



LightsOut Ohio Workplace Program

Frequently Asked Question



About Program Implementation in the Workplace

Are you asking that all lights in the building be turned off?

No. Only those lights you would consider to be non-essential. Occupied rooms that have no natural light would still be lit. Even some areas with natural light would still need artificial light to maintain productivity. Stairways need to be lit for safety. Occupied production areas should be reviewed to see what lights need to stay on. But workplaces typically find that at least some lighting can be turned down off or down.

What day is LightsOut Ohio and when are we supposed to turn off the lights?

LightsOut Ohio takes place on Earth Day, April 22nd. We ask that workplaces select a time of day at their choosing that will fit best with their operations, while having an impact on the greatest number of employees.

How long do we need to have the lights off?

At least one hour. In 2008, our inaugural year, many workplaces originally planned to have non-essential lights out only for the first hour on the morning, but then decided they could easily function in this way for the entire day.

What about conserving energy used in other applications such as the power for computers?

We encourage workplaces to make sure computers are set to automatically hibernate and to practice other forms of energy conservation every day. LightsOut Ohio will provide an energy conservation tip sheet for workplaces.

Does LightsOut Ohio provide any assistance to organize the event at my workplace?

Yes! As the event approaches, you will find sample memos, signage and other tools to help you plan and promote this activity at your workplace. By registering at the LightsOutOhio.org web site, you will receive notifications as this material becomes available.

How does our workplace qualify to receive a certificate of participation?

LightsOut Ohio, and its sponsoring organization, the Sierra Club, will provide a frameable certificate to participating organizations, to be recognized as an "Employer for the Planet". To qualify, the organization must have an authorized employee register at the LightsOutOhio.org web site before April 22nd. Along with receiving reminders as Earth Day approaches, you will receive an email the day after Earth Day requesting to confirm your organization's participation. (Yes, this is an honor system.)

About Environmental Impact

Does turning off lights for one hour really have a positive environmental impact?

LightsOut Ohio shows how easily we can reduce energy consumption and contribute to a healthier planet by making simple modifications to our behavior. It's an easy step in a long journey. We all need to realize that we all have an impact and that we all have a personal responsibility to protect the environment.

If everyone turns their lights back on at the same time, will it cause a power surge that could create power outages? No. Our electric utilities have to deal with occasional power outages in which electric usage jumps back on in large spurts. Plus, we are not asking that all electric usage ceases for a period of time, and then is turned back on. We ask that people curtail a portion of their electrical usage – the non-essential portion.

About the LightsOut Organization

Who runs the LightsOut Ohio program? LightsOut Ohio was established and is run by the volunteers of the local Sierra Club groups in Northeast Ohio. The event is primarily organized by Sierra Club's Akron area group, the Portage Trail Group.

Is the LightsOut program only for the workplace? No. LightsOut Ohio is reaching out to schools, to religious institutions (to turn off lights on the weekend before Earth Day) and into homes to turn off non-essential lights 8-9 p.m. on Earth Day, April 22nd.