



The master switch can cut standby power losses

## standby power checklist

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Many appliances use energy even when they are not in use simply to maintain a convenient 'ready' or 'standby' state. Most of the energy used by appliances on standby is just wasted. Some appliances have a 'master switch' that allows you to turn power off, whilst others need to be switched off at the wall. If an appliance has a glowing light, responds to a remote or is warm to touch when not in use, then it is in standby mode and consuming power.

### WHY?

Standby Power is about 10% of the typical household energy bill. This costs you around \$100 and contributes 750kg of greenhouse gas to climate change.

### HOW DO I DO IT?

Different appliances have different solutions:

- If the appliance has a master switch (like the power button on the front of many television sets) switch that off.
- If there is no master switch – turn it off at the wall (no need to unplug from the socket).
- If the wall socket is hard to reach – buy a power board with individual switches that can be put in an easy to reach position.
- If several appliances have clocks on them – choose the ones to turn off (perhaps switch the microwave and radio off at the wall, but keep the oven clock on).



**TANYA HA**, an expert in environmental living and the author of *Greenology* and *The Australian Green Consumer Guide* provides advice on energy saving in your home.

Switch off everything except your computer hard drive, DVD player and a clock and save (each year):



Department of Environment and Conservation  
Department for Planning and Infrastructure



## Individual switches are easier to reach than the wall switch

### Have you turned off at the wall or at the master switch the following appliances?

- Stereo
- TV
- Set top boxes
- Game console
- Computer monitor
- Printer
- Computer speakers
- Broadband box/ modem
- Scanners
- Pool equipment
- Microwave
- Washing machine
- Mobile phone/ MP3 chargers (even when no device is being charged)
- Electric toothbrushes
- Air conditioners
- Room Heaters

Turn these things off after every use, or at least every night before you go to bed.

Even though most standby power is wasted energy, sometimes it serves a purpose such as retaining settings. A shut down computer uses power for its internal clock – you can switch a computer off at the wall, but you will need to replace the battery sooner (perhaps just make sure that it is shut down and the screen and printer are off after every use).

### Do not turn off the following:

- security systems;
- smoke alarms;
- time controlled equipment like reticulation systems;
- regularly used appliances with a clock or timer such as video recording equipment (some newer models have a 'sleep' mode that retains settings, but uses less power than when on full standby).

**Hint** - Place the Living Smart door hanger on the bathroom or bedroom door to remind you to check that standby power is off.