

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Smart Energy Solutions on 'Reliant Innovation Avenue' Revolutionize the Way Consumers Think About and Use Electricity**

*—Detailed Electricity Use and Cost Data, Home Automation, Solar Power and Smart Appliances Give Consumers Unprecedented Insights, Choice and Convenience—*

HOUSTON, TX; October 11, 2011—Twelve everyday families are at the heart of an energy-efficiency revolution taking place just outside of downtown Houston where Reliant has transformed a typical Houston street into an avenue of innovation. The neighborhood, dubbed Reliant Innovation Avenue, has been outfitted with advanced energy technology – from home energy monitors and smart appliances to solar panels and street lights – giving participants unprecedented information and control over how they use electricity.

The families will provide feedback during the next two years on how the energy solutions and technologies impact their electricity use. Ongoing feedback will be used by the Reliant team as they continue to design and deliver smart energy technology for broader audiences. Reliant announced details about the new project at a news conference today with Houston Mayor Annise Parker, TV home improvement expert Bob Vila who has officially endorsed Innovation Avenue, and representatives from CenterPoint Energy.

"Our ultimate goal is to change the way everyone in the country thinks about and uses energy," said Reliant President Jason Few. "Innovation Avenue is a living laboratory that will provide a glimpse into how everyday people can better understand their electricity use and realize savings through new technology solutions. These same options and savings will be available through Reliant to more and more people as access to smart energy solutions expands throughout the country. This project showcases smart energy technology at its best and gives us insight into how our products impact people's lives and electricity usage."

Residents of the street are harnessing Reliant's technology that is available right now. Each family has been provided with a customized set of products and services, tailored to meet their needs and lifestyles. These tools, some from Reliant's suite of e-Sense® Smart Energy Solutions, include home energy monitors, smart appliances, solar panels, home automation, time-of-use price plans and weekly summary emails detailing usage and cost available by email or on mobile devices. In addition, the residents have also received a home energy checkup, and several have received insulation and an air conditioning (A/C) inspection and tune-up based on their individual needs.

"Houston, the energy capital of the world, is also leading in energy conservation," said Mayor Parker. "Reliant is pushing the envelope, developing new ways for its customers to understand and make thoughtful decisions about how they use electricity. With this new information, Houstonians will have the power to improve their own lives and the sustainability of our planet."

"By transforming their homes, these residents are making themselves into living, breathing examples of energy-efficient green living," Vila said. "Preserving this historic neighborhood and embracing new technology really do complement each other and this project is a perfect example."

The Reliant Innovation Avenue project was conceived and implemented with the input and cooperation of the city of Houston and CenterPoint Energy. It was funded, in part, by a grant from the Department of Energy for modernization of the nation's electricity grid. Reliant's proposal was specifically focused on developing consumer applications to bring the benefits of the smart grid to consumers.

"At first I was freaked out by the daily cost of running the A/C on really hot days, and then I noticed the uptick on days when we ran the clothes dryer – I was really surprised," said Douglas Shoemaker, a Reliant customer and Innovation Avenue resident. "With the home energy monitor, we know how much it actually costs to use our appliances everyday. When we were on vacation recently, we were able to adjust the thermostat and lights from another state with the home automation features. This technology gives my family and me the convenience and information we need to make better decisions about what we use as we try to reduce our electricity bill."

"Smart meters are at the heart of what is making all this information and consumer applications possible," said Kenny Mercado, division senior vice president of Technology for CenterPoint Energy's Regulated Operations. "The smart meter communicates with the in-home displays and smart appliances, giving consumers the insight to make more informed decisions, which could help them reduce their energy usage."

Reliant leads Texas in bringing the benefits of smart energy technology to consumers with more than 400,000 Reliant customers already using Reliant e-Sense® products and services. These services are designed to give customers detailed information about how they use electricity at home, timely insights about their power use and cost, and the ability to take action to change how they buy and use power.

These solutions include:

**e-Sense® Weekly Summary**

An email that provides usage information from the previous two weeks, an estimate of total charges for the billing period and energy efficiency tips.

**e-Sense® Online Account Management (OAM)**

Available on [reliant.com](http://reliant.com), OAM builds on the information provided in the e-Sense® Weekly Summary email by adding more in-depth analysis of the customer's electricity use, allowing customers to view their electricity use in far greater detail than ever before. Customers can use OAM to see usage history by hour, week and year; then compare current usage trends to previous totals. It can also project the bill amount and keeps tabs on usage by allowing customers to set a monthly budget and track usage against a monthly budget set by the customer. The system will also generate personal email alerts regarding usage, estimated costs and bill due date.

### **Reliant e-Sense App<sup>SM</sup>**

The free mobile app gives customers the freedom to access usage and cost information at any time and any place. It enables customers with smart meters to view billing information and to analyze electricity usage via their mobile device. The mobile app can be downloaded from the Android Market, iTunes and Blackberry App World. Along with the option to compare daily, weekly and yearly usage, the Reliant e-Sense<sup>SM</sup> app provides current balance, due date, cost to date and projected bill amount.

### **Reliant Text Alerts**

Customers can access Reliant Text Alerts from any text-enabled mobile phone. Through the free text alert service, customers receive reminders when their bill is due – days before it is due – and alerts them if they exceed their set budget for cost-to-date, projected bill amount and if their daily usage spikes or exceeds the daily usage amount they've set. Reliant Text Alerts have a "text on demand" feature that provides customers with the capability to request information from Reliant by texting standardized requests to MYPOWR (697697) including: "bill" for projected bill amount and "help" to get questions answered about their account.

### **Reliant e-Sense® Gadget**

Customers can install the gadget on their personalized iGoogle page to track daily, weekly or yearly electricity consumption. They simply go to the installation page on Google, click on the blue button to install the Reliant e-Sense® Gadget. It will automatically place the gadget on their customizable iGoogle page.

### **e-Sense® Time-of-Use plan**

For customers who want to shift their usage to lower-priced, off-peak times, the e-Sense Time-of-Use<sup>SM</sup> plan can help them save. With this plan, the cost of electricity changes during the day based on overall demand for power, allowing customers to benefit from making choices about when and how to use electricity. By shifting high-usage activities - like doing laundry or running the dishwasher - to lower-priced times, customers can reduce their cost.

For more information about Reliant Innovation Avenue, visit [www.reliant.com/innovation](http://www.reliant.com/innovation).

### **About Reliant Energy**

Reliant provides electricity and energy services to more than 1.5 million retail customers—including homes, small and large businesses, manufacturing facilities, government entities and

institutions across Texas. The company also offers service to commercial, industrial, governmental and institutional customers in the Northeast and is expanding to offer service to residential customers in the region. As part of NRG (NYSE: NRG), Reliant is backed by one of the nation's largest power producers. NRG owns and operates 25,000 megawatts (MW) of generation capacity, including more than 11,000 MW of capacity in Texas. For more information about Reliant products and services, visit [www.reliant.com](http://www.reliant.com).

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