

# How much electricity do you use?

by Martin Smith - NAFD Environmental Consultant

For most of us, the cost of buying electricity has almost doubled since 2002 and we are continuing to use more and more. The electricity used to keep both our homes and businesses warm in winter and to run modern equipment, including charging our mobile phones and laptops, means that daily energy consumption in the UK has increased by around 70% since 1970.

The consequence of using more electricity not only makes our bills more expensive but also can cause our climate to change. The majority (85%) of the electricity generated is by using steam turbines driven by heat from the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and gas. This process releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and is a contributing factor towards climate change. Small actions every day can make a big difference to the cost of our energy bills, and the less energy we can use also means that less CO2 will be released into the atmosphere.

We are already aware of the simple things that we all can easily do on a day-to-day basis to reduce the amount of energy we use. If we all turned off our PC's, TV's and other electrical gadgets when they are on stand-by we could save enough energy that would equate to the output of a couple of power stations in the UK, together with a significant reduction in CO2 emissions. We may not realise that our homes produce more than 25% (including heating) of the UK's CO2 emissions, even more than our cars.

Many of the things that can be done are just common sense. The amount of

electricity consumed varies depending on the type of appliance, and the following list will give you some idea of which appliances use the most:-

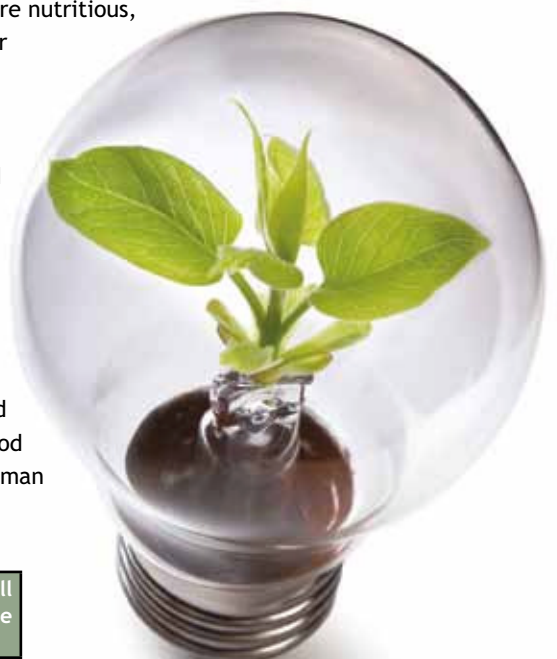
Appliance	Watts used per hour	Appliance	Watts used per hour
Low-energy light bulb	11	Iron	1,000
Extractor fan	75	Dishwasher	1,000
Laptop computer	75	Bar heater (one bar)	1,000
Conventional light bulb	100	Washing machine	1,200
Stereo Hi-Fi	100	Electric cooker (one ring)	1,300
Television	100	Oil filled heater	2,000
DVD/Video player	110	Fan heater	2,000
Refrigerator	125	Bar heater (two bars)	2,000
Desktop computer	150	Deep fryer	2,000
Freezer	300	Electric cooker oven	2,150
Hair dryer	750	Kettle	2,250
Microwave	750	Immersion heater	3,000
Vacuum cleaner	800	Tumble dryer	3,000
Toaster	1,000	Electric shower unit	8,000

*All figures are approximate and will vary according to the make and model of appliance. Check your actual appliance for accurate information.*

## FAQ: What does "genetically modified" mean?

Genetically modified (GM) foods are made from plants that have had traits in their DNA changed. Scientists remove genes from one plant or animal and put them into another organism. The purpose of genetically modifying plants is to improve them in some way such as to make them more nutritious, more resistant to herbicides, insects or diseases, or more tolerant of drought or cold.

This is a very controversial subject and whether it is good or bad depends on who you ask. GM food producers claim that, if the original foods were safe, the new products will also be safe. Opponents believe that this may not necessarily be true once an organism is significantly altered and that scientists messing with our food will have a detrimental impact on human health and the environment.



The National Association of Funeral Directors' Environmental Advisory Group will encourage and support members of the trade association in developing good practice within the funeral industry in matters relating to the environment.