



GUIDELINES FOR HOMEBASED WORKERS ON ENERGY MANAGEMENT



Energy in the form of electricity is crucial for homebased workers. Electricity provides lighting and cooling in the house. This helps all home makers including homebased workers to perform household chores conveniently. Electricity is also used by children to study.

However, electricity is also essential for homebased workers, in the course of their production work which they do from their homes. All homebased workers require good light to work in, or else their eyes get strained and spoilt. Many HBWs use electric sewing machines to stitch clothes, or other electric appliances to process and store food items. Having a regular and affordable supply of electricity helps homebased workers to increase their productivity and quality.

However, the cost of electricity is constantly increasing. The electricity bill is a significant part of homebased worker's household expenditure as well as cost of production. Do you know that we can reduce electricity bills by adopting very simple changes in our household? This brief document will help our homebased worker sisters to understand some of the causes behind high electricity and how we can reduce them.

CHANGE 1

CHOOSE THE CORRECT KIND OF BULB

It is very important to use a bulb which can be most useful to us. There are three different kinds of bulbs which are available in the market.

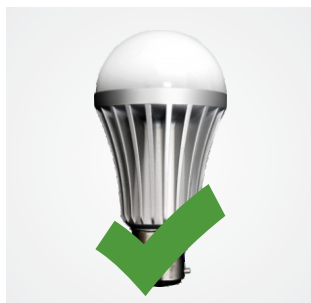
Kinds of Bulbs	Regular Yellow Bulb or incandescent Bulb	CFL Bulb	LED Bulb
Kinds of Bulbs	 ❌	 ✅	 ✅
Wattage : Important – the higher the wattage the more expensive is the running cost.	60 watt (Most expensive running cost - Approximately Rs.1700 per year)	13-15 Watt CFL (Less expensive than Yellow bulb but more expensive than LED running cost)	6- 8 Watt LED (Least expensive running cost – Approximately Rs.180 per year)
Original Cost	Cheapest (Eg. Rs.15 in India)	More Expensive (Eg. Rs. 145 in India)	Most expensive (Eg. Rs. 350 in India)
Life Span	4- 6 Months	2-3 Years	15-20 Years
Brightness	Less Bright	More Bright	More Bright

In view of the above, it is better to replace yellow bulbs with CFL bulbs, and even better with LED bulbs, where feasible.

CHANGE 2

REPLACE ZERO WATT BULBS

It is a common misconception to think that zero watt bulbs consumes zero power. As a result, people use this bulb 24x7 near temple or religious area, decorative items, night-bulbs and so on. Remember these bulbs are adding to your electricity bill every minute they are on.



If one wants to keep lights on for the entire day and night, then LED lights which consume less wattage should be used. Compared to bulbs consuming 12-15 Watt of power, LED consumes only 1 watt of power. Recall from earlier information that higher the wattage, greater is the expense. So remember, if you want to keep a small light on all the time, don't use a zero watt bulb – use a LED instead.

CHANGE 3

USE FIVE STAR RATED ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Today, when we go to purchase an electrical appliance for our house, the number of choices available is confusing. We may be trying to buy a simple fan or a refrigerator or even a washing machine. We are heavily loaded with information on a large number of products. However it is important to know, not only how much a product will cost us when we buy it but what it will cost to run it/use it. If it is going to be expensive to run, it may defeat its purpose.

These days, manufacturers are required to place a label showing how much electricity the appliance will consume under certain conditions. Currently these labels are required for refrigerators, air conditioners, televisions, geysers, tubelights and fans among the household appliances. The labels contain a number of items. The highlight though is the 'STARS'. More the stars more efficient is the appliance and therefore the running cost will be the least. The label here is for a 3 star appliances.



The best and most efficient and economical appliances are those with a five star rating, so opt for a five star appliance when buying a household appliance.

CHANGE 4

FAN REGULATORS

There are two kinds of regulators used to control the speed of the fan. The regulators being an electric device, also consumes power. Care should also be taken in installing regulators of the fan. Round and big regulators consume more power as compared to electronic regulators. The electronic regulators are little expensive than the old style regulators but is more efficient.



Old Style Regulator (Not Recommended)



New Electronic Regulator (Recommended)

CHANGE 5

SWITCH OFF THE PLUG POINTS WHEN NOT IN USE!

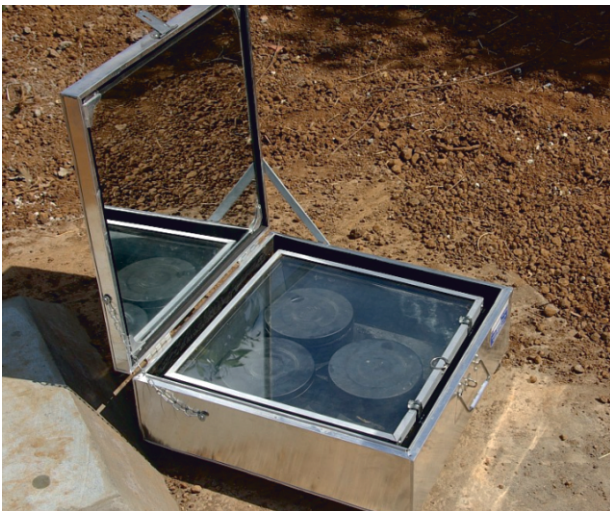
When appliances like television, modem/set-top box, refrigerators, music-system, phone charger are not in use, it is natural to switch them off. However, we often leave the switch plug on. The switch plug of these appliances must also be switched off. There is considerable consumption of electricity when these plugs especially of mobile charger, television are kept on even though the appliances might are not in use. **So remember always switch off the main plug point of the appliance, when not in use.**



CHANGE 6

USE RENEWABLE ENERGY PRODUCTS

Renewable energy products like solar lantern, solar lamps, solar cookers and solar homelight system are widely being used in areas which are not connected to grid electricity. This can also be adopted in households where expenditure is more on lighting. These systems are environment friendly and energy savers. Though the initial cost is high, the running cost is zero as the system runs on the power of the sun. Many of these systems also have options for mobile charging. The device gets charged through solar energy, and is therefore not dependent on electricity and therefore doesn't cost anything to use.



Explore using renewable energy products which are solar operated to reduce electricity costs and be environment friendly.

CHANGE 7

USE NATURAL LIGHT AND VENTILATION, WHERE POSSIBLE

In slum communities where many homebased workers reside, houses are made very close to each other. This leaves little scope for windows for sunlight / natural light or air circulation. As a result households require cooling and lighting appliances even during the day time, thus increasing the electricity bill. One can create simple methods to increase indoor lighting and air circulation. A movable sheet can be placed on the roof in such a manner that it allows light and air to circulate.



This gap in the roof is protected by a dome shaped structure made from fiber sheets. Thus, it is durable. The above picture one can see the hollow structure on the roof that is covered from dome-(outside). The houses which have used this method have reported reduction in usage of lightening and cooling appliances.

Try to use simple techniques to use natural light and ventilation in a better way.

CHANGE 8

REDUCE COOKING FUEL WASTAGE

Cooking is another essential activity which requires energy. We may use traditional wood stoves, or kerosene or gas for cooking. No matter what the source of energy is; there are ways of reducing cooking fuel wastage and maximizing energy use.



For people using kerosene stove, it is important to ascertain the design of the burner. There are burners made with single tube which reduce kerosene consumption. These are recommended.

Energy efficient wood stoves are also available in the market which consume less wood and cause less indoor pollution and are therefore more efficient in more than one way.

When using a gas stove, if the color of the flame, is yellow or orange, the fuel is not being burnt efficiently. Clean the burner of the gas stove to remove any dirt, food or grease particles. Ensure the holes of the burner are clean and clear. Gas saver is a device available in market which has a knob made of magnet which avoids the leaking of gas.

No matter what the cooking fuel is, we can save energy by covering the cooking vessel, instead of keeping it open.



HomeNet South Asia Group (HNSA) comprises HomeNet South Asia Trust and the Association of Homebased Workers in South Asia. It is the regional network of organizations of homebased workers. It currently has a presence in 8 countries of South Asia. It works towards building regional solidarity among homebased workers, especially women workers, and empowers them to lead a life of dignity that is free of poverty by obtaining decent work and social protection within a rights based framework. HNSA Group strives to make homebased workers and their issues more visible, to ensure secure livelihoods for them and to strengthen their collective voice and organizing efforts in the region. It also advocates for the implementation of national, regional and international policies for homebased workers; inclusion of homebased workers in the existing policies and laws, as well as promotes access to homebased workers product to local, national, regional and international markets. For more information visit www.homenetsouthasia.net

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