About the energy savings experiment

Support materials

Conserve helps students to conduct an energy savings experiment in their home. It aims to prove that, by using simple energy saving ideas at home, people can reduce greenhouse gases and cut household energy bills.

This sheet explains the experiment and the ways you can be involved.

The first step is to see who in your household* wants to participate. The experiment can be conducted with one or more participants who agree to record their energy use over two weeks. The participants are called the energy team – even if only one person is participating.

* It's not essential that everyone in the household participate. There are many reasons why people may be unable or unwilling to participate – they may have too many other commitments or be away for part of the time. If necessary, students can conduct the experiment on their own energy usage and still make savings. Energy team participants only record their own energy use.

Next, develop 3–5 energy saving ideas that you are happy to try. (Students will have already developed a list of saving ideas in the **Calculate** activities.) These ideas should be achievable and sustainable – it's not a competition to see who can save the most. The aim is to see how much energy you can save by making simple changes that are easy to implement.

But before you can calculate how much you save, you need to know how much energy you normally use. Your normal energy use is recorded in the **control week**. During this week your energy team records their normal use of the 3–5 appliances listed in your energy saving ideas. It's important that accurate, precise records are kept. Students will place notepads and record sheets around the house to make recording easy. Students will also record daily temperatures and keep a journal of events that might effect energy use.

After the control week comes the **experimental week** in which your energy team puts their energy saving ideas into action. Students will help their team by reminding them about the energy saving ideas and motivating them to stick to their goals.

Finally, results from the **control** and **experimental** weeks will be compared to determine exactly how much energy was saved. Students will report back to their energy team about the money and greenhouse gases their ideas would save over a whole year.

If your energy team saved, say, just $2 per week, this would still amount to a saving of over $100 a year and over 1000 kg of greenhouse gases.