

## **Common Energy Myths**

### **Computers should be left on when you're not using them**

Personal Computers use on average 45-55 watts of electricity. The average Macintosh uses about 15 watts. The largest electricity draw is the monitor, which can use from 50 to 150 watts, depending on size. Flat screen monitors use 10-15 watts.

Computers should be shut off when not used for extended periods. When you're away from the computer, use the "sleep" or "energy-saver" mode. This will turn off the monitor, but your computer won't have to be restarted. Even better, turn off the computer, monitor and peripherals using the surge protector - control strip.

Some peripherals, such as modems, draw power even if the computer is not using them. It's no longer necessary to use a screen saver, as there is little chance a screen will be "burned" and they may actually impede the power-saving mode.

When looking to buy a new computer or monitor, look for the ENERGY STAR label. An ENERGY STAR qualified computer uses 70% less electricity than computers without enabled power management features.

### **Appliances use no energy when turned off**

A large number of electrical products can't be switched completely off without unplugging the device or turning off a power strip. Products such as VCRs, televisions and Air-Conditioners, use power 24 hours a day, often without the consumer's knowledge.

Many gas appliances have electronic transformers and microchips and are being manufactured with electronic features such as digital clock displays, LEDs, and soft touch buttons.

The power use, sometimes referred to as phantom power or stand-by power, may be as high as 15 or 20 watts, which may not seem like much for a single appliance. However, when we add up the power use of billions of appliances in the United States alone, the power consumption for these appliances not being used is substantial.

Stand-by power consumes 5 percent of all residential energy use in the United States, and can cost a homeowner hundreds of dollars a year in energy costs.



**Leaving a power charger plugged in without the appliance, such as a cell phone charger, doesn't use electricity**

Anything with a light emitting diode (LED) clock - be it your microwave or DVD player - uses some amount of electricity all the time. A remote controlled TV is consuming energy while it's waiting for an "on" signal from the remote.

With cell phones, you lose 95% of electricity just through phantom loading (stand-by power). Unplug chargers for equipment like cell phones, PDAs and electric tools and only plug them in when you need them.

**It's less expensive to leave lights on than it is to turn them off and on**

Leaving an incandescent light on actually uses more energy than turning it off and on as needed. If you are using a compact fluorescent light bulb, however, it should be left on if it will be needed within a few minutes. Turning CFLs on and off frequently can shorten the life of the bulb.

**Keep your thermostat on the same setting day and night**

Maintaining a constant temperature throughout the night costs more than lowering your thermostat setting at night and then raising it the next morning to warm up the house. Set the thermostat 7 to 10 degrees cooler before you go to bed.

**The higher you set your thermostat in the winter the faster the house will warm up and the lower you set your thermostat in the summer the faster the house will cool off**

It takes the same amount of time for the temperature to reach 70 degrees whether the thermostat is set at 70 degrees or at 90 degrees. Setting the thermostat setting way up or way down only wastes energy and increases costs.



### **Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFL's) don't provide good lighting and they hum and flicker**

CFL technology has improved, eliminating the flickering and humming you may have noticed with fluorescents in the past. There is a new generation of CFLs that are designed for home use, provide the same quality of light, and screw in to a regular incandescent light fixture. For best performance, be sure to seek out high-quality ENERGY STAR CFL bulbs from a reputable manufacturer.

### **Ceiling fans don't save energy**

It depends on how you use it. During warm weather, turn the thermostat on your air conditioner up a few degrees while also running the ceiling fan. The additional air movement provided by the ceiling fan helps the person feel cooler, thus saving energy. Fans cool people, not rooms. Turn off the ceiling fan if a person is not going to be in the room.

