



Predictable 12 is only the beginning. Next stop: clean, predictable energy.

By Elizabeth Killinger, President, NRG Retail and Reliant

On June 2nd, Reliant announced a new electricity plan called Predictable 12. It's an innovative plan that keeps customer electricity costs the same every month, for 12 months, with no surprises.

It is not a coincidence that we announced this new plan on the same day – joined by Houston Mayor Annise Parker and Texas State Representative Sylvester Turner – we launched Reliant's Beat the Heat Program for seniors and others who need a cool place to stay during Houston's long, hot summer. Predictable 12 is designed to help customers, like seniors, who are on a fixed income and want certainty when planning their monthly budget.

This plan was added to the broad selection of Reliant plans that align with nearly any lifestyle and energy need. And like many of our plans, we introduced Predictable 12 because many customers told us they wanted something like it.

But Predictable 12 has a few vocal critics who have speculated that the plan might encourage irresponsible energy use by customers.

First, I believe we can count on our customers to do the right thing. Contrary to what some may believe, Reliant recognizes that saving money is not the only reason consumers choose to conserve electricity or to use it wisely. We've been serving Texans since competition began, and we've come to understand that – while some certainly conserve energy to save money – many also use electricity wisely because it's the right thing to do.

Before we introduced this plan broadly, we took steps to understand how a flat rate plan would affect energy usage behaviors – precisely because we value balancing customers' energy needs with responsible energy use. Based on research, very little, if any, usage change occurs when customers sign up for a fixed-bill program.

Second, NRG and Reliant have made a significant investment in the developing tools and services that enable customers to understand how their behaviors impact energy consumption and to make responsible decisions.

We were the first to introduce a home energy monitor to consumers. The first to introduce an email that provides customers insight into electricity use and cost on a weekly and even daily basis. The first to introduce usage alerts to notify customers when their electricity consumption reaches a pre-set limit. We provide free in-home energy checkups. And we even offer a smart thermostat that can adjust the temperature on your AC while you're away to help you avoid using power needlessly.

We were also the first to introduce a way for customers to easily conserve electricity when the state needs it on peak usage days. This program, called Degrees of Difference, provides bill credits when customers are able to reduce electricity use on days when power supplies are tight.

Finally, Reliant and NRG are increasing our investments in sustainable energy innovations to empower people to use energy wisely. We aspire to be the company that consumers trust to help them address environmental concerns without compromising the reality of a plugged-in lifestyle. That's why we are accelerating the pace of development for sustainable energy technologies, like electric vehicle charging and rooftop solar panel leases that provide Texas homeowners the ability to generate their own clean energy while reducing their dependence on the grid. Plans like Predictable 12 meet the increasingly diverse needs of consumers today – on their terms – while we work to make widespread adoption of renewable energy technologies like rooftop solar and distributed generation a reality.

I believe we can count on Texans to do the right thing. As Mark Twain said, "Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest."