

Energy Hogs...A New Advertising Campaign Raises Consumer Awareness on Saving Energy

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Do you have energy hogs in YOUR home? If you've got high energy bills or uncomfortable rooms, chances are you do – and you've got to get them out!

That's the message behind a new public service advertising campaign slated to debut in early 2004 by the Ad Council - creators of Smokey Bear, "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk" and other famous campaigns. This public service advertising campaign features a dastardly new character, the Energy Hog, who puts an exciting face to the invisible concept of energy waste, taking a topic of low interest and making it fun for children, while empowering them to take the lead at home in inspiring their parents to make wise energy choices. Children ages 8 to 13 will be targeted during the first and third years, and parents during the second year.

As the "Spokes-villain", or bad guy for the campaign, the Energy Hog is a character that kids can love to hate. His presence in homes causes high energy bills and uncomfortable rooms. But he can be stopped. Due to the complex subject matter and nature of short advertising (30- or 60-second commercials), the ads do not attempt to teach about saving energy, but instead are intended to stimulate interest and inspire viewers to visit www.EnergyHog.org.

The Issue

According to the National Energy Policy, during the next 20 years, U.S. natural gas consumption will increase by more than 50% and electricity by 45%. This campaign strives to decelerate these trends by raising public awareness about the benefits of saving energy at home. By practicing simple conservation measures, families can build strong energy habits, reduce energy bills, and help their communities reduce energy-related pollution.

Key Messages

The campaign will promote the benefits of energy conservation and energy efficiency, including:

- Savings on energy bills: by reducing monthly energy bills, families save money.
- Better environment: by using less energy, we reduce harmful energy-related emissions.
- Increased awareness of new technologies: low-emissivity windows, compact fluorescent lights, and ENERGY STAR[®] appliances that consume significantly less energy.

This campaign will include TV and radio ads, web banners, and an interactive website. The public service advertisements (PSA) empower kids to practice good energy-saving behaviors with their parents to make their homes more energy efficient.

TV

Two television advertisements were created pro bono by the Tracy Locke Partnership of Dallas. The spots feature talking Energy Hogs that pop up in homes where energy is being wasted.

Radio

The four radio spots reflect the spirit and strategy of the television spots. One radio ad features three hogs setting out on a trail to find a house where energy was being wasted. In all the PSAs, children come to the rescue and get rid of the wasteful hogs by logging on to their computers and visiting a new Web site, where they train to become “Official Energy Hog Busters” and learn fun and simple ways to use energy more efficiently.

Web site

We learned from our research that kids today love to play computer games and go on line, but that they wouldn't visit a Web site to learn about energy unless it promised to be fun. With this in mind, the Web site was designed to attract kids by offering a series of five games they can play while becoming familiar with ways to save energy. If they win all five games, they become Official Energy Hog Busters and can print out a certificate. In addition, with their parents they can complete an “energy hog scavenger hunt,” a mini-energy audit of their own home.



Background

Energy Outreach Colorado, a non-profit organization that raises money to assist low-income families with their energy bills, initiated the Energy Hog Campaign with support from the Home Depot and the Colorado Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation (OEMC). With the help of OEMC and the Denver Regional DOE Office, the team secured support from the U.S. Department of Energy, 19 other state energy offices, and the North American Insulation Manufacturers Association.



The Ad Council produces, distributes, promotes, and evaluates national public service campaigns on behalf of nonprofit organizations and government agencies. It uses its expertise to promote national issues that PSA messaging can influence.

For more information, visit www.EnergyHog.org, or contact:
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An obnoxious Energy Hog, sticking out of the icemaker in an old refrigerator, sucks energy from Dad's hairdryer and blows it back at him.



Dad wheels away the Energy Hog after capturing him from inside the refrigerator.



An exterminator pulls an Energy Hog out from underneath a house in one TV ad.



As the Exterminator tosses the Energy Hog into the van, we see that a few other hogs have been captured and are being taken away.



On www.EnergyHog.org, several different Energy Hogs can be found. Each loves to waste energy in a different way, and there are different ways to stop each of them as kids learn to save energy at home.