



HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Knowledge can cut utility costs

Florida families typically spend over \$1,000 per year operating household appliances and few are aware where their energy dollar is going. Utility bills can vary considerably, depending how people use energy and the efficiency of their appliances. The average family of four uses about 600 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity per month, mostly on heating and cooling. Everyone should find out where their energy dollars are going and everyone is encouraged to check their energy awareness by taking the following quiz.

Question

After the air conditioning what is the next biggest energy user in a home?

Answer

Water heaters are the second biggest energy user in most homes and may be costing as much as \$460 per year to operate. Steps to reduce water heating costs include insulating the water heater, lowering the temperature setting, using low-flow shower heads and washing clothes in cold water.

Question

By using a night setback thermostat for your air conditioning for one year (assuming a 5 degree increase, 8 hours through the night) you can save \$5, \$25 or \$50?

Answer

\$50. You can save one percent of your cooling bill for every degree you setback your thermostat (assuming an 8 hour period).

Question

If your refrigerator is 10 or more years old you should consider replacing it with a newer model. True or False?

Answer

True. The energy efficiency of refrigerators has improved greatly over the past 10 years. Considering that you spend 12 percent of your energy dollar on refrigeration, purchasing a newer model will pay for itself in a short time. For example, an older 19 cubic foot, frost free side-by-side refrigerator freezer uses about 3,000 kilowatt (kWh) yearly at a cost of \$210. The newer energy efficient counterpart uses 1,128 kWh at a cost of \$79 per year.

Question

Which uses more electricity – a clothes dryer or vacuum cleaner?

Answer

A Typical electric clothes dryer uses six times the electricity of a vacuum cleaner. Most people tend to overdry their clothes. By shortening a dryer load by 15 minutes, you save enough electricity to vacuum for one-and-a-half hours.

Question

Does the energy efficiency of a clothes washer differ according to whether it is a top loading or front loading model? (Yes or No)

Answer

Surprisingly, yes. A top-loader uses 675 kWh per year at a cost of \$46, while a front-loader uses 286 kWh and cost \$19 to operate.

Question

Which is more energy efficient – a chest freezer or an upright?

Answer

A new 19 cubic foot chest freezer, meeting the minimum energy standards, uses 352 kWh and costs \$25 per year to operate, compared to 450 kWh and \$32 for an upright.

Question

Which kitchen appliance is more energy efficient, the range top or the oven?

Answer

The oven uses twice the energy of a typical electric range.

Question

A standard 150 watt incandescent light bulb (used for 3 to 4 hours per day) cost over \$12 per year to operate while a compact fluorescent with the same amount of light costs about - \$2.50, \$5.50 or \$6.50?

Answer

\$2.50. With a \$10 savings per bulb, watch your savings multiply when you change the 10 most used light bulbs in your house! Also, remember to look for rebate forms where you purchase energy efficient lighting products.

Question

Which uses more energy, watching TV or playing on the computer?

Answer

Actually they are similar, both using about 20 watts and costing about \$17 per year (assuming 4 hours use per day) – unless your television is less than 19 inches. Smaller TVs use about 85 watts and cost only \$7.45 per year. A personal computer (with monitor) uses about 195 watts.

Something we need to remember is owning and operating a new appliance is like buying on an installment plan, the purchase price is only a down payment. The rest of the cost is paid to the utility company through our electric bill, month after month, for as long as the appliance lasts. The recent and continued advances in appliance efficiency can dramatically affect your energy use.