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Attention Mohawk Students and Families: Mohawk’s Green School Team is working hard to achieve the Evergreen Award level of certification for the fifth year in a row and we need your help! It’s time to give your home its annual energy check-up as part of the school’s Green School certification process.

Did you know your home contains energy devices that do these things for you?

They create light, heat, coolness, and sound.

They also make things move.

There are items or places in your home that use too much energy.

THESE are the ENERGY WASTERS.

There are some things in your home that help save and conserve energy.

THESE are the ENERGY SAVERS.

We need your help. You have just been appointed Energy Detective for your home.

The Energy Detective’s job is to find

the ENERGY SAVERS and the ENERGY WASTERS.

Where do you find them?

Start with a Room-by-Room search of your house - an Energy Audit.

Good Luck Energy Detective!

**Energy Detective Tools and Tests**

As the Energy Detective for your home, you need to search out specific areas that the Energy

Wasters have invaded. Here are some ideas for you to use.

**1. Draft Detective Tool**

a. What happens when you put your wet hand in the wind? I’ll bet it feels colder. That is your **Magic Draft Detector Tool**. Now in order to use your Magic Draft Detector Tool, you need a small glass of water and your hand. Dip your hand into the water and let your Magic Draft Detector Tool start to work in the following areas:

**2. Window Draft Detective**

a. Are your windows double paned?

b. Can your Magic Draft Detector Tool feel a draft coming from the edge of the window?

c. Can your Magic Draft Detector Tool feel a draft coming from the edge of the window frame?

d. If you put some caulking around the window, does the draft stop?

**3. Door Draft Detective**

a. With your Magic Draft Detector Tool, inspect the edges of the door. Feel for air coming through the door. Is it near where the door is hinged? Or is it near where the door opens? What about the top and bottom of the door? Are there drafts there? And the doorsill? Check with your Magic Draft Detector Tool for drafts in all these places.

**4. Wall Plug Draft Detective**

a. With your Magic Draft Detector Tool, examine all wall plugs in your home for drafts.

b. If you find any drafts, ask your parents to buy some draft stoppers for the plugs. Maybe you can help install some of them.

**5. Winter and Summer Blinds and Window Coverings**

a. Go to a window where you found a draft.

b. Test this window when the sun is shining and when it is cold at night.

i. When the sun is shining, is the cold air coming in? Close the blinds. Is there a

difference?

ii. At night is the cold air coming in? Close the blinds. Is there a difference?

c. Tell you family your results. Show them the difference you can make by using the blinds.

**6. The Winter Floors**

a. Is there a place in your home where the floors are particularly cold? Why does this

happen? What could you do about it?

**7. Fridge and Freezer**

a. Use a paper to ‘test’ the fridge/freezer insulation.

b. If the paper can slip easily between the insulation and the door, you have found a place where the energy wasters could get out! What can you do to block this draft? Sometimes the door has become dirty with mould and needs to enjoy a good cleaning.

**Energy Vampires**

Energy Vampires don’t feed on blood—they drink up electricity, and they are VERY real. In our homes, schools, and businesses, we have lots of electrical products that cannot be switched off completely unless they are unplugged. These are things like televisions and cell phone chargers. When plugged in, they use electricity 24 hours a day, just sitting and waiting for you to turn on a switch or recharge something.

The “standby power” these items use can be as much as 15 or 20 watts for each one, which is a little more than a night-light uses. That might not seem like much, but it adds up fast. In fact, when we figure the cost of standby power used by everyone in the United States, it comes to more than [$10 BILLION a year!](http://www.eia.gov/kids/news_energy_vampires.cfm) That figures out to about $100 a year for each home.

Did you know that your microwave oven uses more electricity to power the digital clock than it does to cook your food? Although heating food requires more than 100 times as much power as running the clock, most microwave ovens are not being used more than 99 percent of the time.

Here’s a list of the biggest Energy Vampires you may have in your home:

* Television—especially plasma and LCD TVs
* Window air conditioners
* Computers
* Video game systems
* Microwave ovens
* Power tools like drills, screwdrivers, and saws.

How can you get rid of the Energy Vampires? Here are some ideas to keep them away:

* Use a power strip with an on/off switch to plug in a group of items — for example, cell phone and MP3 chargers. When you unplug a device from the charger, just flip the power switch off.
* Use a power strip for your TV, video game system, DVD player, and stereo equipment. When you're done playing games or watching TV, turn the power strip off. Since you're not pulling the plug, you won’t have to reset your clocks!
* A power strip is also great for items whose plugs are hard to reach. There's no need to crawl under your desk to disconnect all of your computer components when you can plug them all into one power strip.
* Don’t forget the garage! Power tools should be unplugged until needed. For rechargeable items like cordless hand vacuums, pull the plug as soon as the battery is charged.
* When buying new appliances, look for the [Energy Star](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=about.vampires) rating.
* When setting up computers and other electrical devices, look for and use the Energy Star [power management options](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=power_mgt.pr_power_mgt_faq).

The best way to beat the Energy Vampires is to unplug anything that you can. Starve those vampires and you’ll save energy, reduce pollution, and save money. In just a few months, your family could save enough money to go see a movie. Maybe *Dracula* will be playing!