



Issue: #TB110
Date: 4/28/97
Topic: Energy Savings With Desktop Office Power Control

Energy Savings With Desktop Office Power Control

One of the largest costs to an office building is electricity. A simple way to save energy is to turn off monitors and printers when not in use. This can be done manually or through the use of occupancy based desktop controls.

Desktop Office Power Controls

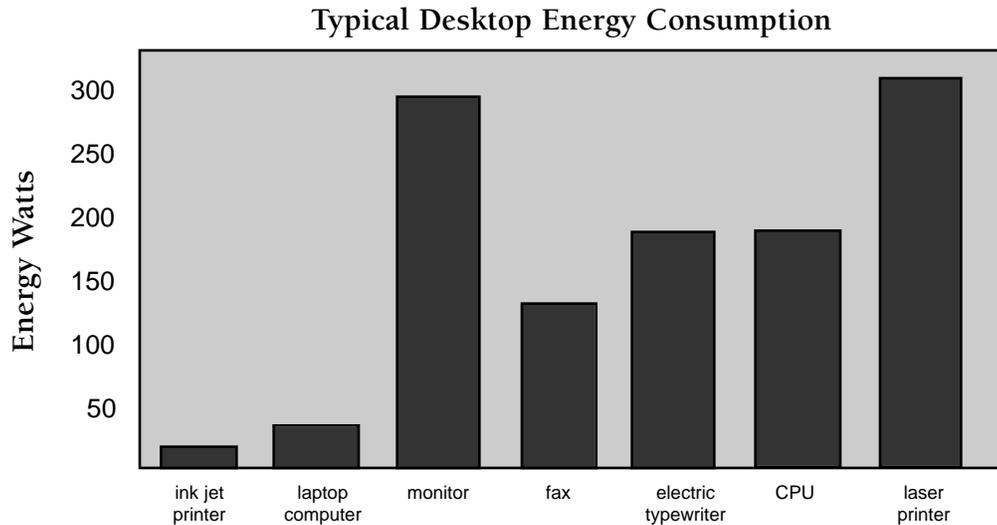
Occupancy-based desktop office power controls effectively control task lighting, computer monitors, printers, heaters, etc. This system consists of occupancy sensors controlling power strips. They allow the worker to choose which equipment is controlled by occupancy, and which should be left on throughout the day. These products can control power to certain outlets on a power strip so that monitors and printers (and lights, radios, calculators, etc.) are turned off when occupancy has not been detected for a pre-programmed length of time. They will also allow the flexibility of choosing which equipment should not be turned off (for example, CPUs and fax and answering machines). The use of occupancy sensors to turn off devices can be multiplied by the number of offices or work spaces to determine energy savings potential. In large companies and offices with frequent unoccupied areas, the savings potential can be staggering.

Desktop Controls in Action

One energy savings model, performed by John Briggs in *Energy Policies and Action*, investigated the impact of installing occupancy controlled sensors on 100 workstations with typical usage patterns. He estimated a savings of 300 kWhrs/year.

A monitored study performed by the Florida Solar Energy Center to measure the energy savings of a new computer system compared to a conventional one of identical characteristics, provided some interesting results. According to the actual energy use patterns found in the study, energy consumption would be reduced by 58% if computers were switched off after 60 minutes of inactivity. The use of occupancy based controlled power strips were recommended by the Florida Solar

Energy Center to turn power off to unnecessary equipment when the work space is vacant, while still leaving power on to essential equipment such as CPUs and fax machines.



Conclusion

The energy savings potential for an office is quite high with the use of occupancy based desktop power controls. These controls will provide workers with the ability to control power to their individual office or work space in addition to helping achieve their company's energy saving goals.

To investigate the energy savings potential for your office, contact The Watt Stopper Technical Support at 1-800-879-8585.

Reference / Source

John Briggs, Lighting Design + Application, *Energy Policies in Action*, July, 1995.

Ontario Hydro, *Office Equipment and Energy Efficiency*, September, 1991.