

Recession turns necessities into luxuries

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- Many Americans are finding they can live without some of household appliances they once considered absolute necessities, U.S. researchers say.

A national survey indicates substantial numbers of people no longer list microwave ovens, television sets and even home air conditioning as necessary, the Pew Research Center reported Friday.

In a telephone survey of 1,003 adults conducted in April, the center's Social & Demographic Trends project found that about half of those questioned now see microwaves, televisions and air conditioning as luxuries.

For example, just 52 percent of the respondents said they considered a television set a necessity, down 12 percent from 2006. Air conditioning was viewed as a necessity by 54 percent of those surveyed this year compared to 70 percent in 2006.

Researchers also questioned respondents about how they were dealing with the recession.

Eight out of 10 reported taking specific steps to economize during the difficult economic times.

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