



SaveOurEnergy Patch

Written by volunteer Ivy Sundell

girl scouts
of greater chicago
and northwest
indiana



To earn this action patch, you must complete the following activities. We focus on what action we can do individually to slow climate change. When each of us does our part to save electricity and water at home, together we make a significant difference in reducing our carbon footprint.

Why Save Electricity?

ComEd's 2016 environmental disclosure shows that 33% of our electricity is from burning coal, 36% from nuclear, and 27% from natural gas.

Burning **coal** emits 971 lbs. of carbon dioxide for every 1,000 kilowatt-hours. Illinois household averages 767 kwh/mo. (electricitylocal.com) That means each family creates 744 lbs of carbon dioxide each month.

Two-thirds of the 100+ **nuclear** accidents worldwide occurred in the U.S. (wikipedia) Meltdowns cause radiation, which can lead to cancer. Nuclear fission, the splitting of atoms, creates radioactive waste that can leak into the environment.

The leaked **natural gas** from drilling, and transporting in pipelines is mostly methane, and can add significantly to our greenhouse gas. (ucsusa.org)

Why Save Water?

Illinois takes 2.1 billion gallons of water from Lake Michigan per day. Lake levels have been declining from warming temperatures that limit winter ice cover and boost evaporation. Also, because of the reversal of the Chicago River, rainwater doesn't replenish the lake, instead it ends up in the sewers leading to the Mississippi River.

Activities:

1. Make a short list of things you can do to save electricity and water at home. Leave room after each item for tally marks every time you save electricity and water.
2. Write reminders on a piece of paper to tape onto places at home. For example, "Turn light off", "Turn off at power strip", "Unplug charger" from wall after use. Tip: You can make your reminders colorful and eye-catching. Good places to tape the reminders are the light switch plate, a corner of your computer monitor.
3. (Optional) Enlist your family. Have them make a list of what they can do to save energy. For example, those with a car can run multiple errands in one trip, or walk or bike whenever possible; they can also fix leaky faucets and running toilets, and use rain barrels.
4. Bring your list of tally marks to the next Girl Scout meeting to share with everyone what you did and how often you saved energy.



Once you have completed the requirements for the patch, you can order the patches at our online store, www.shopgirlscouts.com, and search for the specific patch.