



MEMORANDUM

TO: Low Income Consumer Advisory Task Force

FROM: Liz Jambor, EdD, Manager

DATE: 01/05/2015

SUBJECT: Update of Energy Burden Tables

During the June 2014 Resource Management Commission meeting, members of the Commission requested an update to tables in a 2010 report titled “Residential Electricity Burden” written by Austin Energy staff and a consulting firm hired by Austin Energy. Specifically, members requested that two tables in the report be updated with more recent data to demonstrate any changes in utility burden and poverty levels in Austin and a number of comparable cities throughout Texas. Attached you will find the requested update to the two tables from the 2010 report. The previous study reflected Census data from 2006 through 2008. The updated tables are drawn from data from the 2010 through 2012 Census reports. Other than the years, the data sources used for this update are identical to those of the original 2010 report. For ease of comparison, staff also included the tables from the 2010 report. The ranges of income levels used for all tables align with those commonly used in requests for information from the public, RMC and Low Income Consumer Task Force members.

As Tables 1a and 1b demonstrate, Austin remains at the lower end of electricity burden as compared to other areas across the state. Additionally, the average monthly electric bill has increased at a lesser rate than the median monthly household income, resulting in a decrease in the electricity burden at the median level. Finally, Tables 2a and 2b shows that household incomes at each poverty threshold have increased at a greater rate than utility costs. This means that there is a slight decrease in the electricity burden at each poverty threshold.

As was the case in the original 2010 report, the update of this data concludes that utility costs are a greater burden at the lower income levels. However, Austin is still one of the lower energy burden areas as compared to other areas across Texas.



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TABLE 1

Table 1a: Household Income and Electricity Burden Measures by Area (2010-2012)																
Measure	Austin		Brownsville		Corpus Christi		Dallas		El Paso		Houston		San Antonio		Texas	
Total Households	421,129		118,446		152,670		2,047,328		256,149		1,783,863		602,599		8,852,444	
Households Below Poverty	55,841		36,627		24,678		257,433		57,514		248,758		93,035		1,333,625	
% of all Households	13%		31%		16%		13%		22%		14%		15%		15%	
Households by Percent of Poverty	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total
0-100%	55.8	13.3%	36.6	30.9%	24.7	16.2%	257.4	12.6%	57.5	22.4%	248.8	13.9%	93	15.4%	1333.6	15.1%
101-200%	62.4	14.8%	31.4	26.5%	33.9	22.2%	367.4	17.9%	66.8	26.1%	324.1	18.2%	121.3	20.1%	1744.1	19.7%
201-300%	64.0	15.2%	18.2	15.4%	27.0	17.7%	318.6	15.6%	43.6	17.0%	272.8	15.3%	109.1	18.1%	1453.7	16.4%
301-400%	53.9	12.8%	11.8	10.0%	19.7	12.9%	268.5	13.1%	29.3	11.4%	221	12.4%	77.8	12.9%	1142.4	12.9%
401+%	184.9	43.9%	20.4	17.2%	47.4	31.0%	835.3	40.8%	58.9	23.0%	717.2	40.2%	201.4	33.4%	3178.7	35.9%
Median Annual Household Income	\$56,452		\$32,745		\$44,699		\$56,197		\$39,261		\$55,561		\$49,130		\$50,611	
CPPP Income Requirement (Month)	\$3,487		\$3,156		\$3,272		\$3,553		\$3,132		\$3,582		\$3,358		N / A	
% < CPPP Income Requirement	36%		60%		46%		39%		54%		40%		44%		N / A	
Electricity Burden Measures																
Average Monthly Electric Bill	\$151.00		\$169.00		\$193.00		\$187.00		\$92.00		\$181.00		\$152.00		\$176.00	
Median Monthly Electric Bill	\$126.00		\$150.00		\$174.00		\$160.00		\$74.00		\$158.00		\$133.00		\$153.00	
Median Monthly Household Income	\$4,863.00		\$2,772.00		\$3,906.00		\$4,863.00		\$3,367.00		\$4,775.00		\$4,245.00		\$4,331.00	
Electricity Burden (%)	2.60%		5.41%		4.44%		3.29%		2.19%		3.31%		3.13%		3.54%	



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Table 1b: Household Income and Electricity Burden Measures by Area (2006-2008)

Table 1b: Household Income and Electricity Burden Measures by Area (2006-2008)																
Measure	Austin		Brownsville		Corpus Christi		Dallas		El Paso		Houston		San Antonio		Texas	
Total Households	381,300		116,700		140,800		1,828,700		232,900		1,599,800		542,800		8,258,100	
Households Below Poverty	46,400		37,500		24,700		204,900		59,700		199,990		83,200		1,183,600	
% of all Households	12%		32%		18%		11%		26%		13%		15%		14%	
Households by Percent of Poverty	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total	Num (000s)	Pct of Total
0-100%	46.4	11.0%	37.5	31.7%	24.7	16.2%	204.9	10.0%	59.7	23.3%	199.9	11.2%	83.2	13.8%	1183.6	13.4%
101-200%	56.5	13.4%	30.7	25.9%	31.1	20.4%	315.3	15.4%	57.2	22.3%	292.0	16.4%	109.7	18.2%	1609.2	18.2%
201-300%	57.4	13.6%	17.9	15.1%	23.9	15.7%	283.4	13.8%	40.3	15.7%	253.0	14.2%	94.9	15.7%	1372.4	15.5%
301-400%	52.4	12.4%	11.7	9.9%	17.8	11.7%	247.8	12.1%	26.1	10.2%	196.9	11.0%	72.7	12.1%	1083.2	12.2%
401+%	168.7	40.1%	18.9	16.0%	43.1	28.2%	777.3	38.0%	49.6	19.4%	658.0	36.9%	182.3	30.3%	3009.6	34.0%
Median Annual Household Income	\$54,200		\$30,300		\$42,200		\$54,900		\$35,300		\$54,200		\$46,100		\$48,900	
CPPP Income Requirement (Month)	\$3,000		\$2,500		\$2,800		\$3,100		\$2,900		\$3,100		\$2,900		N / A	
% < CPPP Income Requirement	31%		54%		43%		34%		54%		36%		40%		N / A	
Electricity Burden Measures																
Average Monthly Electric Bill	\$149.00		\$184.00		\$216.00		\$205.00		\$88.00		\$203.00		\$149.00		\$186.00	
Median Monthly Electric Bill	\$125.00		\$160.00		\$197.00		\$180.00		\$75.00		\$180.00		\$125.00		\$160.00	
Median Monthly Household Income	\$4,583.00		\$2,546.00		\$3,590.00		\$4,752.00		\$3,055.00		\$4,663.00		\$4,074.00		\$4,223.00	
Electricity Burden (%)	2.72%		6.29%		5.50%		3.79%		2.45%		3.86%		3.06%		3.79%	

Table 1 of the 2010 Residential Electricity Burden report.

TABLE 2

Table 2a: Austin (Travis County) Percent of Poverty Threshold by Median Utility Burden (2010-2012 Averages)								
Households				Cost Burden				
Percent of Federal Poverty Threshold	Income Limit (Family of 4)	Number	Percent	Electricity Burden	Gas Burden	Water & Sewer Burden	Other Fuel Burden	Utility Burden
0-100	\$ 23,050	55,841	13.3%	13.9%	4.2%	4.6%	4.8%	27.5%
101-200	\$ 47,700	62,400	14.8%	5.9%	1.5%	1.9%	1.3%	10.7%
201-300	\$ 71,550	64,000	15.2%	3.4%	1.0%	1.2%	0.8%	6.4%
301-400	\$ 95,400	53,900	12.8%	2.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	4.8%
401+	NA	184,900	43.9%	1.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	2.7%

Table 2b: Austin (Travis County) Percent of Poverty Threshold by Median Utility Burden (2006-2008 Averages)								
Households				Cost Burden				
Percent of Federal Poverty Threshold	Income Limit (Family of 4)	Number	Percent	Electricity Burden	Gas Burden	Water & Sewer Burden	Other Fuel Burden	Utility Burden
0-100	\$ 21,027	46,400	11.0%	14.9%	6.0%	4.3%	2.9%	28.0%
101-200	\$ 42,054	56,500	13.4%	5.6%	2.1%	1.5%	0.8%	10.1%
201-300	\$ 63,081	57,400	13.6%	3.7%	1.4%	1.0%	1.0%	7.1%
301-400	\$ 84,108	52,400	12.4%	2.7%	0.9%	0.7%	0.4%	4.8%
401+	NA	168,700	40.1%	1.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	2.7%

Table 3 of the 2010 Residential Electricity Burden report.

Table 3a is added per request by Resource Management Commission. This table is an update of Table 2a and delineates the 0-100% group into 0-50% and 51-100% poverty thresholds.

UPDATED Table 3a: Austin (Travis County) Percent of Poverty Threshold by Median Utility Burden (2010-2012 Averages)								
Households				Cost Burden				
Percent of Federal Poverty Threshold	Income Limit (Family of 4)	Number	Percent	Electricity Burden	Gas Burden	Water & Sewer Burden	Other Fuel Burden	Utility Burden
0-50	\$ 11,525	24,921	5.9%	37.7%	11.5%	11.9%	12.8%	73.9%
51-100%	\$ 23,050	30,920	7.3%	11.3%	3.0%	3.5%	3.4%	21.3%
101-200	\$ 47,700	62,400	14.8%	5.9%	1.5%	1.9%	1.3%	10.7%
201-300	\$ 71,550	64,000	15.2%	3.4%	1.0%	1.2%	0.8%	6.4%
301-400	\$ 95,400	53,900	12.8%	2.7%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	4.8%
401+	NA	184,900	43.9%	1.6%	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%	2.7%

Because income levels are not provided at the 0-50% and 51-100% levels, the income level at 100% was reduced by half to reflect income levels for a family of 4 under 51% of poverty level.

Table 3b is Table 3 of the 2010 Residential Electricity Burden report. It is provided here for comparison with the above table. Utility burden has not significantly changed from the 2006-2008 data to the 2010-2012 data.

UPDATED Table 3b: Austin (Travis County) Percent of Poverty Threshold by Median Utility Burden (2006-2008 Averages)								
Households				Cost Burden				
Percent of Federal Poverty Threshold	Income Limit (Family of 4)	Number	Percent	Electricity Burden	Gas Burden	Water & Sewer Burden	Other Fuel Burden	Utility Burden
0-50	\$10,514	21,105	5.5%	39.3%	15.2%	10.1%	7.6%	72.2%
51-100%	\$21,027	25,251	6.6%	10.5%	4.2%	3.1%	2.9%	20.7%
101-200	\$31,541	27,680	7.3%	7.2%	2.5%	1.9%	1.0%	12.5%
201-300	\$42,054	28,801	7.6%	4.9%	1.8%	1.3%	0.6%	8.6%
301-400	\$52,568	29,617	7.8%	4.1%	1.5%	1.1%	0.9%	7.5%
401+	\$84,108	80,155	21.0%	2.9%	1.0%	0.8%	0.7%	5.4%

Table 3 of the 2010 Residential Electricity Burden report. Because income levels are not provided at the 0-50% and 51-100% levels, the income level at 100% was reduced by half to reflect income levels for a family of 4 under 51% of poverty level.