

School Energy Savers

This activity will review three ways to save energy in your school building.

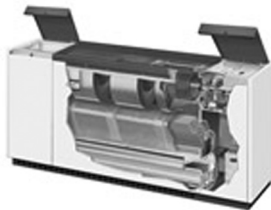
1. Using Vending Misers on beverage machines
2. Using motion sensors for lights in hallways/classrooms/restrooms
3. Keep unit ventilators clear of obstructing materials

Explain what the three items mentioned above are and how they can save energy in a school building.



Vending Miser – A device used to shut off a vending machine when no one is near it. If someone walks by the machine, the motion sensor will sense the movement and send power back to the machine (lights turn on). The use of a Vending Miser can cut electricity consumption in half in some situations.

Motion Sensors – A device used to sense if there is someone in a space. Motion sensors are usually triggered by movement or sound. The settings on motion sensors can usually be adjusted if the user is unsatisfied with how the sensor is operating (e.g., lights stay on too long, big movements required to turn lights on, or lights turn on when someone walks past in the hallway).



Unit Ventilators – Originally designed for schools, a unit ventilator brings in fresh air and heats/cools it on its way into the classroom. They are often found under a bank of windows on exterior walls. When books, jackets, or other materials are placed on top of the unit ventilator, proper air flow is obstructed, resulting in an inefficient system. If mittens or scarves are placed on top of a unit ventilator, germs can easily be spread throughout the room because the fresh air is contaminated as it flows over and around the clothing items.

Have students stand up and form a circle, facing towards the middle. One person stands in the middle of the circle. This person is the “chooser.”

The person in the middle will close their eyes and spin around a few times, then open their eyes and point to a person and say one of the following: Vending miser, Motion sensor, Unit Ventilator.

The following actions must be done by the person that was pointed to and the people on either side of them before the person in the middle finishes saying, “School Energy Savers.”

Vending Miser:

- Person in Middle – Turns to person on left, puts arms down by sides with one palm up to represent where a soda comes out
- Person on Left – Reaches for the invisible soda, opens and drinks it
- Person on Right – Squats down and bends the knee of the person in the middle to represent the machine turning on when someone walks near it



School Energy Savers cont.

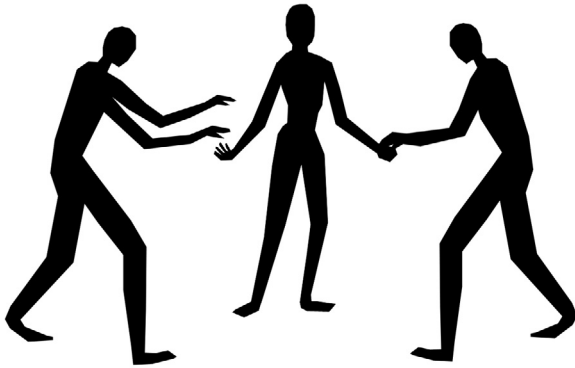
Motion Sensor:

- Person in Middle – Stands with arms up, wrists bent with left hand closed in a fist and right hand open to represent lights being “on”
- Person on Left – Stands really still with arms crossed in front of them
- Person on Right – Runs or jumps around in place to show motion



Unit Ventilator:

- Person in Middle – Stands with arms down, elbows bent with left hand in a fist and right hand open with fingers wiggling to represent heat coming from within
- Person on Left – Puts both hands on top of fist and slightly pushes downward to represent the vent being block by books/plants/jackets etc.
- Person on Right – Puts hands on top of wiggling fingers like there is warm air coming out of a nice warm fire



If the group of 3 complete their actions before the person in the middle finishes saying, “School Energy Savers” the person in the middle closes their eyes, turns, and selects another person.

If any one of the group of 3 doesn’t complete their action in time, the slowest to respond goes in the center and becomes the “chooser.”

You may need to remind the chooser to say which School Energy Saver the selected person is supposed to act out and/or that they need to say, “School Energy Savers” as fast as they can to get out of the middle.

Excerpt from
Energy & Your School Activity Guide
at keepprogram.org

© 2019 Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education

The Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program is supported through funding from



Wisconsin K-12 Energy Education Program (KEEP)
College of Natural Resources
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point

