

Texas power companies are adjusting residents' smart thermostats to higher temps. Here's why.

June 21 2021, by Brett Molina



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Live in Texas and notice your thermostat temperature happened to go up by itself?

Some owners of smart thermostats in the Lone Star State found their pre-set temperatures were going up, all done remotely by their power company, according to local reports. It wasn't devious: The adjustments are being made as part of programs aimed at saving [energy](#) and reducing strain on the power grid.

Brandon English told Houston TV station KHOU his wife and daughters had lowered the temperature on their thermostat before taking a nap. When they woke up, the inside of their home had become much warmer.

"They'd been asleep long enough that the house had already gotten to 78 degrees," English told KHOU. "So they woke up sweating."

In Galveston, Karen Rogers told NBC affiliate KPRC she noticed the temperature on her thermostat was being turned up without her consent. She later discovered it was part of an energy savings event initiated by her energy company, said the report.

Meanwhile, CBS station KENS reports some CPS Energy customers saw their thermostats adjusted during peak energy periods.

The adjustments are part of energy savings programs offered by energy companies. For example, the WiFi Thermostat Rewards [program](#) from CPS Energy provides a one-time bill credit upon enrolling and annual bill credits at the end of summer when you use a qualified WiFi-enabled thermostat.

As part of the program, the company can adjust customers' thermostats remotely. "During summer peak energy demand days, we may briefly adjust your thermostat settings by a few degrees. We'll do this only as needed," according to the CPS Energy website.

A similar program called Smart Savers Texas allows for thermostat

temperatures to be altered remotely during peak energy events.

Erika Diamond, vice president of customer solutions at EnergyHub, which runs Smart Savers Texas, said customers will typically receive an offer to join the program from their energy provider or the manufacturer of their [thermostat](#).

During a peak energy event, the program "increases the [temperature](#) on participating thermostats by up to four degrees to reduce energy consumption and relieve stress on the grid," said Diamond. Customers can opt out at any time. Diamond also said events like this are rare, possibly two to eight times each summer.

Representatives from CPS Energy and the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which manages the state's power grid, could not be immediately reached for comment.

Earlier this week, ERCOT urged residents to conserve energy because of hot weather. In February, a historic winter storm left millions of Texans without power.

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