPS and over-estimate the capacity of battery storage over both the 2021 and 2022 campaign periods.

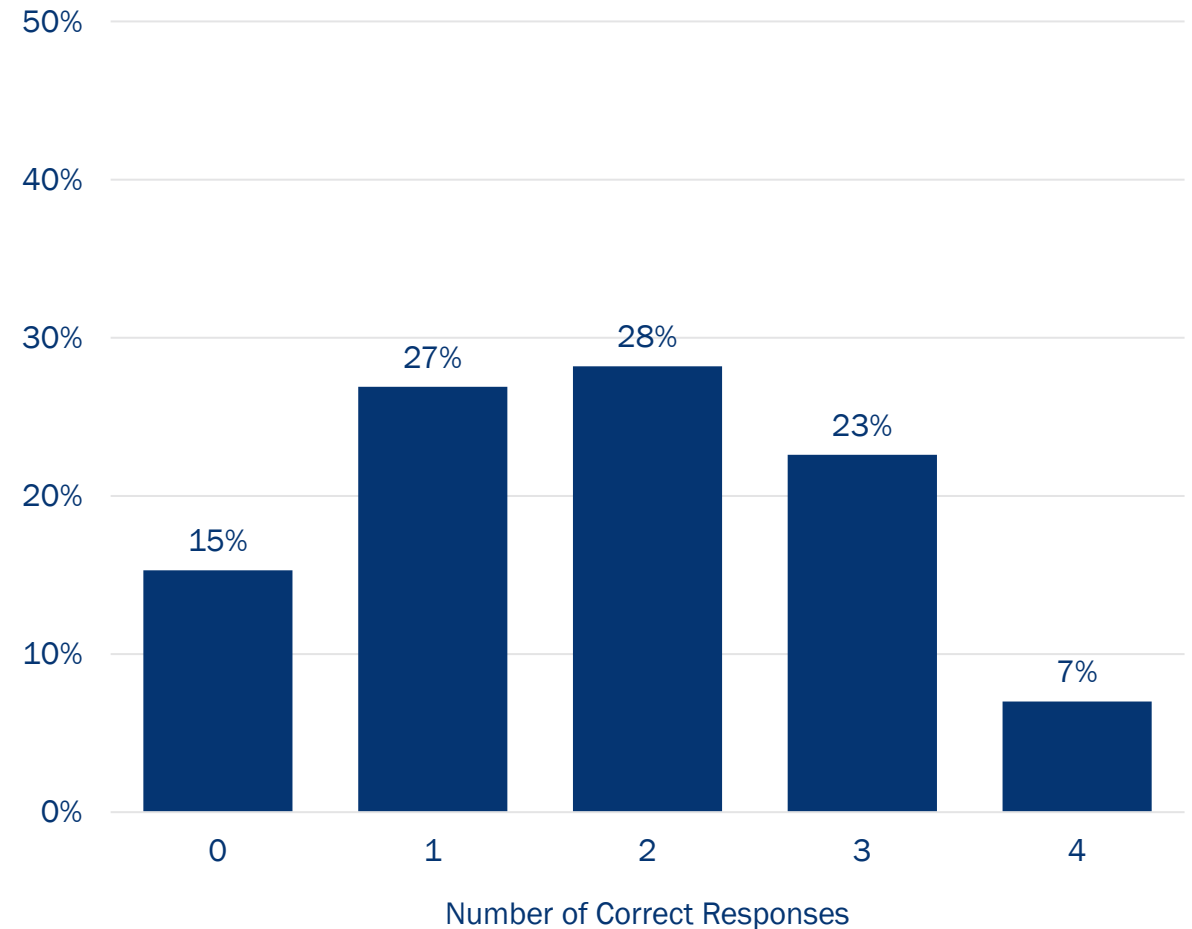
Please select whether you think the following statements about California (CA) are true or false.

Statement	Percentage of respondents who gave correct answer					
	Jun 2022 (n=500)	Jul 2022 (n=500)	Aug 2022 (n=500)	Sep 2022 (n=500)	Oct 2022 (n=500)	Nov 2022 (n=500)
On hot sunny days, when many people use their air conditioners, CA's electricity demand may exceed its supply	92%	91%	91%	89%	89%	91%
When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, there is a risk that there will not be enough electricity for all Californians and the power grid operator may need to create localized power outages to protect the grid	85%	83%	82%	83%	82%	83%
CA's electricity supply is most limited in the evening hours when solar panels start to generate less electricity and Californians are using more electricity	58%	59%	59%	66%	71%	70%
CA's electricity supply is most limited in the morning hours when solar power plants are not fully up and running yet and Californians are using more electricity ( <b>False</b> )	67%	70%	72%	69%	66%	67%
In CA, innovations in battery storage have made it possible to store enough energy generated by solar panels when the sun is shining to completely power our electricity grid when it gets dark ( <b>False</b> )	41%	41%	41%	36%	48%	37%
When an unusually high amount of electricity is used, the power grid operator may ask Californians to conserve energy to prevent wildfires ( <b>False</b> )	29%	23%	27%	23%	25%	24%

# Additional Analysis of Wildfire Related Questions

We took a closer look at all factual questions referencing wildfires (n=4) across respondents from waves 1–6 (n=3,000).

- We created a variable based on the count of correct responses across these four questions.
  - Across all respondents, only 7% correctly answered all questions related to wildfires, while approximately 15% answered all questions related to wildfires incorrectly.
  - Most respondents were mixed in their ability to correctly answer these questions, indicating continued confusion between Flex Alerts and PSPS.





Opinion **Dynamics**

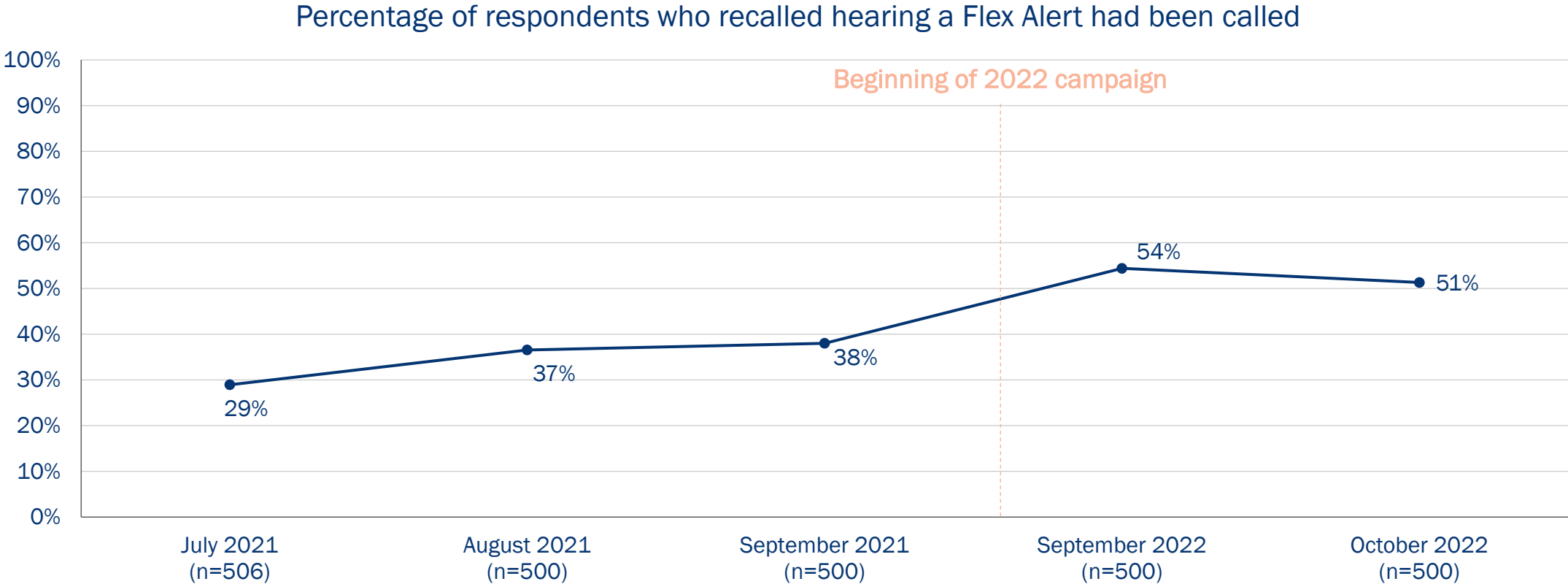


PAST FLEX ALERTS



# Just over half of respondents recalled hearing that a Flex Alert had been called, which is significantly more than any time during the 2021 campaign.

Over the past month, do you remember receiving a Flex Alert notification or hearing that a Flex Alert had been called?



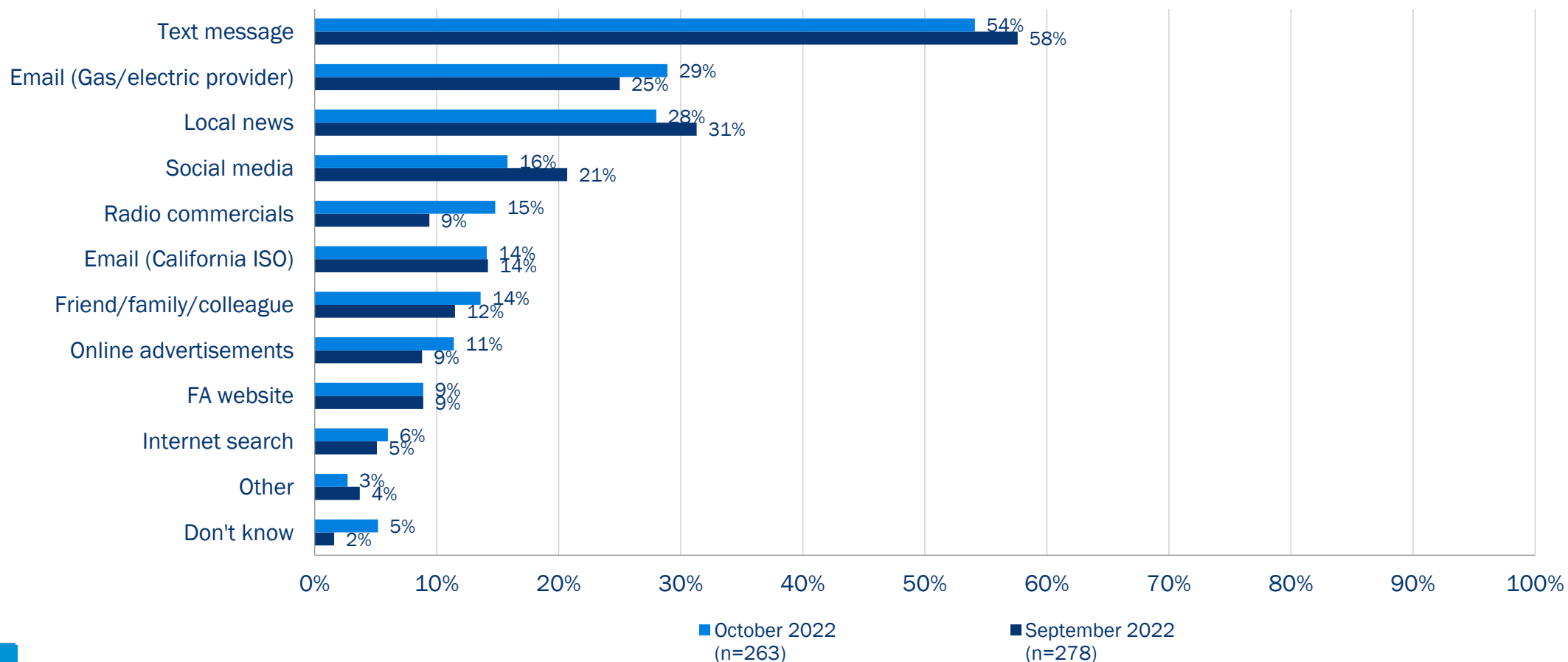
Note: Post-Flex Alert questions were not asked in July or August 2022 due to first alert being called in mid-August.



# More respondents reported hearing a Flex Alert had been called via text message compared to any other source.

How did you receive the Flex Alert notification or hear that the Flex Alert had been called?

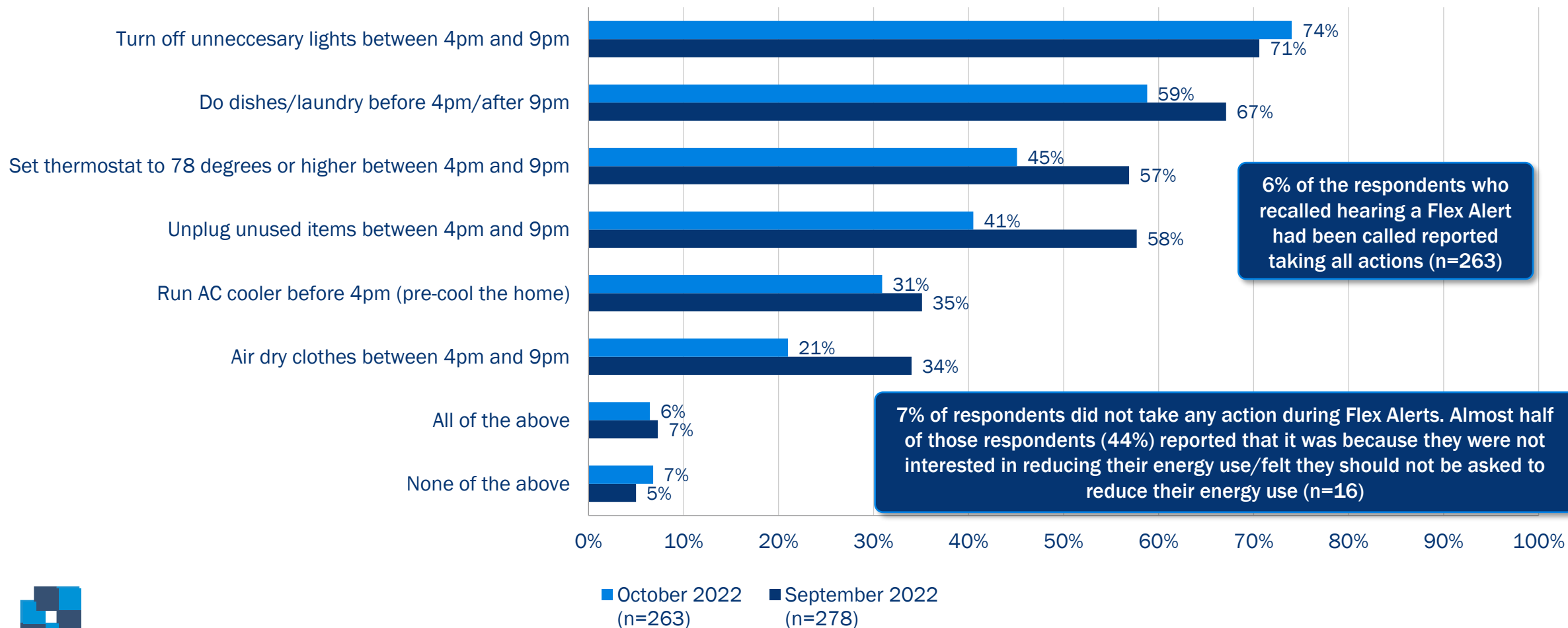
Percentage of source notification from those who were aware of recent Flex Alerts



When a Flex Alert was called, respondents most commonly reported taking action by turning off unnecessary lights, doing dishes/laundry before 4:00 p.m./after 9:00 p.m., and setting their thermostat to 78°F or higher between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Please select all the actions you were able to take to alter or reduce your energy use during the Flex Alert.

Percentage of actions taken from those who were aware of recent Flex Alerts





Opinion **Dynamics**

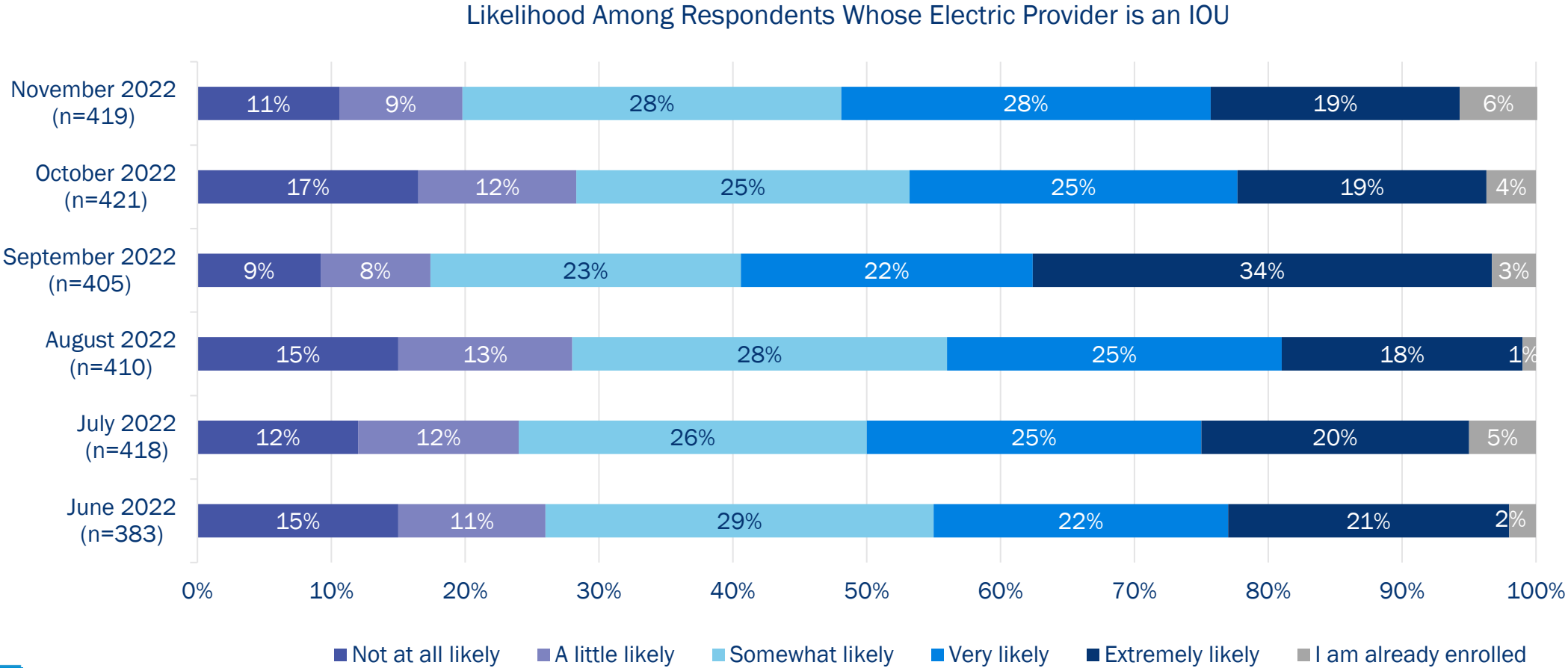


LIKELIHOOD TO SIGN UP FOR POWER  
SAVER REWARDS & INTENT TO ACT



# On average, nearly half of Californians reported they were likely to sign up for Power Saver Rewards, peaking in September following FA<sup>10</sup>.

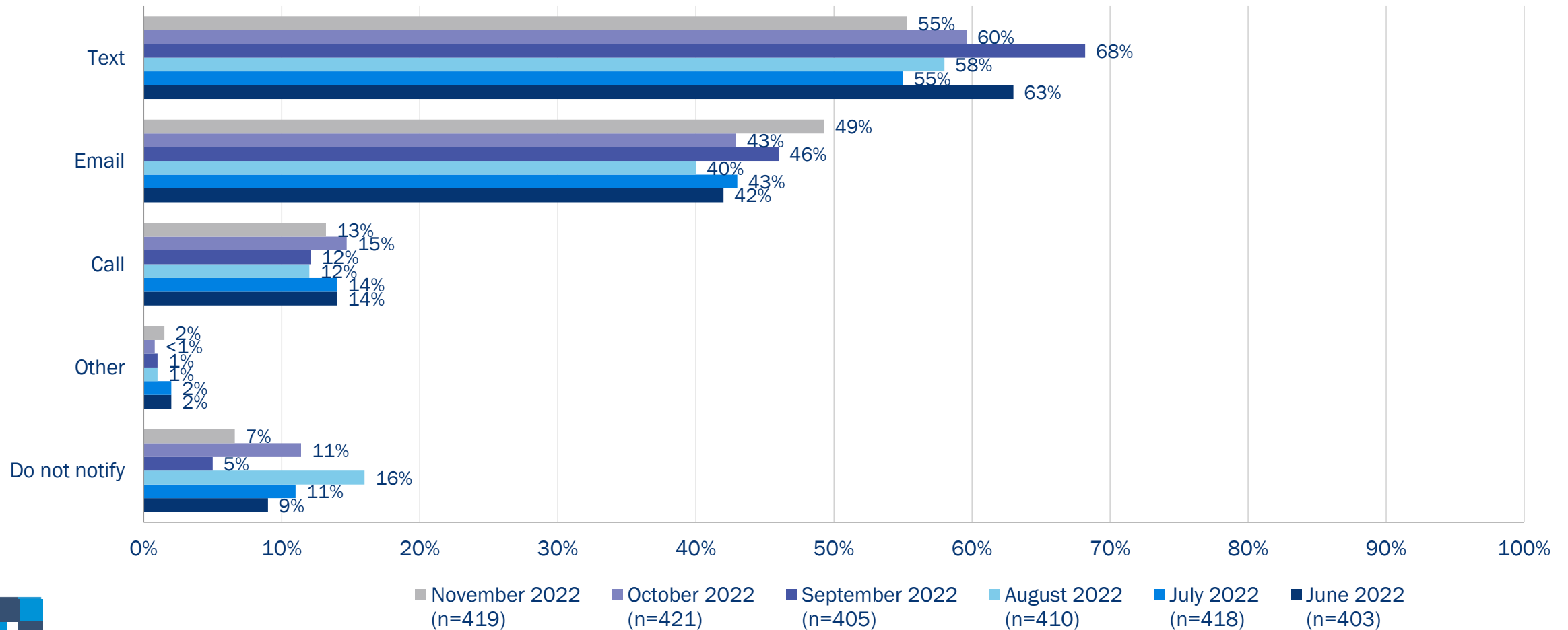
How likely are you to sign up to receive Power Saver Rewards in the future?



# Eligible PSR participants prefer to be notified about upcoming Flex Alerts through texts, so that they may earn rewards.

How would you prefer to be notified about an upcoming Flex Alert so that you might have a chance to earn Power Saver Rewards?

Likelihood Among Respondents Whose Electric Provider is an IOU



Note: Other responses included mail.

Californians were consistently most likely to turn off all unnecessary lights, do dishes or laundry before 4:00 p.m. or after 9:00 p.m., and unplug unused items between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on hot days over the campaign period; likelihood to take most actions peaked in either August or September.

Please rate the likelihood of taking each action on hot days.

Statement	Percentage of respondents that selected “extremely” or “very” likely					
	Jun. '22 (n=500)	Jul. '22 (n=500)	Aug. '22 (n=500)	Sep. '22 (n=500)	Oct. '22 (n=500)	Nov. '22 (n=500)
Turn off all unnecessary lights between 4pm and 9pm	77%	80%	76%	74%	66%	68%
Do your dishes or laundry before 4pm or after 9pm	64%	70%	66%	67%	57%	59%
Unplug unused items between 4pm and 9pm	54%	52%	52%	64%	54%	52%
Pre-cool your home	54%	52%	51%	61%	50%	50%
Set thermostat to 78 degrees or higher between 4pm and 9pm	46%	47%	43%	54%	48%	47%
Run your AC cooler before 4pm	49%	49%	53%	50%	48%	42%
Air dry clothes between 4pm and 9pm	44%	43%	43%	48%	39%	40%
Turn off AC between 4pm and 9pm	37%	28%	29%	34%	32%	37%

Notes: 1. The “pre-cool your home” statement was asked as a separate question with a definition of pre-cooling.

2. Response options “Air dry clothes between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.” and “Turn off AC between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m.” added to 2022 tracking survey.

3. Orange bar shading indicates months where likelihood to take most actions peaked throughout the campaign.



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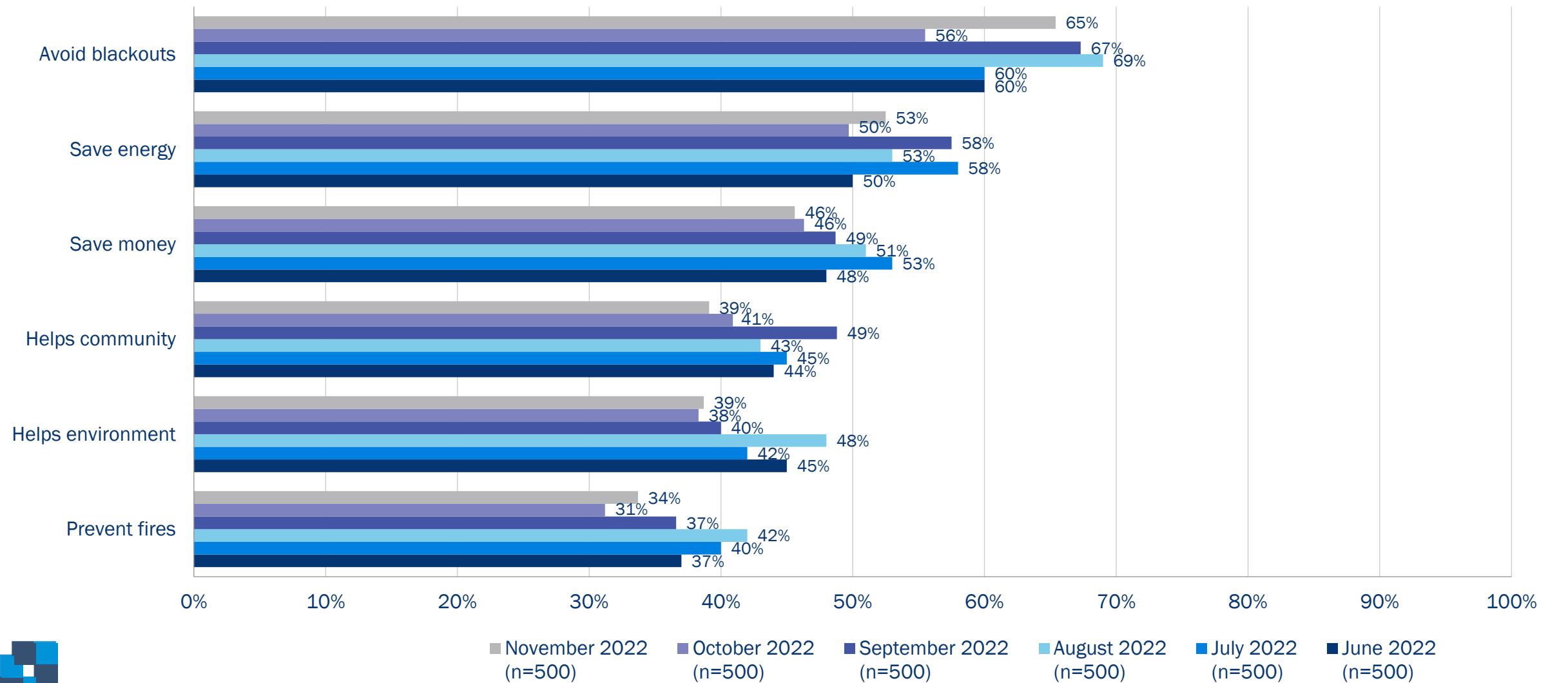
## FLEX ALERT BENEFITS AND BARRIERS





# Avoiding blackouts, saving energy, and saving money were most frequently identified as benefits of taking action during a Flex Alert over the campaign period.

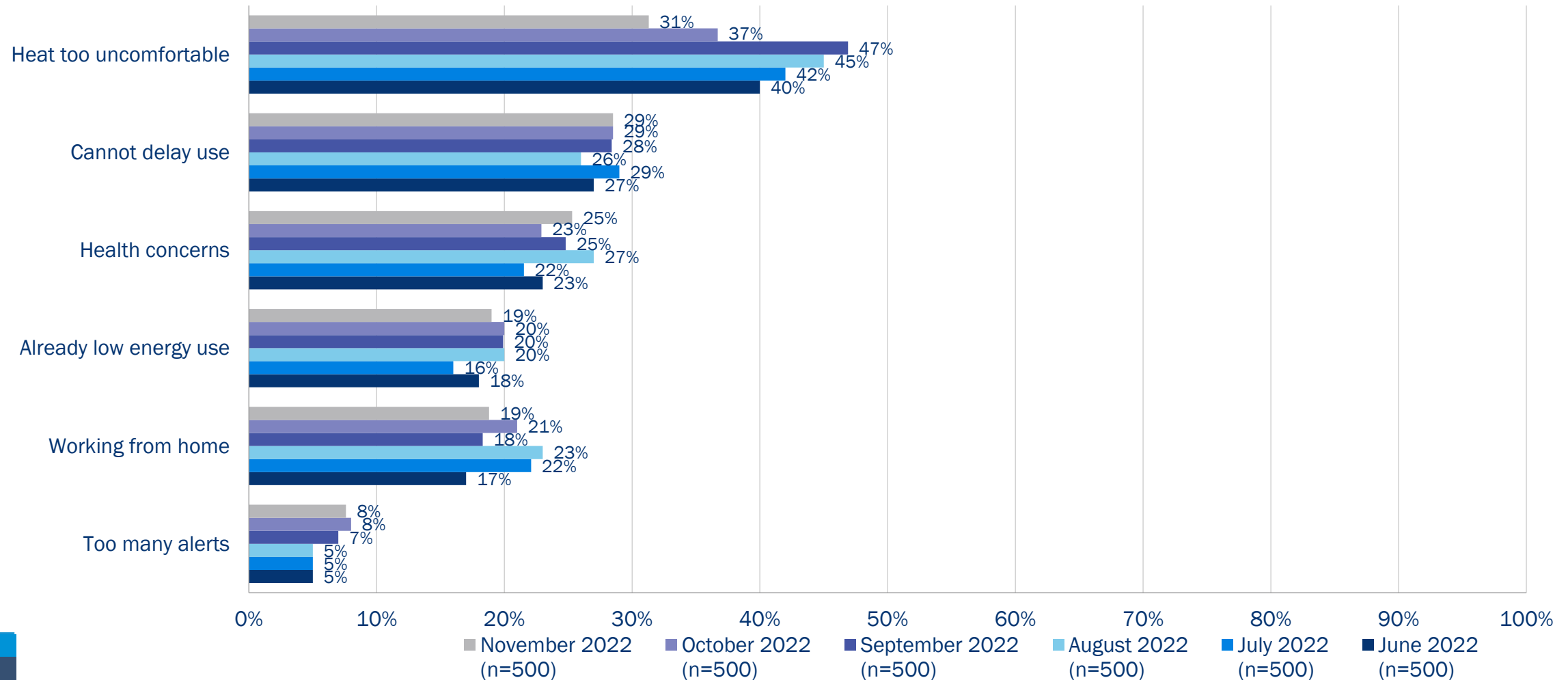
What benefits do you see from taking action during a Flex Alert?



Note: 4% of respondents selected “None,” and 7% “Don’t know.” Response options removed from figure in Wave 6 of 2022

# Californians most frequently identified concerns about getting too hot, an inability to shift their energy use, and health concerns as barriers to taking actions during a Flex Alert over the campaign.

What barriers do you see to taking action during a Flex Alert?



Note: 17% of respondents selected “None,” and 9% “Don’t know.” Response options removed from figure in Wave 6 of 2022



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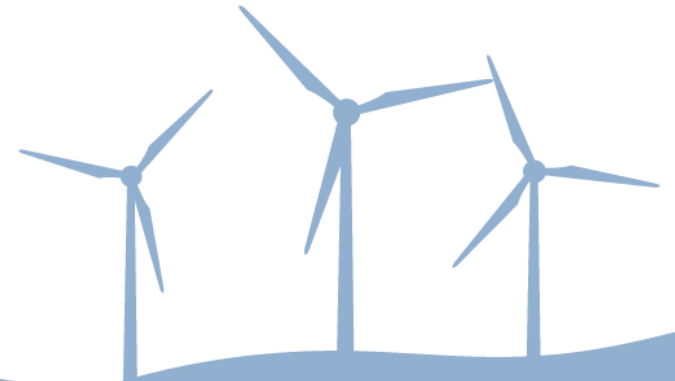
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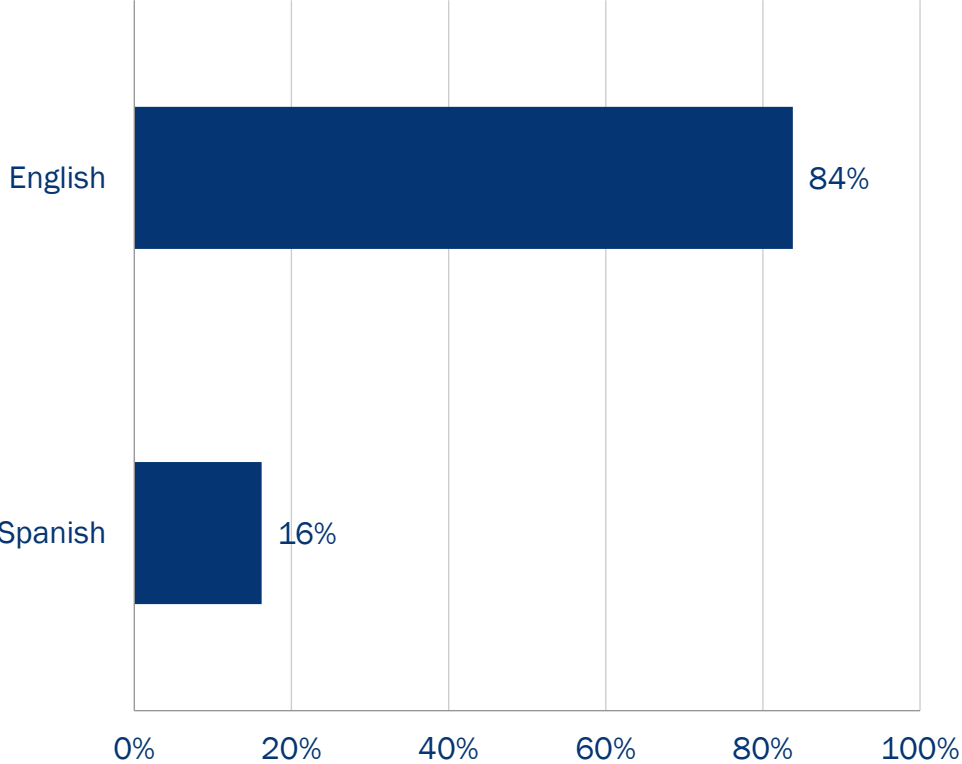
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# APPENDIX

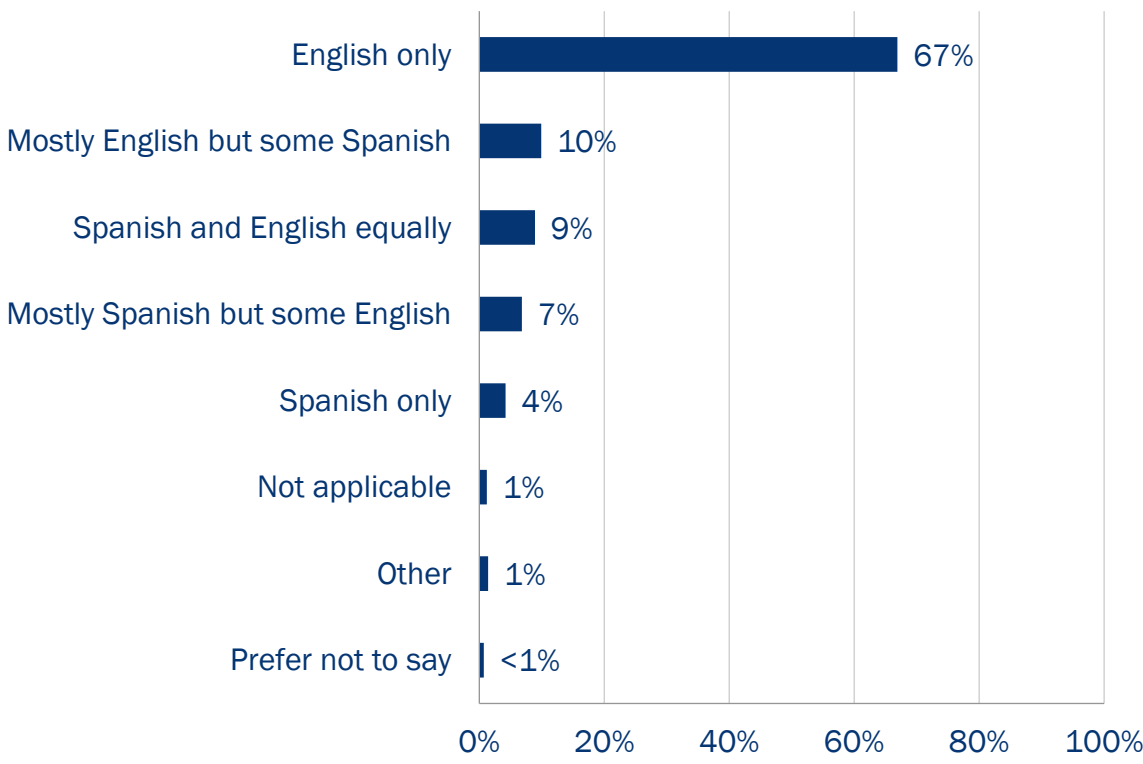


Although fewer than 20% of our respondents took the survey in Spanish for each wave during the 2022 campaign, more than a quarter of respondents consistently spoke at least some Spanish in their home.

What is your preferred language to take this survey? (n=3,000)



What level of Spanish/English is spoken in your home? (n=3,000)



Note: Language data displayed is unweighted as it reflects demographics of the specific respondent sample. When data weights were applied to analyses, Spanish-speaking representation increased to over a third of survey respondents (38%).

# Memorandum

**To:** Erik Johnson, CPUC  
**From:** Opinion Dynamics Evaluation Team  
**Date:** September 22, 2022  
**Re:** Stakeholder Engagement Assessment - Pre-launch Draft Memo

---

This memorandum presents key findings and recommendations from Opinion Dynamics' assessment of stakeholder engagement during the pre-launch phase of the 2022 Flex Alert Campaign.

## 1. Introduction

Stakeholders play an integral role in the design and execution of the statewide (SW) Flex Alert ME&O campaign. Within the context of the Emergency Load Reduction Program (ELRP), representatives from the Investor-Owned Utilities (IOUs) as well as the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) coordinate with and provide input to DDB Group throughout the lifecycle of the campaign. Given the different perspectives and level of engagement these stakeholders hold, we conducted targeted research to provide insight into how stakeholder engagement processes can be optimized to ensure both high levels of engagement and that individual stakeholder needs are being met. The research is designed to occur in two phases so that findings are timely and actionable: pre-campaign launch and alongside implementation. This phased approach allows us to look at the role of stakeholders from two vantage points: how stakeholders could work better together (pre-launch) and how stakeholder engagement is going (in tandem with campaign execution).

The focus of this memo is on the first phase of the Stakeholder Engagement Assessment, which addressed the need for iterative feedback and provides the CPUC with a deep dive into the ways in which stakeholders have collaborated thus far. This memo also provides timely, actionable feedback to DDB. The research objectives included an assessment of:

- The roles and responsibilities of campaign stakeholders;
- The goals of each stakeholder as it relates to their involvement in the campaign, and any perceived challenges to achieving them;
- The activities conducted by each stakeholder;
- Any needs of IOU stakeholders related to their involvement in the campaign and collaboration process;
- How collaboration occurred in the pre-campaign phase,
- The perceived value of collaboration with other stakeholders; and
- Any feedback or recommendations on how to improve the campaign implementation and collaboration process.

## 2. Methods

We conducted six in-depth interviews with campaign stakeholders from May 23<sup>rd</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, each lasting between 40 and 60 minutes. Table 1 below lists each stakeholder, the respective number of interviews we conducted per organization, and the number of people interviewed. We interviewed nine people across the stakeholder organizations, which consisted of three IOUs (SCE, PG&E, and SDG&E) and three non-IOU organizations (CPUC, CAISO, and DDB Group). Our interview with DDB Group also included a representative from DDC.

Table 1: Summary of Stakeholder Interviews per Organization

Organization	Number of Interviews	Number of People Interviewed
CPUC	1	1
CAISO	1	1
DDB Group	1	2
SCE	1	1
PG&E	1	2
SDG&E	1	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

We recorded each interview with respondents' permission and maintained confidentiality across all responses. After careful review and analysis, we presented findings during two share-out and iteration sessions with the CPUC and DDB Group to hear their feedback and thoughts on how they might implement the research recommendations.

## 3. Findings

Our interviews explored campaign roles and responsibilities, goals, main activities, key aspects of collaboration, and any pertinent challenges associated with each. The following sections detail our findings in each topic area. (Please see Appendix A to reference the interview guide.)

### 3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

**Roles and responsibilities related to Flex Alert and ELRP ME&O differed across the organizations, but were similar among the IOUs.** The non-IOU organizations have unique responsibilities such as:

- Campaign design,
- Development of campaign materials,
- General campaign advising and oversight, and
- Approval of materials.

The three IOUs have responsibilities geared towards promoting the consumer-facing ELRP brand – Power Saver Rewards (PSR) – to their customers. Table 2 provides a summary of each stakeholder's role and respective campaign implementation responsibilities.

Table 2: Roles, Responsibilities, and Main Functions of Campaign Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Role	Campaign Responsibilities & Main Functions
CPUC	Campaign oversight (design and execution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve campaign materials as they are developed and refined</li> <li>Work closely with DDB to ensure proper campaign execution</li> <li>Provide relevant input and updates at stakeholder meetings</li> <li>Take in and address commentary from IOUs and the public</li> </ul>
CAISO	Campaign advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor grid conditions daily</li> <li>Issue Flex Alerts during peak demand events</li> <li>Instruct campaign actors to implement Flex Alert quick response marketing</li> <li>Contribute to campaign discussions during stakeholder meetings</li> </ul>
DDB Group	Campaign Implementer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop statewide campaign strategy and associated materials and messaging</li> <li>Execute campaign strategy and plan</li> <li>Host and facilitate bi-weekly Flex Alert stakeholder meetings</li> <li>Provide campaign updates at stakeholder meetings</li> <li>Track campaign performance and provide updates to the CPUC</li> <li>Manage and provide guidance to network of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) via DDC</li> </ul>
SCE	Utility partners to the campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement ELRP to customers leveraging Power Saver Rewards (PSR) branding and marketing</li> <li>Support increasing customer awareness and education on PSR</li> <li>Notify customers of FA/PSR events</li> <li>Provide feedback on campaign materials and campaign progress in and outside of biweekly stakeholder meetings</li> </ul>
PG&E		
SDG&E		

## 3.2 Campaign Goals

We identified two overarching ME&O goals among campaign stakeholders, with two additional goals mentioned at the organizational level. **Campaign goals converged around education and awareness for California customers on the importance of Flex Alerts and participating in the Power Saver Rewards program.**



- All six stakeholders agreed that a primary campaign goal was to improve customer awareness of the importance of saving energy during a Flex Alert and how to save energy so that when a Flex Alert is called, energy usage is reduced.
- A secondary goal was to educate customers who have been defaulted into, or opted into, the Power Saver Rewards program on how they can be rewarded for conserving energy during a Flex Alert, as well to encourage non-defaulted customers to sign up.
- Two stakeholders emphasized additional goals of ME&O efforts - achieving target kWh savings and realizing energy load reduction during peak hours to avoid a grid emergency.

“We’d like to see the campaign be very effective at convincing consumers that participation is needed and that to be on alert helps us to avoid more serious interventions to the grid, which includes outages.”

The perception of progress towards meeting these goals was generally favorable among most of the stakeholders. However, one stakeholder expressed concern that the lack of focus on urgency in campaign messaging would impede long-term progress. In addition, several stakeholders mentioned potential challenges to customer response to Flex Alerts that could impact achievement of campaign goals, including:

- Customers’ unwillingness to save energy to avoid discomfort during high temperatures;
- Inconvenience to customers’ daily lives;
- Inadequate incentive to encourage energy conservation; and
- The belief that grid reliability is the responsibility of the utility, not the customer.

Campaign goals may have a greater likelihood of being met if the group allows time in recurring meetings for discussion on ways to mitigate these barriers.

### 3.3 Campaign Activities

Planned and ongoing ME&O campaign activities differ between the three IOUs and the three non-IOU organizations. **Non-IOU stakeholder activities are focused on ME&O for the statewide Flex Alert campaign as a whole, while IOU activities are focused on ME&O for the Power Saver Rewards program.** In particular, the non-IOU stakeholder statewide Flex Alert ME&O activities focus on online video broadcasting, TV commercials, social media posts on various platforms, and digital display banners.

Ongoing and planned IOU ME&O activities consist of:

- Welcome emails to defaulted PSR customers and communications throughout the summer,
- Paper bill inserts publicizing PSR to non-defaulted customers,
- Collateral such as billboards, banners, TV commercials, social media posts, and radio streaming encouraging defaulted and non-defaulted customers to participate or sign up for PSR,
- Internal PSR promotion to IOU employees living in service territories, and
- Day-before and day-of Flex Alert notifications with tips on how to save energy.

One non-IOU stakeholder mentioned the need for two adjustments to current ME&O activities: 1) more activities aimed at increasing the number of Californians enrolled for direct messages from CAISO, both before

and after campaign funding expires; and 2) enhancing the sense of urgency communicated in Flex Alert messaging so that Californians better understand the importance of reducing their energy usage.

### 3.3.1 CBO Engagement

DDB Group has engaged CBOs to provide tailored ME&O to core customer groups across California as part of the SW campaign. The core customer groups included are those identified as harder to reach with general campaign messaging, including:

- Low-income residents,
- Senior residents,
- Multicultural residents,
- Residents with disabilities,
- Rural and agricultural residents, and
- High energy users.

CBO activities consist of multilingual ME&O channeled through two pathways: General ME&O and Flex Alert “quick response” channels (see Figure 1 below). General ME&O consists of activities focused on increasing general awareness of Power Saver Rewards and will continue throughout the remainder of the campaign months (May – October 2022). The Flex Alert quick response ME&O, however, consists of outreach efforts in response to a Flex Alert/PSR event being called. These notifications will alert customers of the incoming event and encourage participation to both conserve energy and earn rewards for doing so.

Figure 1: CBO-Driven ME&O Activities



### 3.4 Collaboration

A key component of the SW Flex Alert ME&O campaign is collaboration among stakeholders to incorporate various ideas and perspectives into campaign messaging and materials. **While the DDB facilitated bi-weekly meetings are the main way stakeholders collaborate, the meetings could benefit from more discussion.**

“We said we really should exchange ideas and learnings and come together and see what we've learned -what's working, what's not, and how we can learn from each other to enhance the program.”

The bi-weekly meetings are designed for stakeholders to receive big-picture updates on the campaign, voice concerns, and ask questions. However, feedback and observation indicates that most stakeholders do not contribute during the bi-weekly meetings, which often feel like more formal presentations rather than a space for collaboration. Therefore, finding ways to increase the level of discussion could encourage more crosstalk among stakeholders and allow for more sharing of perspectives and ideas.

Following these meetings, stakeholders like the IOUs can provide comments and feedback on campaign materials before they are sent off for the final stamp of approval from CPUC. However, **all three IOUs**

**mentioned that limited time to comment and provide feedback on campaign materials hindered collaboration.** They called for being involved in the materials review process as early as possible, such as during initial creative and collateral development. They also asked for more flexible deadlines so that their feedback can be incorporated into campaign materials before official implementation.

## 4. Recommendations

Based on the findings presented above, we offer several suggestions for improving stakeholder engagement moving forward:

- **Recognize each stakeholder may have more than one goal for the campaign.** As discussed in Section 3.2, we identified one primary and one secondary goal among stakeholders for the 2022 Flex Alert campaign. We also found that two stakeholders had additional goals, including target kWh savings and energy load reduction during peak hours to avoid a grid emergency. Collateral, to the extent possible, should be open to minor adjustments that help stakeholders meet additional goals and remain flexible to any changes that arise.
- **Enhance collaboration during bi-weekly stakeholder meetings by incorporating polls and break-out rooms to maximize crosstalk and utilize stakeholder ideas.** The value of the bi-weekly stakeholder meetings depends upon the level of meeting discussion. One stakeholder felt that discussion was limited and wished people would speak up more. We recommend DDB incorporate engagement activities such as polls and break-out rooms to improve discussion and encourage stakeholders to verbalize their ideas during the meetings.
- **Allow space at the bi-weekly stakeholder meetings to address potential challenges to customer response to FA/PSR events.** As discussed in Section 3.2, stakeholders mentioned several challenges to customer response that could impact achievement of their goals. We recommend DDB allow adequate space and time in stakeholder meetings to address these issues so that they are resolved quickly either ahead of or during campaign implementation. Consider adding an agenda item to the meeting that allows designated time for stakeholders to address these potential challenges, either regularly or on an ad hoc basis.

- **Identify procedures that allow for more review time of campaign materials.** As discussed in Section 3.4, all three IOUs mentioned not having enough time to comment and provide feedback on campaign materials before they were finalized. We recommend DDB hold a stakeholder workshop at the end of this campaign year to brainstorm process improvements that will allow for more review time while materials are in development.

## Appendix A. Interview Guide



Flex Alert Stakeholder  
Interview Guide\_DRAF



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# STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT

PHASE 2 REPORTING

APRIL 17, 2023



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# I. STAKEHOLDER ASSESSMENT: PHASE 2

## I.1 INTRODUCTION

Opinion Dynamics conducted targeted research to provide insight into how stakeholder engagement processes can be optimized to ensure both high levels of engagement and that individual stakeholder needs are being met. The research was designed to occur in two phases: pre-campaign launch and post-campaign. This phased approach allowed us to look at the role of stakeholders from two vantage points: how stakeholders could work better together (pre-launch) and how stakeholder engagement and collaboration went overall (post-campaign).

The focus of this chapter is the second phase of the Stakeholder Engagement Assessment, which addressed the need for iterative feedback and provides the CPUC with a deep dive into the ways in which stakeholders collaborated with one another, engaged with the campaign, and how these processes can be improved for future campaign cycles. The research objectives included an assessment of:

- Objectives for the Flex Alert Campaign stakeholder engagement process;
- Methods used to engage stakeholders in the campaign development and implementation processes;
- Perceived success of stakeholder engagement, and what lessons they find useful to carry on for future campaign cycles; and
- Whether the objectives of the engagement process were met, and the impacts that this process had on both the campaign and stakeholders.

## I.2 METHODS

We conducted six in-depth interviews with campaign stakeholders from late February and early March 2023, each lasting between 30 and 45 minutes. We interviewed 11 people across the stakeholder organizations, which consisted of three IOUs (SCE, PG&E, and SDG&E) and three non-IOU organizations (CAISO, DDC, and DDB). Table 1 below lists each stakeholder, the respective number of interviews we conducted per organization, and the number of people interviewed.

Table 1: Summary of Stakeholder Interviews per Organization

Organization	Number of Interviews	Number of People Interviewed
CAISO	1	1
DDC	1	2
DDB	1	3
SCE	1	1
PG&E	1	2
SDG&E	1	2
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

We recorded each interview with respondents' permission and maintained confidentiality across all responses. Interviews were later transcribed and used to generate our findings and recommendations in the following sections.

## I.3 FINDINGS

### I.3.1 PERCEPTION OF STAKEHOLDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

We asked stakeholders to identify the roles and responsibilities of each organization involved in the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign to determine whether individual stakeholders had a firm understanding of each organization's



engagement with the campaign. **Most representatives accurately identified the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder engaged in the campaign (4 of 6).** Table XX in Section XX of this report details the accurate roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, to which we leveraged each stakeholder's response to assess accuracy. One stakeholder did not feel comfortable detailing the roles and responsibilities of any organization other than their own. Another stakeholder correctly identified the roles and responsibilities of each organization except for the CPUC, which they said was responsible for campaign marketing and advertising.

### 1.3.2 CAMPAIGN ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Stakeholders most frequently mentioned the following key objectives for engaging in the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign:

- **Work with stakeholders to promote the conservation of energy by compelling consumers to take energy saving action during a Flex Alert (4 mentions);** and
- **Promote education and awareness around both Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards (2 mentions).**

"I think some of my concerns have been alleviated somewhat to my satisfaction. Conversation – that's a focus that's come more into view than in previous years."

A few stakeholders mentioned several other objectives, including execution of the Flex Alert ME&O campaign (1 mention), conservation of energy specifically to avoid grid emergencies (1 mention), and notifying customers about Flex Alert events (1 mention).

**These objectives are relatively consistent with the overarching campaign goals that stakeholders mentioned during Phase 1 of our research.** One stakeholder was particularly pleased with how stakeholders' objectives have evolved over the 2022 campaign year to focus more on the importance of energy conservation rather than awareness and education for Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards alone.

### 1.3.3 ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION AROUND CAMPAIGN MARKETING

**Collaboration and engagement among stakeholders were more prevalent around statewide Flex Alert messaging and marketing than Power Saver Rewards.** Throughout the campaign period, stakeholders met on a bi-weekly basis to receive and share big-picture updates on the campaign, voice concerns, and ask questions. However, these meetings primarily focused on discussing statewide Flex Alert messaging and marketing efforts and development and implementation timelines, as well as sharing creative materials and assets.

While all stakeholders did work together to select the brand name "Power Saver Rewards" as the ELRP customer-facing program name during the pre-launch phase of the campaign, **stakeholders did not work together on a shared campaign-wide name for what an issued Flex Alert would be called (i.e. "Flex Alert Event" versus "Power Saver Rewards Event").** All three IOUs used the term "Power Saver Rewards Event" in communications to their customers when a Flex Alert was issued, while the non-IOUs used the term "Flex Alert Event."

Due to privacy restrictions regarding customer information, IOUs were responsible for direct-to-consumer outreach for the Power Saver Rewards program. **Given this provision, IOUs worked independently on Power Saver Rewards marketing and messaging and did not collaborate with non-IOU stakeholders directly on these efforts.** One stakeholder wished IOUs would share more of their work on Power Saver Rewards during the bi-weekly stakeholder meetings and allow other stakeholders to collaborate with them on the developing their marketing plans and materials for the program. Two IOUs mentioned that while they did not directly work with non-IOUs on PSR marketing, their teams cross-checked statewide Flex Alert collateral to make sure terminology was consistent with their own messaging when referencing Flex Alerts and energy usage in general.

"I think there's value in hearing what's going on with everybody... just like IOU learnings can inform us, our learnings can help inform the IOUs."

## I.3.4 TOOLS FOR ENGAGEMENT AND COLLABORATION

The biweekly Flex Alert stakeholder meetings were the primary tool used to facilitate stakeholder collaboration. **Overall, stakeholders felt the biweekly meetings were effective at engaging their organizations with the campaign (5 of 6) and supporting effective campaign implementation (5 of 6).** Most stakeholders also said the meetings were productive and a good use of their organizations' time to learn about key campaign updates and overall progress. However, one stakeholder felt the meetings were more like presentations rather than a space for collaboration and wished there was more opportunity for open dialogue. Another stakeholder wished the CPUC would have been more involved in the facilitation of the meetings and helped spur conversation.

Outside of the bi-weekly stakeholder meetings, IOUs met separately to discuss Power Saver Rewards. They shared feedback on marketing plans with one another and provided updates on their individual implementation efforts. **All three IOUs felt the IOU-only meetings were an effective tool at supporting successful execution and effective implementation of the campaign.** One IOU felt that these meetings were more effective than the bi-weekly stakeholder meetings because they gave IOUs the opportunity to work in a smaller group and focus on activities limited to their organizations (i.e. Power Saver Rewards marketing and messaging).

## I.3.5 COLLABORATION SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

### COLLABORATION SUCCESSES

Stakeholders felt the biggest successes that came from collaboration during the campaign were:

- **Effectively reaching customers about Flex Alerts and Power Saver Rewards, and**
- **Avoiding grid emergencies all season, especially during the 10-day stretch of consecutive Flex Alert events.**

Stakeholders were pleased that their efforts were able to simultaneously raise awareness for the Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards brands and also prevent outages in the state. Stakeholders also said that these campaign achievements would be extremely difficult to realize without strong stakeholder engagement and collaboration on key activities such as the fast-paced Flex Alert call to action channel.

"Looking back and seeing the results, going through a 10-day Flex Alert period without an outage speaks to the successful collaboration among all the partners."

As mentioned, stakeholders were pleased with the biweekly stakeholder meetings and found them to be an effective and useful tool for executing the campaign. One stakeholder highlighted that continued collaboration in and outside of these meetings allowed for their individual organization's needs to be better met and ideas considered.

### COLLABORATION CHALLENGES

IOU and non-IOU stakeholders both experienced challenges associated with collaboration. **Several stakeholders (IOU and non-IOU) said alignment of branding and messaging for Power Saver Rewards collateral was challenging and may have potentially caused customer confusion (4 mentions).** This alignment challenge was likely a result of the campaign's overall structure and general IOU sentiment around marketing to customers. Due to privacy restrictions around customer data, stakeholders decided during the prelaunch phase that the campaign implementer would be responsible for statewide Flex Alert marketing efforts while IOUs would develop and implement their own direct-to-consumer Power Saver Rewards strategies. This split the larger campaign into two components – statewide Flex Alert marketing and Power Saver Rewards marketing (see Figure 1 below). In addition to the campaign's structure, one IOU explicitly expressed that, given the nature of IOU-customer relationships, IOUs knew how to communicate with their customers best and thus did not need to collaborate on marketing and messaging strategies. Overall, stakeholder collaboration around Power Saver Rewards was hindered due to this alignment challenge.

Figure 1: High-Level Overview of 2022 Flex Alert ME&O Campaign



IOUs shared challenges unique to their organizations. As was expressed from representatives during our Phase 1 interviews, all three IOUs reiterated that receiving campaign collateral too close to the marketing launch date hindered collaboration by leaving them limited time to review content and comment and provide feedback. This posed complications around their Power Saver Rewards marketing plans specifically, which had already been in development and made efforts to align marketing and messaging materials difficult under tight timelines. IOUs also mentioned additional challenges, including:

- Tackling customer confusion around the oversaturation of brand names and programs (2 mentions);
- What to call a Flex Alert event (1 mention).

Non-IOU stakeholders had unique challenges to stakeholder collaboration. One stakeholder expressed misgivings around how Power Saver Rewards implementation across the IOUs were communicated, specifically surrounding details such as amount, timing, and delivery of bill credits to customers. This posed challenges with how to market the program on a statewide level and incorporate these differences into their statewide plan accurately and cohesively. Another stakeholder mentioned difficulty around connecting with IOUs to review and provide input on their individual Power Saver Rewards marketing plans, as mentioned above.

## 1.4 KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings presented above, we offer several recommendations for improving stakeholder engagement in future campaign cycles:

- **Establish a regular cadence for IOUs to share their Power Saver Rewards marketing plans at the biweekly stakeholder meetings.** Scheduled share-outs will help keep other non-IOU stakeholders in the loop on Power Saver Rewards branding and messaging, encourage collaboration on these materials, and limit the collaborative gap between the ME&O campaign's two core components (see Figure 1). This could also improve alignment of campaign branding and messaging across both statewide Flex Alert and Power Saver Rewards efforts.
- **Incorporate time at select bi-weekly stakeholder meetings for all stakeholders to briefly share key highlights and samples of what they have been working on, what they plan on doing, and if they are running into any challenges they would like to discuss with the group.** This will foster crosstalk and take advantage of the time dedicated to stakeholder collaboration. In addition, this could potentially allow stakeholders to view campaign materials and

marketing collateral as they are in development rather than too close to marketing launch deadlines when opportunities for input and feedback are limited.

- **When possible, consider sharing presentations prior to stakeholder meetings 24 – 48 hours ahead of the planned meeting time.** This may allow stakeholders to prepare questions ahead of meetings so that Q & A time is utilized efficiently and effectively.



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# 2022 FLEX ALERT MARKETING, EDUCATION, AND OUTREACH EFFECTIVENESS STUDY

## APPENDIX C





## CBO SERVICE AREA MAPPING

Based on available data, Opinion Dynamics created a map of CBO service areas to determine the locations and regions within the state where CBOs are serving consumers and where potential gaps in coverage may exist. This map served as a visual tool to support the assessment of how well-positioned the CBO channel was to support the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign in meeting its objectives.

The evaluation team used the data provided by DDC in Table 15 as a starting point for building the coverage map of each CBO's service area that supported the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign (n=16). This data was then integrated using mapping software with publicly available mapping data of California's 58 counties and the boundaries for each of the three IOU's service territories (PG&E, SCE, and SDG&E).

Table 1. Breakdown of CBO Service Territory

CBO	Service Count	IOU Territory
Acterra	San Mateo, Santa Clara, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Marin, Alameda, Solano, Napa, and Sonoma Counties	PG&E
American GI Forum	Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties	SCE, PG&E
American Muslims for Sustainability	Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Jose, San Diego, and Merced Counties	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E
Alliance to Save Energy	Alameda, Amador, Butte, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Tehama, and Ventura Counties	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E
Council of the Blind	Fresno, Merced, Sacramento, Stanislaus, Yolo, Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Solano, Sonoma, Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Mateo Counties	PG&E
California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	N/A - Statewide	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E
Faith Action for All	Kern County, Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties	SCE, PG&E
High Sierra Energy Foundation	Inyo and Mono Counties	SCE
Mainstreet Oceanside	San Diego County	SDG&E
National Utilities Consumer Rights Association	Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, and Orange Counties	SCE
Network of Community Entrepreneurs	Kern, Santa Barbara, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Fresno Counties	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E
Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley	Santa Clara County	PG&E
Service Center for Independent Life	Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties	SCE
Southern California American Indian Resource Center	San Diego, Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Sonoma Counties	SDG&E, SCE, PG&E
Sustainable Claremont <sup>a</sup>	Los Angeles County	SCE
Valley Clean Air Now	San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern and Counties	SCE, PG&E

<sup>a</sup> Sustainable Claremont collaborated with San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance (organization not shown here) to support the campaign.

Figure 25 is an overview of CBO coverage across the state of California during the 2022 Flex Alert ME&O campaign. Each overlapping IOU service territory is included and demarcated by different colored outlines and accompanying labels. Additionally, the map's orange dots represent the physical locations of each CBO's home base. Since some CBOs were close to one another, we assigned an opaqueness feature that made their points on the map opaquer compared to the CBOs that were farther apart. For example, the more solid point above the PG&E territory label, which is in Sacramento County, is composed of three overlapping CBO points; the two transparent dots surrounding the SDG&E territory label each represent one CBO. (Please note: two CBOs are excluded from the map. American Muslims for Sustainability did not have information on where it was primarily located, and Alliance to Save Energy is located in

Washington DC, which is outside the boundaries of this map. However, the counties these two CBOs serve are still indicated.)

In addition, the blue shading on the map represents the number of CBOs serving a given county (see legend in the upper right corner of the map). The lighter blue shades indicate a greater number of CBOs serving the area, while the darker blue shades indicate a small number of CBOs serving the area. The darkest blue indicates no CBOs serving the county.

Figure 1. CBO Coverage across California

