

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.

Vampire Energy Hunt



Energy Vampires are electronic appliances that are constantly using energy - even when you think they are off! Instead of being all the way off, they go into “stand-by mode” and suck energy when you’re not using them! Sometimes, these vampires have a tell-tale sign that can help you catch them — some give off a little light (like DVD players or microwave oven clocks) and some make noise like a laptop computer. Others (such as a cell phone charger) might be warm to the touch.

Homework: Grades K-2

Along with a parent/guardian, walk around your home and look for lights on appliances (cable box, TV, etc) and make note of them. They are potential energy vampires.

Homework: Grades 3-5

1. Do You Have Energy Vampires in Your Home?

1. Wait until it’s dark outside and you have an adult with you.
2. Grab a flashlight and turn off everything in your home the way you would normally at night. Make sure all lights are turned off.
3. Find your electric meter in the basement or on an outside wall. Is it running even though everything is supposedly “off”? If yes, you’ve got vampires!

2. How To Catch Those Energy Vampires

1. Sneak through each room in your home, and investigate each item plugged into an electrical outlet. Look for lights, listen, and touch possible vampires to see if they are warm.
2. Make a tally in the “Vampires Found” column on your Vampire Hunter’s Notes sheet for every vampire you find. (see reverse side of this sheet)

Remember to make a mark for each vampire you see - if you find more than one of the same kind of vampire make a tally for each of them.

3. How to Zap Energy Vampires

Energy Vampires can be hard to find, but they are easy to beat:

1. Turn vampires all the way off when you’re done with them. Sometimes this means unplugging them. This works especially well with smaller appliances like toasters, CD players, and toothbrush or cell phone chargers.
2. For bigger vampires—things that can’t be turned off all the way such as refrigerator – check to see if it has an Energy Star label. If not, talk to your parents about a replacing it with an energy efficient model. Rebates are available from Wellesley’s Municipal Light Plant.
3. Use a power strip for your computer equipment. Turning it off when you are done with the computer & printer will disconnect the energy vampires from the power source.
4. Look for big plugs that charge cell phones, cameras, etc. Unplug if they feel warm and are not charging something.



VAMPIRE HUNTER'S NOTES

FINDING VAMPIRES AND HOW TO ZAP THEM!

UNPLUG WHEN NOT IN USE

Vampire	# found	Estimated Cost per year	Total cost	Check if done
Microwave oven		X \$2.97=		
Coffee maker		X \$1.10=		
CD player		X \$8.31=		
Cordless phone base		X \$2.71=		
Battery/camera chargers		X \$0.77 =		

USE POWER STRIPS FOR A CENTRAL TURN-OFF STATION—GROUP TOGETHER COMPUTER/PRINTER/SCANNER AND TV/DVD/VCR/GAMES

Computer desktop		X \$20.36=		
Computer laptop		X \$15.42=		
Laser printer		X \$1.52=		
TV, LCD		X \$6.72=		
TV, plasma		X \$154.18=		
VCR/DVD player		X \$13.02=		
Video game console		X \$22.49=		
Total # of Vampires →		Total Money →	\$	We zapped ____ vampires

OTHER WAYS TO ZAP ENERGY VAMPIRES

1. Use timers to turn on/off indoor lights for security when not at home and for holiday decoration lights
2. Use motion detectors to turn on outdoor lights only when motion is detected
3. Visit the Wellesley's MLP website for info on Energy Star appliance rebates and a free energy audit.
4. Borrow one of the **Kill A Watt** electricity usage monitors from the Wellesley Free Library to determine exactly how much energy your specific appliances are using.

