



## Home Office and Home Electronics

Working from home saves energy and time by cutting out the commute, but it may increase your home energy bills a lot unless you use energy-saving office equipment.

ENERGY STAR office equipment is widely available: it provides users with dramatic savings, as much as 90% savings for some products. Overall, ENERGY STAR office products use about half the electricity of standard equipment. Along with saving energy directly, this equipment can reduce air-conditioning loads, noise from fans and transformers, and electromagnetic field emissions from monitors.

### Home Office Tips

- Selecting energy-efficient office equipment—personal computers (PCs), monitors, copiers, printers, and fax machines—and turning off machines when they are not in use can result in enormous energy savings.
- An ENERGY STAR computer uses 70% less electricity than computers without this designation. If left inactive, ENERGY STAR computers enter a low-power mode and use 15 watts or less. Spending a large portion of time in low-power mode not only saves energy, but helps equipment run cooler and last longer.
- To maximize savings with a laptop, put the AC adapter on a power strip that can be turned off (or will turn off automatically); the transformer in the AC adapter draws power continuously, even when the laptop is not plugged into the adapter.
- Common misconceptions sometimes account for the failure to turn off equipment. Many people believe that equipment lasts longer if it is never turned off. This incorrect perception carries over from the days of older mainframe computers.

- ENERGY STAR computers and monitors save energy only when the power management features are activated, so make sure power management is activated on your computer.
- There is a common misconception that screen savers reduce energy use by monitors; they do not. Automatic switching to sleep mode or manually turning monitors off is always the better energy-saving strategy.
- **\$ Long-Term Savings Tip:** Consider buying a laptop for your next computer upgrade; they use much less energy than desktop computers.

### Home Electronics Tips

- Look for energy-saving ENERGY STAR home electronics.
- Many appliances continue to draw a small amount of power when they are switched off. These "phantom" loads occur in most appliances that use electricity, such as VCRs, televisions, stereos, computers, and kitchen appliances. In the average home, 75% of the electricity used to power home electronics is consumed while the products are turned off. Unplugging the appliance or using a power strip and using the switch on the power strip to cut all power to the appliance can avoid this.
- Unplug battery chargers when the batteries are fully charged or the chargers are not in use.
- Studies have shown that using rechargeable batteries for products like cordless phones and PDAs is more cost effective than throwaway batteries. If you must use throwaways, check with your trash removal company about safe disposal options.