Los Angeles Department of Water & Power

e-SMARTkids

ADVANCED TIPS

Save a Watt

This advanced activity is a long-term homework assignment that teaches students about reading energy bills and conserving energy and money. It appears in the section *You've Got the Power.*

Objective

Students will learn how saving energy through conservation measures can help reduce their family's energy bills.

Implementation Tips

- Make sure students understand why they should compare the same three months of this year's and last year's bills—so they are comparing periods that have roughly the same weather patterns and family habits.
- Make sure students are comparing actual energy used, not dollar costs. Help them look for these totals, which will show up in kWh and therms used.
- In some cases, students may find that even though their household energy use went down for the months they saved energy compared to those months in the prior year, their bills went up due to increased energy costs.
- Some students may find that despite their energy conservation efforts, they were not able to reduce household energy use compared to last year. Solving this mystery will take some detective work. Have students think carefully about the activities in their home that might have contributed to this. For example, if students had more people living in their home or visiting in the current year period, that means more energy was used to run dishwashers, clothes washers and dryers, and water heaters for hot showers. If the current year period was a lot hotter or colder than the prior year period, that means more energy was used to run the air conditioner or heater for longer periods of time or at higher settings.

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