

Energy Sources: Environmental Benefits

The environmental benefits of turning lights and computers off are dependent on the source of the electricity you consume.

Coal fired power plants produce about 50 percent of the electricity in the United States.

Natural gas fired power plants provide about 15 percent.

Nuclear plants about 18 percent.

Hydro dams about 10 percent.

The remaining sources of power generation are from oil (about 3 percent) and "renewable" sources such as biomass, geothermal, wind, and solar power plants.

Fossil fuel combustion power plants (coal, gas, and oil) emit carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide (mainly from coal and oil fired power plants), nitrous oxides, and particulates and heavy metals such as mercury (coal fired power plants).

Regardless of the source of electricity, if you consume less energy, you are reducing the impact you have on the environment.