



**Duquesne Light**

*Our Energy...Your Power*

# Duquesne Light: Low Income Engagement

**June 19, 2014**

# Agenda

- ▶ **Serving Low Income**
- ▶ Program Design
- ▶ Results

# Challenges to serving the low income segment

- ▶ Hard to reach
- ▶ Hard to engage
- ▶ Programs not cost-effective
- ▶ Lifestyle barriers
- ▶ Less disposable income
- ▶ Saving energy is not a priority

# Always considering ways to target underserved communities

- ▶ Duquesne has robust low income programs
  - Customer Assistance Program (CAP)
  - Universal Services
  - CARES
  - LIHEAP
  - Act 129
  - Whole House Audit Retrofit
- ▶ Bring programs to the low income population by engaging in their community
  - Outreach through neighborhood centers and religious centers
  - Advertise in local community newspapers and public transportation
  - Community events that bring face to face interaction

# Best assistance programs provide financial assistance

- ▶ Programs that directly reduce bills deliver the most benefit to low income customers
  - Customer Assistance Program (CAP)
- ▶ Need to tie financial reductions to energy consumption reduction
  - Different tools you can offer to produce energy savings
  - Reducing energy usage benefits low income sector as well as the entire ratepayer population
  - Empowers the low income community to break a cycle of misuse and misinformation
- ▶ Low income populations want to contribute to helping the environment by participating in energy savings programs

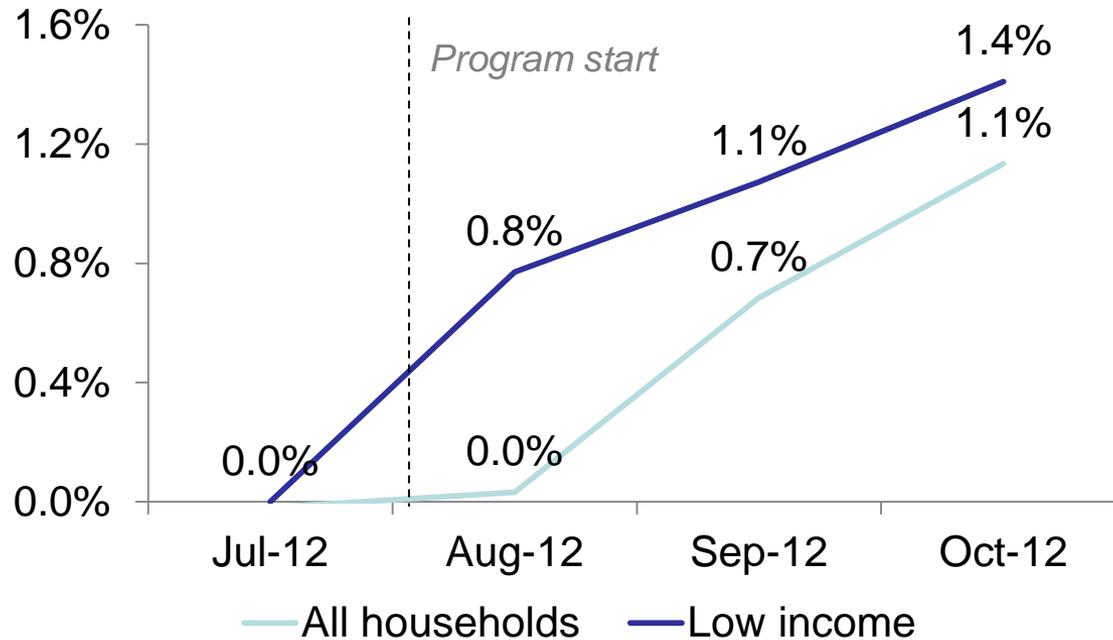
# In response to new mandate, added an Opower program that opened a new low income opportunity

| <b>ACT 129</b>        | <b>Phase I</b> | <b>Phase I</b> | <b>Phase II</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Consumption reduction | 1%             | 3%             | 2%              |
| Energy savings (GWh)  | 141            | 423            | 277             |
| Timeline              | May 2011       | May 2013       | May 2016        |

- ▶ Required utilities to meet new reduction targets
  - Created a need to invest in new EE programs
  - Phase II included a 4.5% low income consumption reduction requirement
- ▶ Presented another opportunity to target low income
  - Launched a low income pilot
  - Track their experience
  - See how they respond

# Low income segment performed particularly well from the program start

**Savings per Household** (*Percent of Monthly Energy Use*)



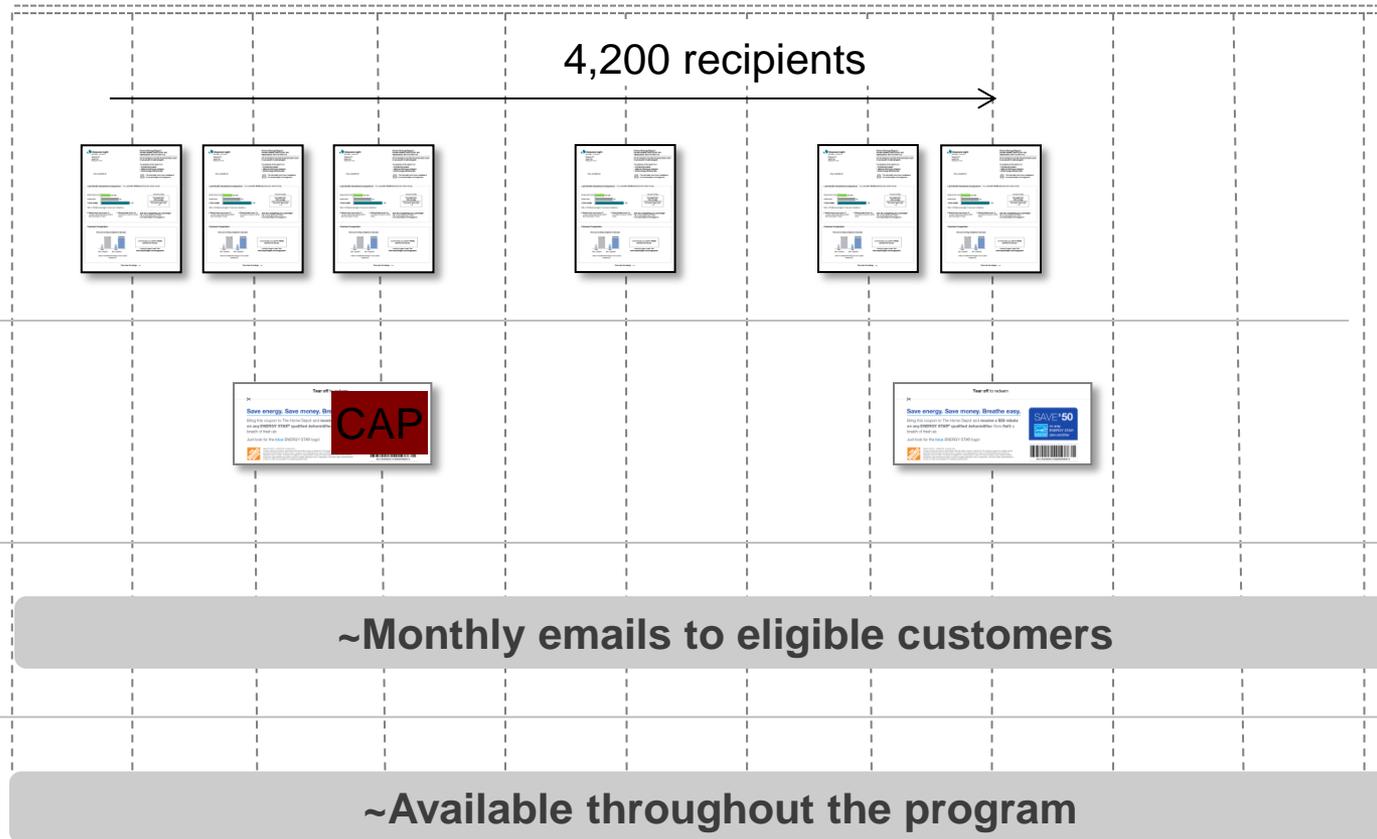
Strong low income savings rate was sustained throughout the whole first year of the program.

# Agenda

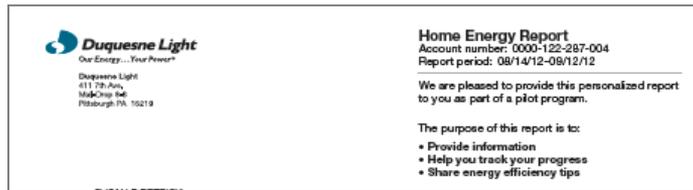
- ▶ Serving Low Income
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# Low income pilot program

Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr May



# Driving awareness of the Customer Assistance Program



Customer Assistance Program

## Take the worry out of staying warm this winter

Through the Customer Assistance Program, Duquesne Light ensures that customers on a limited or fixed income have access to affordable energy:

- Reduced monthly payments based on your household income and size
- Protection against loss of service
- Referrals to other community programs



**Apply today:**  
1-888-393-7600

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• Reduced monthly payments based on your household income and size

• Protection against loss of service

• Referrals to other community programs



**Apply today:**  
1-888-393-7600

Turn over for savings →

- Initial test run of the potential to raise awareness of non-EE related services
- Sent promotion to ~4,300 customers in September 2012

# Promoting a dehumidifier rebate to all recipients last spring



Tear off to redeem

## Save energy. Save money. Breathe easy.

Bring this coupon to The Home Depot and receive a **\$50 rebate** on any **ENERGY STAR®** qualified dehumidifier. Now *that's* a breath of fresh air.

Just look for the **blue** ENERGY STAR logo!



- Rebate sent with home energy report in Spring 2013
- Coupon valid at PA Home Depots

Tear off to redeem

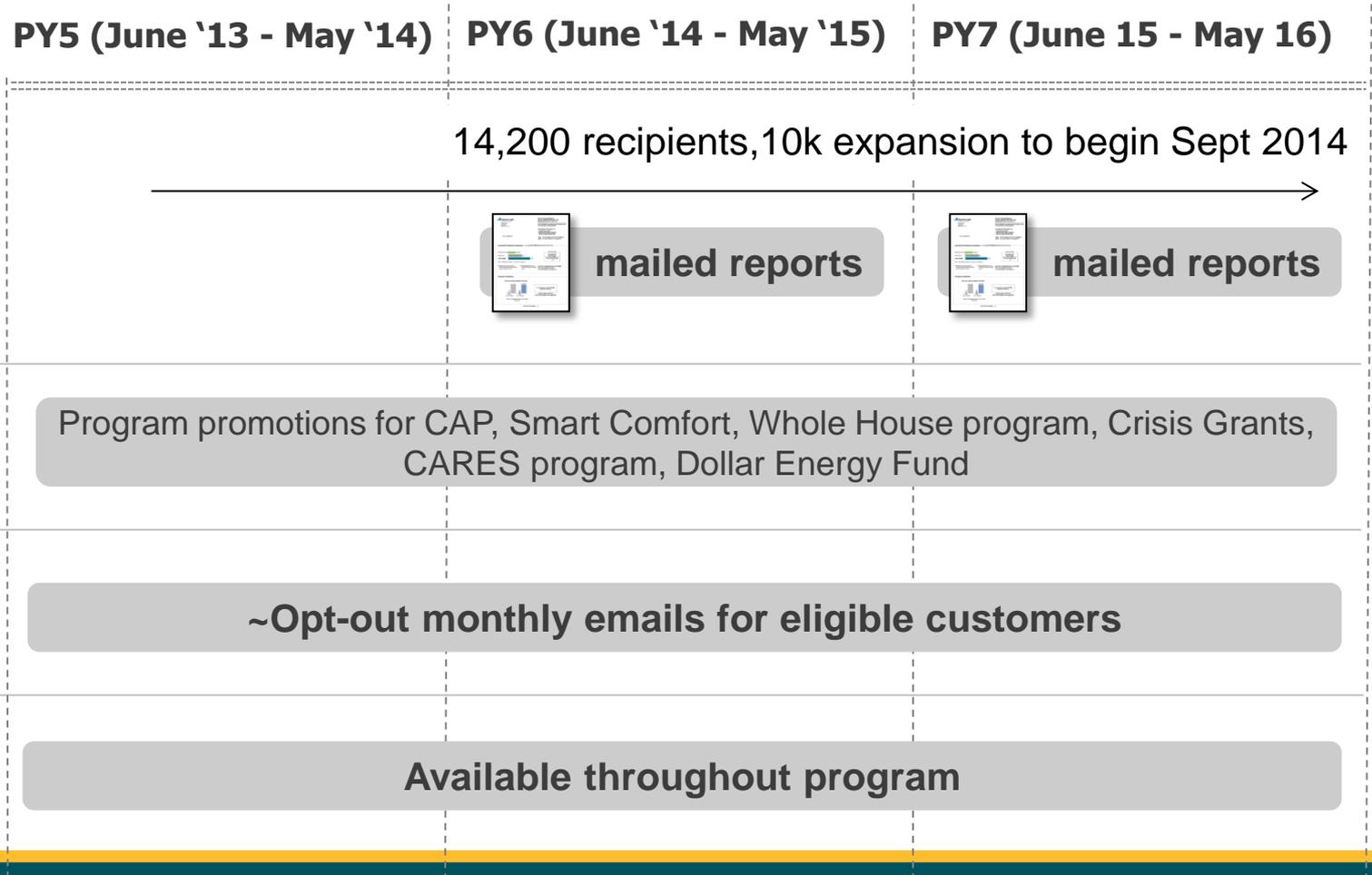
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# Due to phase I success, phase II low income has expanded to 14k households

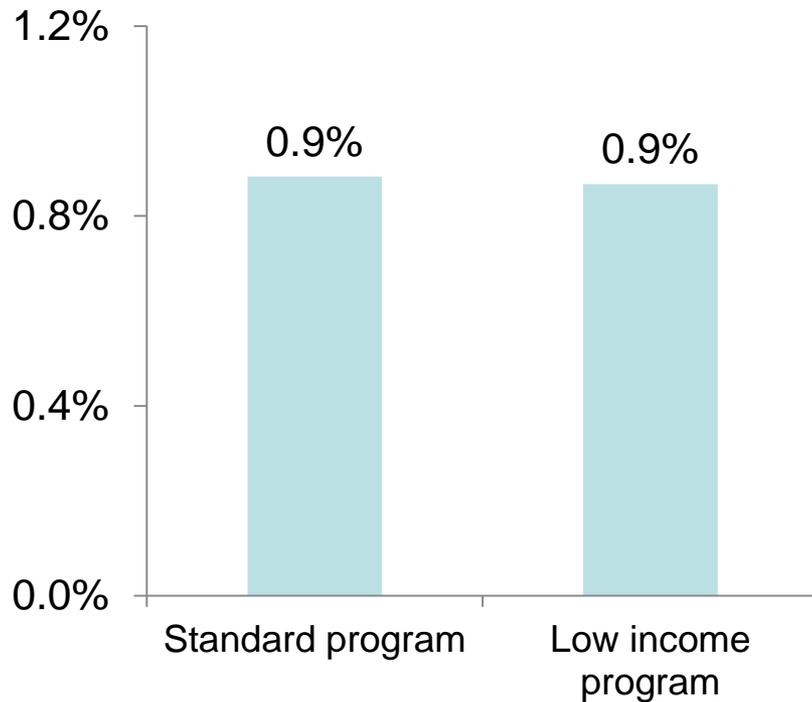


# Agenda

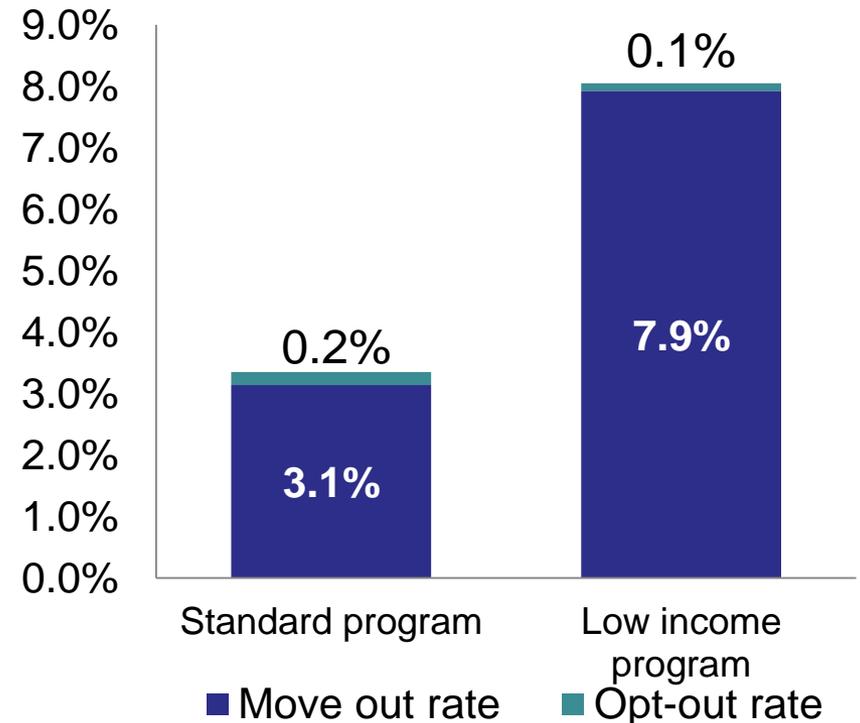
- ▶ Serving Low Income
- ▶ Program Design
- ▶ **Results**

# Low income segment delivers the same savings rate and a lower opt-out rate

**Savings per Household**  
*(Percent of Monthly Energy Use)*

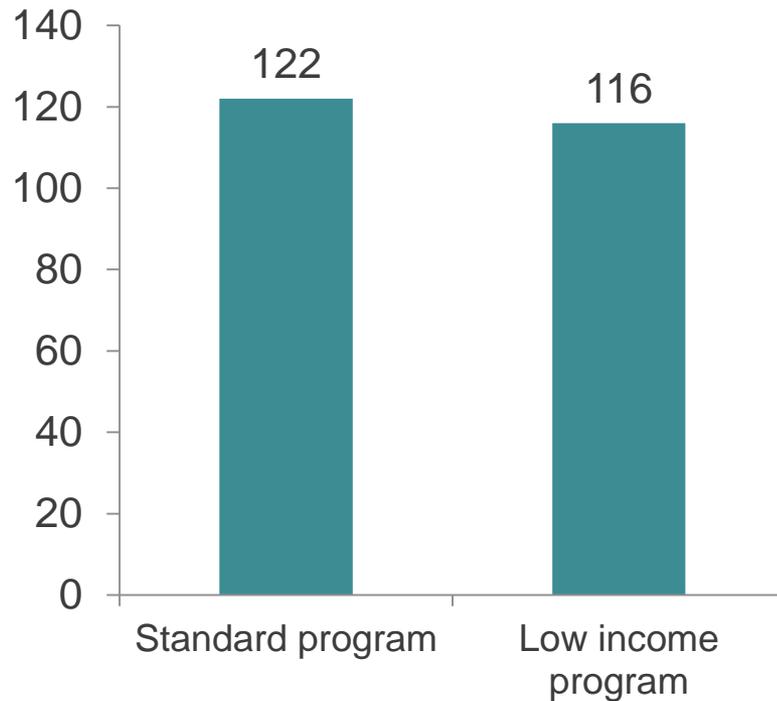


**Cumulative Attrition Rate**

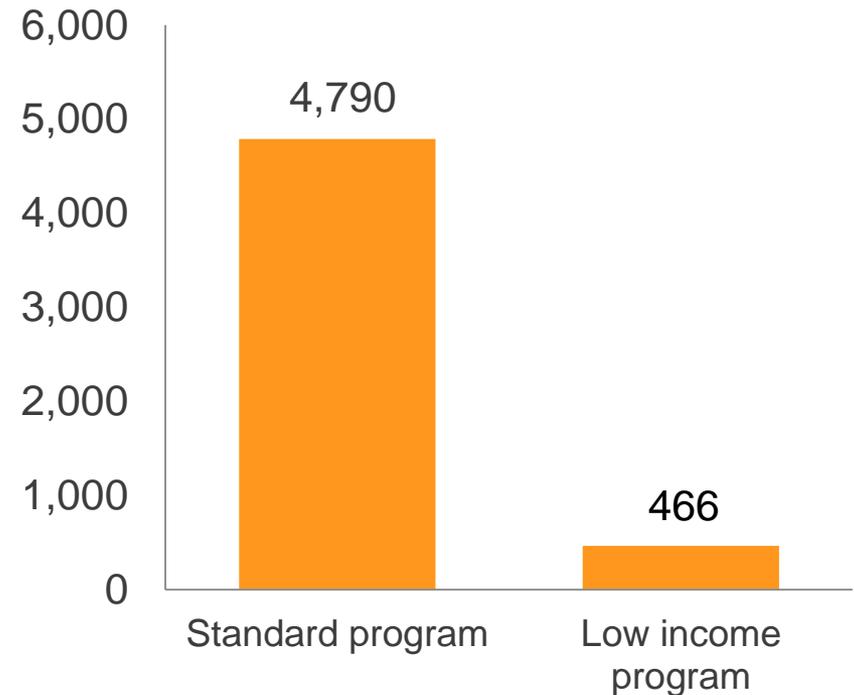


# This led to a total savings of 466 MWh

**Savings per Household**  
(kWh)



**Total Savings**  
(MWh)



## Steps in the right direction but barriers remain

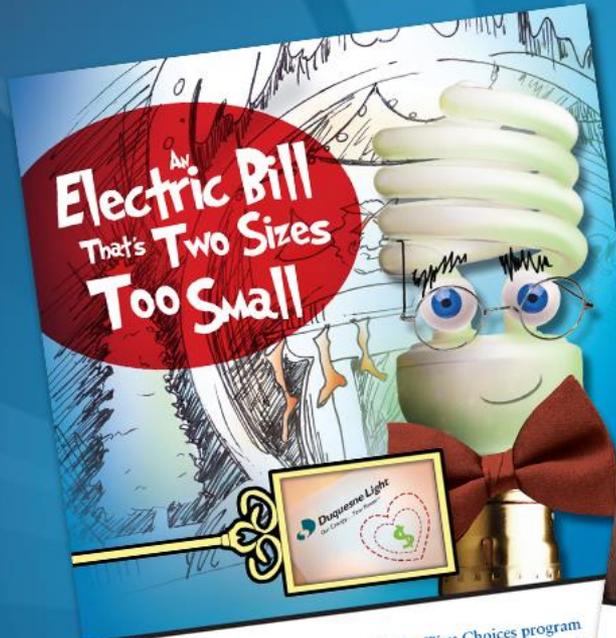
- ▶ Always more to do but need to balance the costs and benefits
  - Program offering is rich but still need outreach to get to the customers
  - Communication barriers
  - But because we integrate with the community so well, don't feel like lacking a program/tool
- ▶ “You can lead a horse to water but can't force it to drink”
  - Offering a wide variety of tools
  - Make sure the community is aware of your offerings
- ▶ Issues of life support are first priority
- ▶ Barriers will remain beyond the utility but as the utility, must provide the appropriate level of support to ease the energy burden

## Looking forward – plans and priorities

- ▶ Roll all low income offerings in to one touchpoint
  - Creating an accessible “one-stop shop” by integrating program with other multi-faceted services
  - Working with gas utilities as well as United Way 211
- ▶ Expand customer offering while delivering pinpointed messages
  - Expanding to a multi-year behavioral program
  - Giving customers what they want e.g. adding more rebates
- ▶ Track customer activity and movement
  - Gain customer and program insights

# Appendix





With the Watt Choices program from Duquesne Light, residential and business customers can get rebates for using a wide variety of energy-efficient products. Sign up for rebates right on our website.

**WATT CHOICES**  
OUR ENERGY...YOUR POWER TO SAVE

**Duquesne Light**  
Our Energy...Your Power™

**WATTCHOICES.COM**  
**1-888-WATTLEY (928-8539)**



As more people turn to wattchoices.com to apply for rebates, get free energy efficiency kits and learn about ways to trim their electric bill...well, the energy-hogging, money-wasting items tend to feel left behind.

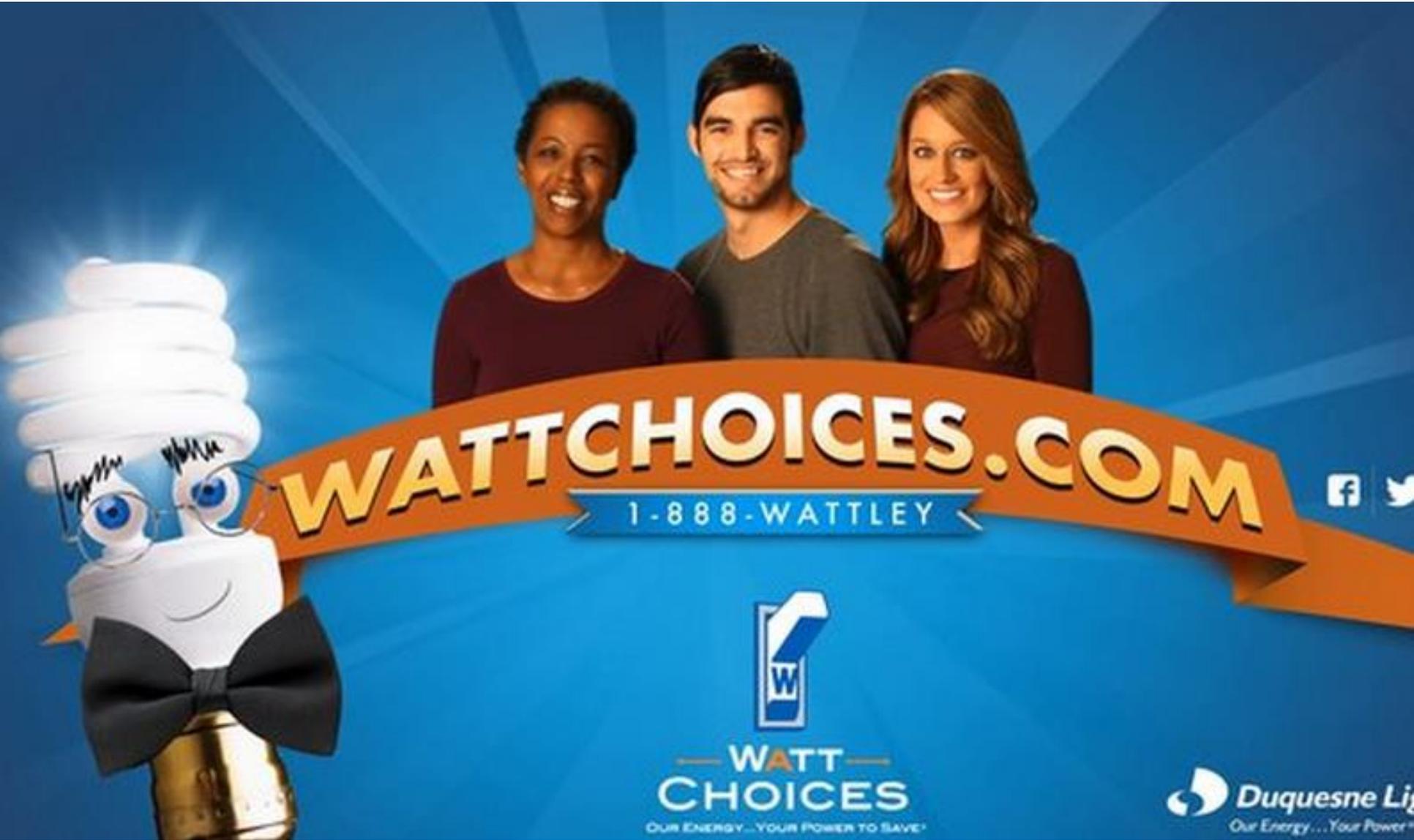
*Watt Choices...therapy for residential and business electric bill anxiety.*

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# Commercial: Bright Tips



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