

SEPTEMBER SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE

A Partner Challenge

Getting to Know You...

While we are focusing on our actions in the present, it can be fun to think about the future. What is one thing you look forward to in the future? Include your personal response below (please note, this form is just for you).

I look forward to: _____

Energy Tips:

Conserving energy is a powerful way to reduce your impact, and no matter where or how you live, there are things you can do. **Try at least one action below and talk about it with your partner this week.**

Easy & Simple

- **Change your daily habits.** Conserving energy doesn't mean you have to spend money. Turning off the lights when you leave the room, adjusting the thermostat 1 to 3 degrees, and washing laundry on the cold wash can all significantly save energy (and money). Have kids? Get them involved by making it a game. Keep score of who remembers and who forgets to turn off the lights.
- **Watch out for the vampire.** Of all the electronic devices in the average home about 75% of them are always drawing power even when they are off, and this is known as vampire energy. Make it a practice to unplug electronics when not in use or use a power strip to group appliances in the same area. This way things can be turned on and off easily. If you're curious as to know how much energy your appliances are drawing, use a Kill A Watt meter (HSC Sustainability has a few of these people can request).
- **Switch bulbs.** LED bulbs are up to 80% more efficient than incandescent bulbs and last longer. Although they are a little more expensive, they'll save money and effort in the long run.

Going Further

- **Get a home energy audit.** An energy audit is a detailed assessment of the home's energy use. It identifies ways you may be able to save energy and money. See if your energy company offers them or go with an independent company. The US Department of Energy has [some great tips](#).
- **Consider the ogre.** When you're shopping for an energy company, consider your options. [EnergyOgre](#) identifies energy plans in your area and you can even ask for renewable energy options.
- **Take a look at solar.** Solar has become mainstream here in Texas, and it's a great way to reduce your environmental impact and save money. The City of Irving recently hosted a Home Energy Fair and have compiled a lot of resources and webinars to help homeowners navigate the process. [Find all those resources here](#). If you have solar and would like to share your story, let us know!

Action Taken: _____

Issue or Challenge: _____