

Fact or Fable? Consumer Electronics Use More Energy When They Are Turned Off

Courtesy of Nicor

This is both a fact and a fable. The typical American household contains 24 electronic products, according to the Consumer Electronics Association. Many of these devices continue to draw power when they are turned off, or are not actively being used. This is commonly known as standby power. While electronics draw more power when they are turned on, certain devices—such as cable boxes and laptop computers—are typically in standby power mode for such long periods of time each day that it makes up the majority of their total energy use.

A study by the Consumer Electronics Association found that for electronics as a whole, 68% of total energy use takes place during active use. Off mode accounts for 24% of energy use, while idle or sleep mode makes up the remaining 8%. Off mode means the device is turned off, but still plugged in, while equipment in idle mode is turned on, but not being used.

Energy use varies by device, however. The following table compares the active and standby power use of commonly-used consumer electronics equipment:

Annual Energy Use of Electronics Devices By Power Mode			
Device	Active	Idle	Off
Compact Audio	23%	15%	62%
DVD Player	12%	27%	61%
TV Set Top (Cable or Satellite) Box	32%	N/A	68%
Laptop Computer	82%	3%	15%

As the table indicates, the off mode accounts for more than 60% of the energy use of set-top boxes and audio video equipment, while active mode dominates energy consumption for laptop computers. Why the difference? Electronic devices vary in how they are used and in their power draw (how much energy they use at any given time). For example, set-top boxes and laptop computers are generally in active use about one-third of the time. However, laptops have a substantially higher power draw in active mode, while set-top box power draw is about the same whether turned on or off. That is why two-thirds of set-top energy use takes place in off mode.

Reducing Standby Energy Losses

The average U.S. household spends \$100 per year to power electronics and appliances while they are in standby power mode, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. So what can you do to stop wasting your energy dollars?

- Unplug devices that are rarely used. An example would be a television and DVD player in the guest room.
- Unplug battery chargers from electronic devices when the batteries are fully charged or the chargers are not in use.
- Use a power strip as a central shut-off point for clusters of electronics products, such as a home office or entertainment console.
- Purchase ENERGY STAR qualified electronics that have low standby power and other power management features. When installing a Pay TV service, ask the supplier to provide an ENERGY STAR qualified set-top box.

IMGA Member Communities

Aledo, Illinois
Auburn, Illinois
Bethany, Illinois
Chester, Illinois
Cobden, Illinois
Corning, Iowa
Creal Springs, Illinois
Divernon, Illinois
Enfield, Illinois
Findlay, Illinois
Franklin, Illinois
Fulton, Missouri
Grayville, Illinois
Karnak, Illinois
Lamoni, Iowa
Louisville, Illinois
Milford, Illinois
New Boston, Illinois
Perryville, Missouri
Pinckneyville, Illinois
Pittsfield, Illinois
Plattsburg, Missouri
Pleasant Hill, Illinois
Riverton, Illinois
Rossville, Illinois
Tamms, Illinois
Thebes, Illinois
Vienna, Illinois
Waverly, Illinois
Westville, Illinois
White Hall, Illinois
Winchester, Illinois

IMGA Eligible Utility

Corn Belt Energy Corporation
Graceland University
Illinois Agriculture Association
Illinois State University
Western Illinois University



On November 29, Brenda Rubenacker joined IMGA as our new office manager. Brenda had been retired for the last 9 years. Previously she was the Cardiology Liaison for Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, IL. She hopes to get acquainted with everyone and help with any problems or questions you might have for her.

Brenda's interests include having fun with her 3 grandchildren, watching her 2 grandsons play hockey, fishing, reading and trying new recipes on good friends. She is a super fan of Notre Dame football and hockey.

SAVE THE DATE!

The IMGA **Annual Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, April 24th in Springfield, IL at the Northfield Inn & Suites.

The event is **FREE** and will include a breakfast and lunch buffet! Be on the lookout for more detailed information.

OQ TRAINING FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

The next training sessions for OQ training will be February 7– Auburn and February 9– Pinckneyville: Corrosion Control, and March 27– Auburn and March 29– Pinckneyville: Damage Prevention.

All sessions begin at 9am and lunch is provided.

Brochures will be mailed soon. If you need more information, you can call our office at 217-438-4642.

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD IL
PERMIT NO 15

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Interstate Municipal Gas Agency
1310 West Jefferson
Auburn, IL 62615