

Change a Light, Change the World

The signs of Fall are beginning to appear, with school buses rumbling down the streets, the hint of autumn in the air, and fewer daylight hours. These changes also cause us to spend more time inside our homes with the lights turned on, which may result in higher electric bills.

To help address these higher electric bills, the South Carolina Energy Office, the US Department of Energy, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development are encouraging consumers to make a switch to ENERGY STAR[®] qualified lighting by joining the ENERGY STAR *Change a Light, Change the World* Campaign this October. October is also designated by the US Department of Energy as Energy Awareness Month. By taking the ENERGY STAR Change a Light Pledge and changing at least one incandescent light bulb to an ENERGY STAR qualified bulb, South Carolinians can save energy in their homes and join others across the nation who are making energy efficiency a daily priority.

A typical US household spends nearly 20 percent of its annual electric bill on lighting. That means for every \$100 of your bill, \$20 goes to lighting. Fortunately, energy-efficient bulbs are readily available today. ENERGY STAR qualified light bulbs use at least two-thirds less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last up to ten times longer.

Families can enjoy plenty of light to read, work, and play while also cutting back on their energy costs. According to the government's ENERGY STAR program, by replacing a 60-watt incandescent light bulb with an equally bright 13-watt ENERGY STAR qualified light bulb, a household will save more than \$30 in energy costs over the lifetime of the bulb.

Every light changed is also a step in the right direction to promote energy independence and preserve our environment for this generation and the next. Just think, if all the households in South Carolina changed just one incandescent light bulb to an ENERGY STAR qualified one, enough energy would be saved to light all the households in Columbia for 350 days! And over 131 million pounds of carbon dioxide gas would be prevented from entering our atmosphere, an impact similar to inflating 4.4 million basketballs. Placed side-by-side, this string of basketballs would stretch approximately 620,000 miles long!

This fall, there's an easy way to lower energy bills and to light the way for a brighter future. To take the ENERGY STAR Change a Light Pledge, visit www.energystar.gov/changealight. And to learn other ways to save energy this Energy Awareness Month, visit the South Carolina Energy Office's Webpage at www.energy.sc.gov.