

## Power Down Over the Holidays

As we head into the month of December, the holidays and time spent away from the office are on the horizon. Even in our current circumstances, with increased teleworking and reduced travel, many NIH staff will be enjoying time away from the campus or home office. We would like to encourage everyone to take a few moments before any extended leave to make sure you are conserving energy while you are away. To make this process easier, we have included these tips as a checklist. Make sure you do these 5 things in your on-campus or at-home workplace:

- ❑ **Sleep, Hibernate or Power Down Your Computers** – Computers have become much more energy efficient over the last few decades, but it is still a good practice to reduce their energy consumption when they are not needed. A computer in sleep mode, hibernate mode or powered down typically consumes less than 1-2 watts.<sup>1</sup> Many computers are set to sleep after a certain amount of time, but it never hurts to double-check your settings!
- ❑ **Turn Off Power Strips or Unplug Appliances & Equipment** – Disconnecting appliances from outlets eliminates phantom plug loads, the electricity consumed by these devices even when not in use. This additional energy consumption is estimated to cost each American household an average of \$100 every year.<sup>2</sup> This practice can also be applied to lab equipment that won't be needed in the near future.
- ❑ **Turn Down the Thermostat** – For the typical American household, nearly half of the monthly electricity bill comes from heating and cooling.<sup>3</sup> Turning your thermostat down in the winter while you are away is an easy way to save money (the exact amount depends on the size of your house, how well your house is insulated, the efficiency of your heating system, the outside temperature and many other factors). Try turning your thermostat down while you are away to see how much you can save!
- ❑ **Close Blinds and Check Windows** – Blinds act as a buffer between your windows and the rest of your home or office. Keeping them closed when a room is unoccupied helps prevent sunlight from warming the room or air drafts from cooling the room. Another helpful practice is to ensure all windows are sealed properly to reduce air leaks.
- ❑ **Turn Off the Lights** – Take a second to double-check that all lights are off before leaving your office or home. It is a simple, but effective, way to reduce unneeded energy consumption.