

Key Messages

Three out of four Americans (76 percent) are concerned that proposed EPA policies to eliminate coal-generated electricity will produce higher electricity costs.

Their concerns are not unfounded. Removing reliable and affordable coal generation from the energy mix forces America to rely more on fuels subject to volatile swings in price and supply. Many Americans reported higher electricity bills this winter, largely as the result of a cold spell when electricity prices in their regions tracked the price of natural gas and alternative fuels, used to generate their power.

Of note:

- **Concern about the impact of higher electricity prices** is greatest among senior citizens/retirees (**88 percent**) living on fixed incomes who are particularly sensitive to cost increases.

A majority of Americans responsible for paying their utility bills (56%) said higher electricity bills this past winter had an impact on their daily lives.

Many consumers this winter got a taste of the economic consequences that stem from increasing reliance on fuels other than coal. Those paying utility bills who said the higher costs had an impact on their daily lives reported that those higher costs caused them to adjust thermostats below comfortable levels (32 percent) and cut back on leisure activities (28 percent). Some (19 percent) also reported that higher electricity costs limited their ability to purchase food, healthcare and other necessities. *Had stable and plentiful coal not have been part of the energy mix, those prices would have been even higher.*

Most Americans (70 percent) are concerned that the proposed EPA regulations will spawn electricity black-outs and brown-outs this summer

Heavy summer and winter usage alike can stress the nation's power grid and heighten the effects of a failure in any part of the system. Implementing regulations that shut down coal facilities will remove the most dependable source of electricity from that system.