

Efficient Computer Operation

If you have a home computer, your family may spend hours a day doing homework, checking e-mail, or surfing the Web. Though computer equipment uses less electrical energy than many other home appliances, there are a few things you can do to reduce your computer's electrical consumption to a minimum.

Most types of computers use similar amounts of electricity. But monitors vary in their consumption depending on their size, with small screens using less. Compare the consumption figures of competing equipment when you next buy computer equipment. And be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR® logo as you shop because this is your assurance that your computer will use the minimum power necessary.



Follow these tips to reduce the energy consumption and operating cost of your computer equipment:

- Activate your computer's sleep setting. This shuts down your computer and monitor after any period of inactivity. This is the single most important step you can take to reduce consumption, since most equipment uses almost no power during sleep.
- If your printer doesn't automatically sleep between jobs, shut it off manually when you're not using it.
- Don't print any more documents than you need to, since printers use electricity, paper, and ink or toner. A computer can save a lot of time and energy if you use it efficiently. Try reading documents on-screen and saving them to electronic files instead of printing and filing unimportant documents.
- If you need to send documents to someone, send an e-mail. It's quicker, it saves energy, and doesn't require postage.

For more information on energy-saving computer equipment visit the Department of Energy ENERGY STAR® website at www.energystar.gov.

Source: John Krigger, Saturn Resource Management. John Krigger is a nationally recognized author of numerous energy efficiency books, including "Surviving the Seasons", and "Residential Energy: Cost Savings and Comfort for Existing Buildings". For more info, visit his website (www.srmi.biz)