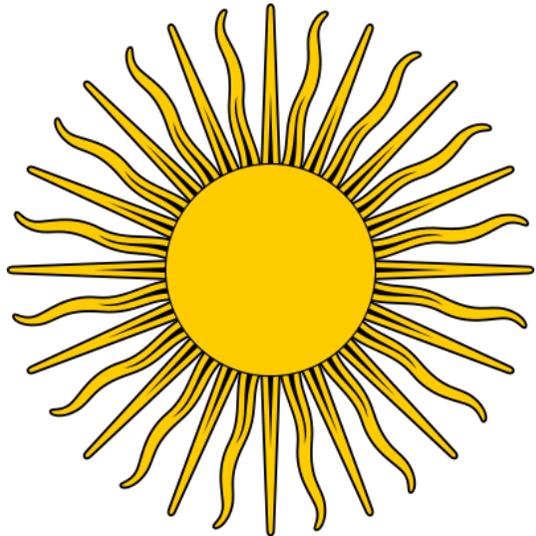


# Change Choices Good, Better, Best

## Energy in our school



## Stepping Up to Sustainability

### Stepping Up to Sustainability – how can we live more sustainably and make positive lifestyle choices?

In 2011, WESSA launched the 'Stepping Up to Sustainability' concept. With the support of various partners, USAID and other funders, eleven 'Sustainability Commons' have been established across South Africa.

Each of these 'Sustainability Commons' will practice sustainable living by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better,
- installing renewable technologies,
- conserving and teaching about water management, as well as,
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity.

The goal is simple - to put into practice the lifestyle choices we all need to make! These innovative concepts are set to expand as we all 'step up to sustainability' and seek to change our environmental footprints into environmental handprints of practice for a more sustainable future!



## Energy

*Some of our most serious environmental problems are associated with our use of energy*

Some of South Africa's most serious environmental problems are associated with our use of energy. Nuclear and coal-fired power stations for electricity generation, coal combustion in the townships, coal-to-oil processes, petrol and diesel use in vehicles for bulk transport, and over-exploitation of fuelwood resources, all result in serious, long-term environmental damage.

Eskom supplies about 95% of South Africa's electricity and about 45% of Africa's electricity. Early in 2008 regional electricity demand exceeded supply capacity, with the result that South Africa's power exports were curtailed while domestic demand was managed by major cutbacks in industrial use.



#### Did you know?

You can reduce your electricity bill by 10%, simply by unplugging appliances or switching devices off at the power point.

#### Did you know?

By reducing our use of fossil fuels, we can reduce air pollution, acid rain and global warming and also reduce our school's electricity costs.

#### Did you know?

Germs prefer warmth and winter is a prime time for flu. So if the classroom is too hot, the germs will spread and multiply more rapidly.

#### Did you know?

Most of South Africa's electricity comes from fossil fuels – via coal power stations. The power we get from coal causes air pollution, acid rain and global warming.

## Good Change



### Choices Energy



**Place signs around the school buildings to remind everyone to switch off lights.** Putting up signs

can be very effective in helping to put ideas into action. "Last to leave please switch off" and "Please put on energy saver when done" are two of many signs that can be used and placed around the school.



**Use alternatives to projectors.**

Whiteboards and chalk boards are ideal for replacing projectors and use no energy. Use projectors only when necessary.



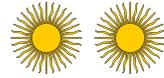
**Unplug and switch off all equipment at the wall plugs when appliances are not in use.** Appliances and

other electronics use power even when switched off because they are in standby mode. Unplugging these appliances and equipment will reduce monthly power usage.



**Write tips for saving energy.** Put them in your school newsletter or ask if they can be read out during school assembly.

## Better Change



### Choices Energy



**Change to energy-saving light bulbs and other energy saving electrical appliance options.** Energy-saving

light bulbs use less than 20% of the energy of a conventional light bulb and can last up to 15 times longer. Fitting energy-saving light bulbs helps the environment and should reduce your school's lighting bills.



**Reduce the school's computer brightness levels.** Turning down the

brightness on school computer monitors can greatly reduce energy use.



**Turn down the thermostat by a few degrees.** Keeping doors closed to

trap the heat and turning down the temperature of the thermostat will help save energy. Classrooms that are too warm make people feel drowsy.



**Have a classroom 'energy challenge' competition.** Each class can keep

track of the energy savings that they achieve. Make graphs and post them on the school notice-board or announce the weekly winners in assembly.

## Best Change Choices

### Energy



**Install solar panels or windmills to run some of your school's electrical equipment.** Solar panels can lower your school's electricity costs and are easily installed.



**Install geyser blankets and turn down the heat.** Wrapping a geyser blanket around the geyser will maintain the heat much longer; this way the geyser will use less energy to keep the water warm. Reducing the water temperature of the geyser will also save energy.



#### WESSA Share-Net

People  
Places and  
Publications  
For  
Environmental Education

For **environmental resources** to support better lifestyle choices, contact WESSA Share-Net, 033-330 3931 ext 124 or 144; e-mail us at [sharen@wessa.co.za](mailto:sharen@wessa.co.za) or visit our website [www.wessa.org.za](http://www.wessa.org.za)

Main funding agent of the WESSA  
'Stepping Up to Sustainability'  
project.

#### Did you know?

Projectors use an extremely high power halogen lamp that may consume up to 750watts, yet produces a very dim yellow image.

#### Did you know?

Using lower wattage globes at closer distances is an effective way to save electricity.

#### Did you know?

The old CRT (cathode ray tube) monitors use about three times more power than the newer LCD (liquid

#### Did you know?

The average life expectancy for an air conditioning system is 8 to 15 years.

## Practice the lifestyle choices