

Electronics, Appliances, and Energy

Whether you love electronics or hate them, one thing is certain: you're going to have to use them in college for class.

Shopping for Electronics

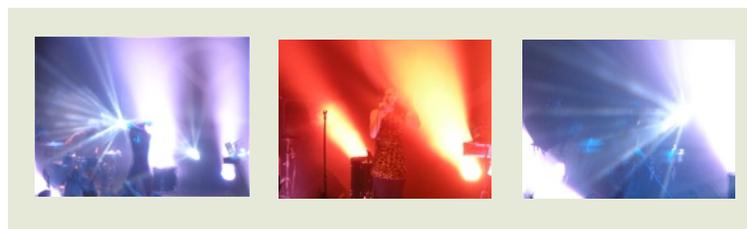
If you want to find out more information about new electronics, check out EPEAT, the definitive global registry for greener electronics at EPEAT.net.

Don't forget to check out ENERGY STAR certified products. ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy helping us all save money and protect the environment through energy efficient products and practices. Every ENERGY STAR certified product must contribute significant energy savings nationwide. ENERGY STAR products are usually 25% more

efficient than the average product available.

Computers and Other Hardware.

- No matter what type of computer you buy, enable its energy savings settings. Most



equipment that is set automatically to switch to sleep mode can save up to 70% of energy consumption, and helps the equipment last longer.

- Avoid using a screensaver when your computer monitor is not active (let it switch to sleep

mode or turn the monitor off instead.)

- Turn down the brightness of your monitor. It saves energy and the life of your battery.
- Turn off your computer when

it's not in use. Many people think that turning off a computer will reduce its lifetime, but this isn't the case.

- Turn off your laptop's Bluetooth or wireless capabilities when not in use to get some extra minutes of battery life.

- Don't forget to turn off your printer and other outside hardware when they're not in use.

- Consider buying a laptop. Laptops use less energy than desktops and are equally suitable for most users.

- Don't forget to properly dispose of your computer when it is no longer usable. Consider donating it to an e-waste recycler, who will know how to properly dispose of the computer in an environmentally-conscious manner. Without proper disposal, toxic chemicals can leech out of the computer, and contaminate the surrounding areas of the disposal site.



Lighting and Heating

- Instead of using standard incandescent lightbulbs, use compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs). They have a rated life of 10,000 burn hours versus a rated life of only 750 burn hours for incandescents. You'll replace bulbs less frequently and save money.
- Consider using LED lightbulbs. LED bulbs are thought to radiate higher-quality light, all while using less energy than other types of bulbs. Many LEDs can last for 100,000 hours, which means you might have some left over after you graduate.
- Use natural lighting whenever possible. Keeping your blinds or drapes open instead of plugging in your lamp will save energy.
- Unplug your lamps when they're not in use and don't forget to turn off the lights when you leave your room. Leaving the lights on draws considerable amounts of energy, and is a habit that is far too easy to fall into.
- In the winter, turn your heat down when you go to sleep and when leaving your room. In general, most people fall asleep better in the cold than in the heat, so this tip could help your sleep cycle.
- Want maximum energy savings? If so, in the summertime, make sure that you set your thermostat no lower than 78°F. When winter rolls around, make sure the settings aren't any higher than 68°F.
- Try to use your fan instead of the AC. It uses less energy, and can be just as effective.

Kitchen Appliances and Laundry

- According to ENERGY STAR, you can reduce cooking energy by as much as 80 percent when using your microwave instead of an oven for small portions of food. In addition, by microwaving you save on air conditioning costs in the summer, since less heat is generated when compared to using your stove or oven.
- Call housing if you have any faucet leaks. Just one leaky faucet can waste gallons of water.
- Wash your laundry with cold water whenever possible. To save water, try to wash full loads or, if you must wash a partial load, reduce the level of water appropriately.
- When drying clothing, remember to strive to dry full loads, and to make sure to reduce drying time for partial loads.
- Try to repair your appliances before replacing them. You'll save money and save your appliance a trip to the landfill.
- Practice water saving techniques by turning off faucets when soaping hands, brushing teeth, or scrubbing dishes.
- Take shorter showers. On average, one minute of showering uses 3-7 gallons of water.
- Try to use environmentally preferable dish washing soap and detergent. Many dish washing products contain residue and chemicals that aren't biodegradable or natural. By purchasing environmentally preferable soap and detergent, you'll avoid causing damage to our ecosystems and save your hands the pain from contact with harsh chemicals.

TVs, Chargers, and Other Electronics

- When you're done charging your phone, computer, or other electronic device, don't forget to unplug the charger from its outlet. Plugged in chargers continue to use up energy, even after your device is removed from it. These "phantom" charges can consist of 5-10% to your electric bill.
- When you're done using an appliance, see if you can recycle it. For example, in Fairfax County, residents can dispose of their electronic waste through the Electric Sundays Program. For more information, see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/recycling/electric-sunday.htm>
- Turn off and unplug your gaming systems when they're not in use. Many of these systems use the same amount of power when they're in standby mode or whether they're in use. An Xbox or a Playstation 3 left on 24 hours a day for a year uses as much energy as two large refrigerators.
- Strive to extend the life of your electronics by taking care of them. Store them away properly and avoid contact with food. Your wallet and the planet will thank you for your efforts.