



Let's Turn off the Lights!!

This lesson plan focuses narrowly on promoting a single basic habit of energy conservation -- turning off the lights. The lesson involves a demonstration to measure lighting energy use and a craft activity where tenants create a fun "prompt" to remind them to turn off the lights. Due to the narrow focus of the lesson and the emphasis on prompts, the lesson may be ideal for tenant populations with severe and persistent mental illness. The craft activity will work for tenants whose unit lighting is controlled by traditional wall switches.

Specific messages

- Independent living will involve paying an electricity bill
- You can keep your electricity bill low by using your lights correctly
- One way to keep bills low is to turn off all lights when you leave for the day

Lesson Plan

- Introduction and icebreaker: Talk about what electricity is and the fact that it costs money. Everyone introduces themselves and names one reason why it's good to save energy. 10 minutes
- Lights demonstration: Measure energy output with a kilowatt meter and role-playing turning lights off. 5 minutes
- Activity: Tenants decorate a light-switch plate for their unit with messages reminding them to turn off the lights when they leave the room. 15 minutes
- Closure: Review lesson -- talk about what residents have learned. 5 minutes

Supplies Needed

- Light-switch plates
- Paint and paintbrushes
- Stickers
- Small pieces of hard-stock paper with pre-written messages like "Going somewhere? Turn off the light!"
- Kilowatt meter

A note on the light-switch plate activity

Before you plan this activity, be sure that building staff is willing and able to replace tenants' light-switch plates with the new decorated ones. Light-switch plates can be purchased at home improvement stores for as little as \$0.40 each -- look for plates labeled "3/8" larger than standard" -- they will fit normal fixtures but provide extra space for decorating. Standard plates will take well to conventional acrylic paints. Tenants should decorate the light switch using paints, stickers and pre-written messages (or bring hard-stock paper, markers and scissors so they can write their own).

***** See light switch plates made by tenants below!*****

