

# Make the Meter 'Spin' Slower

## Smart Meters

Learn about your electric meter and how much electricity your home is using!

### Find your electric meter

With permission and/or help from your parents, go find your electric meter on the side of your house. The meter measures electricity your home is using, allowing your electric company to bill your family for the electricity you've used in a month.

Your meter will look like one of the options below. These instructions apply to the meter on the right, a smart meter. If you have an analog meter, with a number of dials, follow the instructions for an analog meter.



Analog Meter



Smart Meter

### Day 1: How much electricity has your home used so far?

The digital screen on your smart meter will flash between a few different screens of numbers. Watch carefully – when the screen says “kWh” in one corner, that is the total electricity your home has used since the meter was installed. kWh stands for kilowatt-hours, the measurement of electricity use. Write down the number on the kWh screen, and the time that you checked the meter.

### Day 2: How much electricity does your home use in a normal day?

Around the same time the next day, go out and check the meter again. Once again, wait for the kWh screen to appear, then write down the number.

Subtract the Day 1's kWh number from Day 2's kWh number. This will give you the kWh of electricity your home used on Day 2 (see example at the right). Take note of this number.

### Day 3: Can you intentionally use less electricity?

With permission and/or help from your parents, make some conscious decisions over the next day to turn off lights and appliances that are on (like a TV, a microwave, you can unplug a computer or phone if no one is using it). This is called energy conservation – turning devices off will help your home use less electricity.

#### Sample Electric Use Calculation:

Day 1: 15,941 kWh

Day 2: 15,969 kWh

$$15,969 - 15,941 = 28$$

Day 2's electric use is 28 kWh.

Around the same time on the third day, go back out and check the meter again. Once again, wait for the kWh screen to appear, then write down the number. Subtract the Day 2's kWh number from the Day 3's kWh number to get the kWh of electricity your home used on Day 3.

Is this number less than Day 2's usage? If it was, you successfully conserved energy – reducing the amount of electricity your home used in a single day. If it wasn't, try again for another day to see if you can reduce the electricity the home is using.

### **Day 4+: Keep experimenting!**

Keep experimenting to figure out which devices or behaviors in your home result in higher or lower electricity use. Are there habits you can change to make energy conservation more permanent than just one day?