

The New Haven Register

Business

New England Energy Alliance survey: Few will pay to fight Global Warming

Thursday, August 15, 2013

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A new energy survey released Thursday suggests that while New Englanders remain concerned about the effects of global warming, fewer of us are willing to pay more for our electricity to combat it.

The New England Energy Alliance survey found that at least 70 percent of the region's residents surveyed are at least somewhat concerned about global warming. That is 7 percent lower than it was in the organization's 2009 survey.

But the number of people in the region willing to pay more for their electricity in order to limit global warming has fallen dramatically in the past year. Just four out of every 10 people who responded to the survey said they would pay more for their power to fight global warming, compared to 8 out of 10 last year.

"Not surprisingly, near-term concerns about the economy trump longer-term, more abstract worries about global warming," Paul Afonso, executive director of the New England Energy Alliance, said in a statement.

But despite concerns about paying more for power in order to deal with global warming, the cost of energy is becoming less of an issue for those who responded to the survey.

The high cost of energy was identified by 39 percent of those surveyed as being New England's most important energy issue. But that figure is down 16 percent from a year ago.

Using charges on energy bills to fund energy-efficiency programs is falling out of favor with residents of the region. Last year, 50 percent of New Englanders believed in the cost-effectiveness of programs designed to promote wise energy use, but this year, the level of support is down to 36 percent, according to the survey.

A total of 600 New England residents took part in the New England Energy Alliance survey, which was done for the group by Waltham, Mass.-based Opinion Dynamics Corp.

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