

Energy Star Opportunities

By Tania Shammo

Have you taken advantage of energy efficiency-related discounts and rebates on appliances? You can find incentives in your region by visiting www.energysavers.gov/financial/.

The state of Illinois recently offered a one-day program offering a 15% point-of-sale rebate to consumers replacing old appliances with Energy Star-qualified models. The rebate program generated more than \$25 million in sales and resulted in the sale of more than 27,000 energy-efficient appliances in the state.

Besides getting a great deal through rebates and incentives, do you know the other ways Energy Star-labeled appliances can save you money?

be a substantial part of the total energy bill. The Energy Star program also helps businesses and homeowners save energy and protect the environment by giving them the information needed to make smart choices about efficiency.

Ways to Save

Did you know that the typical U.S. family spends about \$1,900 a year on home utility bills? Why not spend money wisely and invest it by saving energy? You can save energy around your house simply by making sure your appliances and heating and cooling systems are properly maintained. Pay attention to your living room, kitchen and outside lighting by using lighting controls like occupancy sensors, dimmers or timers to reduce lighting energy use, and replace standard light bulbs and fixtures with fluorescent lamps. Next, keep an eye open for a leaky faucet; repairing your faucet can save you the extra money you would have spent on wasted water.

Manufacturers must test all major appliances to meet energy efficiency standards set by the Department of Energy. These are displayed on an Energy Guide label that specifies how much energy the appliance uses, compares it with the energy use of similar products and notes the approximate annual operating cost.

In my family, for example, my husband chose to work from home, figuring that it would save money, gas and time. At the same time, it increased our energy bills. Energy Star can help reduce your high energy bills, improve comfort and help protect the environment. Your home uses energy every day to keep you warm in the winter and cool in the summer. It uses energy to provide

Energy Star program offers tools and incentives to save energy and money

Energy Star Program

Energy Star is a voluntary program helping organizations, businesses and individuals protect the environment through energy performance. In 1992 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced Energy Star as a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy efficient products. Through 1995, EPA expanded the label to additional office equipment products and residential heating and cooling equipment. The Energy Star label is now on major appliances, office equipment, lighting, home electronics and more. EPA also has extended the label to cover new homes and commercial and industrial buildings.

The Energy Star program has introduced energy efficiency tools and resources to help eliminate energy waste and lower operating costs of water and wastewater utilities. Wastewater plants and drinking water systems spend billions of dollars each year on energy to treat water. These operating costs can

you with light when you need it. It uses energy to provide you with hot water and run your appliances and electronics.

October was not only National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but also Energy Awareness Month. One member of the Federal Department of Energy's Energy Star Partnership, PPL Electric Utilities, urged its customers and the communities it serves to use the month to focus on wiser and more efficient ways of using electricity.

Energy Star also created a special energy saving awareness website for children called Energy Star Kids, which offers interactive learning tools, games and facts to teach children where energy comes from, how it is used and what they can do in their own rooms to conserve it. This is a great way to teach kids how to make a difference in the world by assisting in the fight against global warming.

Go ahead—spread the word and ask your friends and neighbors to take simple energy saving steps with you. Teach the kids how to make a difference in the fight against global warming.

Our mission should be saving energy and fighting climate change with Energy Star-qualified products, which will lead us to use less energy, save money and help protect the environment.

You can start by investigating your home and educating your family, friends and neighbors on how to save energy. Then take action by making the changes needed.

To learn more about the Conditions and Criteria for Recognition of Certification Bodies for the Energy Star Program, visit www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/downloads/mou/Final_Draft_Conditions_and_Criteria_for_Recognition_of_Certification_Bodies.pdf *wqp*

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For more information on this subject write in 1005 on the reader service card or visit www.wqpmag.com/lm.cfm/wq121005.

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