

Introduction

Welcome to Week 15 of the 2018 Certified Green Lab Program! If you've missed any newsletters so far, you can find their contents on the iSEE website [here](#). This week, we will start the Purchasing portion of the Elective Actions. Elective Action #18 is:

18. Purchase and use EnergyStar certified equipment.

One point is possible per device type.

As a reminder, completion of five Elective Actions beyond the Required Actions will earn you Bronze level certification, completion of ten will earn Silver level certification, and fifteen Elective Actions will earn Gold level certification.

Instructions

Elective Action #18: Purchase and use EnergyStar certified equipment.

Select one or more types of devices (monitors, refrigerators, etcetera) and commit to replacing those devices with Energy Star versions when they reach the end of their lifespan. If you already have an Energy Star device, you can commit to continue purchasing Energy Star versions of that device.

Just like remembering to turn off the lights, using Energy Star certified devices will not only protect the environment by reducing electricity consumption, but also cut down on the cost of energy bills. [Since 1992](#), Americans have saved over \$450 billion and 3.5 trillion kWh by purchasing these energy efficient devices.

There are about sixty different types of appliances that Energy Star currently certifies. The full list of products can be [found here](#). Specific device types that may be most useful in your lab include:

- Refrigerators
- Dishwashers
- Telephones
- Air conditioners
- Computers
- Monitors

Another assessment tool for finding the most environmentally friendly electronics is the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool, or EPEAT. Developed by the

EPA and the Green Electronics Council, [EPEAT is](#) “the leading global ecolabel for the IT sector.” The program assesses multiple life cycle criteria of a device, including energy efficiency, product packaging, product longevity, carbon footprint, manufacturing chemicals, and many more. Devices assessed by EPEAT include servers, computers & displays, imaging equipment, televisions, and mobile phones. [See the registry for EPEAT products here.](#)

Note that should you choose to pursue this Elective Action, we aren't asking you to immediately dispose of and replace a perfectly functional, non-Energy Star device. We are just asking that you make a commitment that you will do so when these devices reach the time that they actually need replacing! While more energy might be saved directly from your lab the quicker you get Energy Star appliances, there are also some significant environmental impacts that come from the premature consumption of an unneeded device that can be avoided.

Though not required for Green Lab certification, please consider how to responsibly dispose of your old devices and appliances you will replace. If they *are* still functional (as well as clean and chemical-free!), and it is close to the end of the academic year (or if you're willing to store the device until then), a great option for electronic donation is the annual [Dump & Run](#) program at the University YMCA. Every August, the YMCA holds a sale of gently used items from the community and the university dormitories. Small household appliances and computers are accepted, though large appliances and devices (such as a television or larger) are not.

Another local option to donate appliances and electronics is the [Habitat for Humanity ReStore](#) in Champaign. The ReStore asks that donated appliances be clean and in working order, and that electronics should be specified if they are in working condition or intended for recycling. Pick-up of donations can be arranged.

The best in-town options for recycling devices that no longer work are [Mack's Twin City Recycling](#) and [Mervis Recycling](#), both in Urbana. Mack's will accept most electronics and appliances, aside from televisions and monitors. Mervis will also accept most electronics and appliances, though they will not take microwaves.

Be sure to call ahead to verify the accepted items and any fees at any of these facilities before bringing in your devices!

More information on where to recycle uncommon items in Champaign-Urbana can be [seen here](#).