

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Use a ‘Kill-a-Watt Meter’ to Save Energy and Save Money

Local citizens will be able to save money on their electric bills thanks to recent gifts to the Freeport Public and Highland Community College libraries. The devices, called ‘Kill-a-Watt meters’ were distributed to the libraries by students in the Aquin and Freeport High School Student Servant Leadership programs as part of their regional community service project co-sponsored by the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society.

‘Kill-a-Watt’ meters gauge exactly the electrical usage of household devices – such as computers, video games and refrigerators – and help users determine how to cut their energy consumption and reduce their monthly bills.

The meters can be checked out from local libraries and are accompanied by a simple instruction manual and list of energy saving tips. The meter plugs in between the device being tested and its wall outlet. When left in place for a day or two, it records energy usage and allows simple conversion of kilowatts to the dollar savings on the monthly bill.

Some early users of the device have reported saving hundreds of dollars annually. “I had no idea that the old fridge in the garage was costing that much to run,” said one user. “We really didn’t need it that badly and the electric company even paid us \$25 when they hauled it away. Now our bill is ten dollars less each month. I couldn’t believe it.”

Another user reported that simply by putting all her home entertainment devices and chargers on a power strip and turning that ‘completely off’ when she wasn’t using them she saved four dollars a month – almost \$50 each year.

By comparing the kilowatt usage of their current appliances with those of similar energy-efficient models which are described in the accompanying information, library patrons can also use the meters to calculate what the payback might be for changing to more energy-efficient models.

In addition to the Freeport Public and Highland libraries, Student Servant Leaders are placing meters in the libraries in Forreston, Oregon, Mt Morris, Pearl City, Lena and Savannah. The local Audubon chapter is placing them in Leaf River, Polo, Chadwick, Milledgeville, and Pecatonica. In areas served by Jo-Carroll Energy, that company has given meters to local libraries including those in Warren, Galena, Hanover, Thompson, Stockton, Mt. Carroll, Lanark and Elizabeth.

For more information about the Kill-a-Watt project or with questions about how to save energy and save money, contact your high school’s Student Servant Leadership project members (name, phone) or Keith Blackmore or Lynn Feaver of the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society at nwillinoisaudubon.org.

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