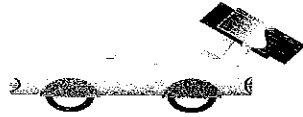


WHAT CAN MY FAMILY AND I DO TO CONSERVE ENERGY?



By: SOPHIA LEE

SUNation came to our school and taught us how solar power works. We made a cool experiment which showed how solar power can make a power boat work without batteries. I wish all my toys had solar panels on them so that way I would never have a toy that didn't work because of dead batteries and I wouldn't have to spend so much money on replacing the old batteries with new ones.

Solar Power is one way we can conserve energy by letting the natural energy of the sun, heat and light and power our homes and businesses. I think we need to think of more ways to use solar power to conserve energy, like why can't traffic lights and highway billboards and other transportation signs be powered by the sun? Cars that are solar powered by the sun are awesome, but I don't think my family is ready for that. We can make sure we don't run the car engine too long before actually going somewhere.

Some ways my family and I can conserve energy would be to install solar panels on our roof. That way we wouldn't have to pay so much money to LIPA and we would help the environment. We could change all our light bulbs, both inside and out to compact fluorescent bulbs. We could also walk around the house and close the lights in the rooms we are not in. Mom always says "close the lights, we are not related to Con Edison"! (Con Edison was the same as LIPA.) We could also put more of our lights on a timer so the outside lights don't have to be on all night or we could install more motion sensors.

We could spend less time on the computer and more time reading books or playing family board games. Another idea is to set the computer screen saver to power off after a few minutes of not being used.

Mom always lowers the thermostat to 68 degrees in the winter when we are not home and she tells us to put more clothes on and to wear slippers if we are cold. We could also use extra blankets to keep warm. Another idea to keep the house warmer during the day would be to raise the shades to let the heat in from the sun. My dad closes the heating vents in the rooms that we hardly use during the winter months. We could use our fireplaces more often to add extra heat to the rooms instead of raising the thermostat. During the summer months, we keep the shades down and the air conditioner on 78. We also try our best to keep the windows and doors closed and to close the air conditioning vents in the rooms that we do not use lot.

We already have an insulated water heater and dad lowered the hot water temperature. In our house, mom washes a lot of clothes and dishes. She always makes sure the machines are full and uses cold water for the washing machine whenever possible. Mom told us where she grew up, most people would hang their clothes outside on a clothesline. In Long Island, we use an indoor clothes rack when she doesn't have a full load of clothes in the dryer.

When we go into the refrigerator or freezer we could know what we are looking for before we open the door, that way when the door is opened, less warm air will get in and less cold air will get out.

We could take cooler and shorter showers and maybe use a minute minder to time ourselves. And, I could towel dry my hair more so I don't have to use the hair dryer too long.

These are some of the ways we could conserve energy in my home. Going around the house and talking about how to conserve energy made me realize that we can do so much more...