

ENERGY SAVING IDEAS

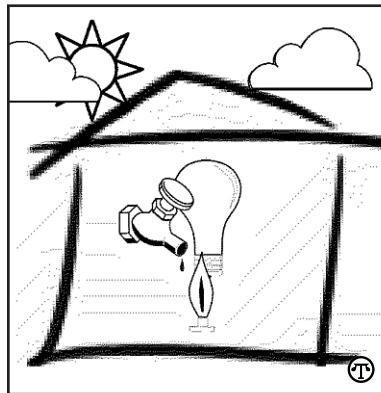
Home Networks: A Simple Way To Conserve Energy

(NAPSA)—With summer approaching and energy prices on the rise, the consumer electronics industry is offering some simple and timesaving ways to deal with the threat of a national energy crisis. According to a recent survey by the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), 72 percent of people complain that they spend too much time turning off the lights in empty rooms and 38 percent report constantly adjusting their home's thermostat to achieve a comfortable temperature without wasting energy.

Drawing shades closed in sunny rooms and opening windows for a cool breeze are some of the more popular ways to save energy. However, homeowners may simply be trading calories for kilowatts as they run around constantly adjusting thermostats and window treatments. According to another CEA survey, 59 percent of participants were somewhat to very interested in automated lights that turn on or off when someone enters or leaves a room and 65 percent were interested in a system that would adjust the water heater and thermostat based on external conditions.

These types of energy saving applications are just some of the ways home networks, or "smart homes," can lighten the load on the homeowner as well as the local utilities. By linking the systems, appliances and electronics in your home, all the major components in your house can share information and work more efficiently, saving you energy and time.

For example, motion detectors used for security also can turn off the lights and close vent dampers in empty rooms. Motorized sky-



Today's consumer electronics make it simple for people to save energy in their homes.

lights can be set to open if the weather turns cool and close automatically if it starts to rain. Opening a window can automatically stop the air conditioner and start the ceiling fan in one room or throughout the house. Sprinkler systems can avoid watering the lawn if the local forecast calls for rain and motorized awnings and blinds can automatically extend in anticipation of a sunny day. In areas where the local utility offers a discounted rate for using electricity during off-peak hours, major appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers, can be set to run when power is least expensive.

Home networks provide an inexpensive and convenient way to save energy without replacing a home's systems and appliances. In fact, anyone can begin networking their existing lights and appliances for under \$50 using simple plug-in modules and battery operated sensors. Visit www.TechHome.org for more information on how to get started.