

# WATTS GOING DOWN IN 100 SYDNEY HOMES.

Welcome to the December edition of City of Sydney's Home Energy Consumption Trial news – read on for information on sustainable festive ideas and remember to send in your entry to our **Bill Buster Competition** - we are looking for the household that has made the biggest savings on energy use in their home.

## Energy-saving champions of the month

### *Aaaarrgh big number ...and now a small number*

Our energy monitor sits within view on our coffee table, in addition to providing a talking point with visitors, it's also made us energy extremists or perhaps energy-saving champions.

The first night we had the monitor, I went to the kitchen and turned on the main kitchen lights (three halogen down lights) and heard across the room the cry of "Aaaarrgh Big Number" as the numbers on the meter doubled!

We're now very careful about lighting and avoid the halogens in favour of lamps fitted with energy-efficient light bulbs.

We have a digital electricity meter and we're on time-of-day billing. During Peak Time we can pay over 35 cents per kWh. With our monitor as a constant reminder, we are now making savings by using less energy and being careful when we run appliances ie avoiding Peak Time for washing machine, dishwasher, cooking etc when we can.

The electrician set the alarm on our monitor to \$2.00, but as we've made a few changes around the home we've reset it to \$1.10.

On our recent electricity bill, we can see that for the same period last year we used 17.55kWh a day and now we're down to 5.59kWh. We are using 31.85% of the electricity we used last year and this is almost entirely due to the cent-a-meter and the new habits it has taught us.

### **Ric & Fiona, Chippendale**

I have just installed LED lights and am now using 36 watts rather than six 50 watt halogen down lights. My home is just as bright, but it's not as hot and I'm saving energy.

### **Lilian, Ultimo**

*Ric & Fiona, and Lilian receive sustainability store vouchers*

## Bill Buster Competition

### *How many KiloWatts down are you?*

Compare your energy use on your electricity bills and tell us how you're tracking. Some of the figures we've received so far are very impressive. Yes, you'll need to show us your bills to prove your savings.

Send your photos, top tips, bills and stories to [energytrial@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:energytrial@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)



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## Energy Monitor battery alert

Pauline (participant from Ultimo) tells us the battery in the display component of her energy monitor discharged. While the batteries in the display unit and the sender unit (the piece of the monitor the electrician installed in your meter box) are supposed to last for more than 12 months, if you have problems with your monitor let us know. Please do not attempt to access the sender unit.

Pauline's tip if you need to change the battery in the display unit is to hold down the reset button on the back of the display component after the battery change. It takes a few minutes for the display unit to find and register the signal from the sender unit, but it will reconnect.

## Energy monitor for family and friends

Many trial participants have told us about their energy monitor becoming a conversation piece when family and friends visit, and a few have asked about buying a monitor. Monitors retail for around \$200 and are available online from [Todae](#).

Other brands of energy monitors are available from [Neco](#).

## FREE Workshops

In addition to helping you make savings on energy use in your home, the City of Sydney runs a number of free sustainable living workshops each month. Click here for information on [seminars and workshops](#).



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## A jolly green festive season

- If you're hanging lights for the festive season, use energy-efficient LED lighting.
- Use a native tree for festive celebrations and plant it in the garden or a pot after Christmas.
- If you are planning to buy a music player, phone or computer or electronic appliance as a present this festive season, check the Guide to Greener Electronics developed by Greenpeace for a rating of the major brands.
  - Ensure your electronics have high energy star ratings – the more stars the better.
  - Look for rechargeable batteries and recyclable or reusable cartridges, peripherals and paper.
- If you have unwanted electronics, you can:
  - Donate or on-sell unwanted items through online networks.
  - Organise a swap party in your community or join a local swap group.
  - Recycle mobile phones through MobileMuster.

For more on creating a green festive season, see [www.sydneychristmas.com.au](http://www.sydneychristmas.com.au)



## E-Waste Recycling

Australians are among the highest consumers of electronics in the world, generating 140,000 tonnes of E-Waste each year, with an estimated 234 million items of E-Waste in, or on their way, to landfill. (Total Environment Centre 2009).

## City of Sydney offers a free E-waste recycling drop-off collection for residents.

Since November 2008, the City has recycled over 35 tonnes of E-waste.

Collections occur quarterly.

For more information [click here](#).