

WELLESLEY ZAPS ENERGY VAMPIRES THIS HALLOWEEN

In the Halloween spirit, the town of Wellesley is in search of vampires- Vampire energy that is.

Vampire energy is when certain appliances and electronics will continue to use power even when they're switched off.

It is estimated that 10 percent of the average home electricity bill comes from the energy used by these products. [ABC News](#) reported that, a typical family spends \$120 dollars per year on vampire appliances including cable and DVR boxes, cordless phone chargers, microwave ovens and video game consoles.

The vampire energy campaign, run this October by the Wellesley Sustainable Energy Committee, will enable Wellesley residents to find these energy vampires around their homes. Instead of being all the way off, they go into "stand-by mode" and suck energy when you're not using them.

The educational value of the campaign is high, as is the energy and money savings. In addition, it will help Wellesley reach its goal of lowering energy usage 10% by 2013.

Students in the schools, both public and private, are looking for them, as well. Armed with a special homework assignment sheet, they are being given ways to calculate how much money the energy vampires are draining out of their homes. Some students will be really pushing this message home and through their neighborhoods by dressing up as vampires this Halloween.

It can be a simple process:

- 1) **Identify the energy vampires in your home.** Sometimes, these vampires have a tell-tale sign such as giving off a little light (like DVD players or microwave oven clocks) while others, make noises. Others (such as a cell phone charger) might be warm to the touch. One sure way to determine which appliances are sucking energy is to borrow a "Kill A Watt" electricity usage monitor from Wellesley Free Library which will tell you exactly how much power is being used.
- 2) **Pull the plug** on appliances or electronic items that aren't used often such as a VCR. For things that need to be charged, such as cell phones or camera batteries, be sure to unplug the charger once the device is fully charged.
- 3) **Invest in energy saving products.** Use a power strip with a central on/off switch to control clusters of products such as computers/printers/scanners. Use timers for lights, especially during the upcoming holiday season. Put a motion detector on your outside lights so that they are not on all night long. Visit a local hardware

store to find power strips, timers, motion detectors and other energy saving products.

- 4) **In the future** look for appliances and devices that have a low-standby mode (most Energy Star-rated items have lower standby use).

The Sustainable Energy Committee and Wellesley's Municipal Light Plant are offering a variety of ways to zap these energy vampires and other [conservation tips](#) as well, in order for Wellesley residents to lower their energy usage and save money. Visit the MLP's website for more information.