Introduction

Welcome to Week 5 of the 2018 Certified Green Lab Program! Last week's newsletter covered Elective Action #3. If you missed it, or either of the prior newsletters, click here to find them on iSEE's website. For this week's newsletter, we will be discussing Elective Action #4.

4. Schedule a meeting with your IT professional and determine the most energy-efficient settings for your computer equipment if you have it in your lab.

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 #4: Schedule a meeting with your IT professional and determine the most energy-efficient settings for your computer equipment if you have it in your lab.

Turning off your computers at the end of the day isn't the only way to reduce their energy usage. There are many settings that can be adjusted, habits to be adopted, and even physical adjustments to be made that can go a long way to minimize a computer's energy consumption even while it's in use. With every kWh you manage to cut back, you can save an average of two pounds of carbon from being emitted into the atmosphere. By maximizing energy efficiency across your lab, you might be able to save thousands of pounds of carbon!

While there are many online resources with suggestions regarding settings for energy efficiency and the like, it is important to consider that they may not always be universal for all computers. Factors such as the brand, model, and age of the device can all play a role in these differences. Plus, the functions that you need your computers to be able to perform will vary across labs too. Therefore, an IT professional will be well-suited to helping determine the best settings for your specific lab computers.

Some suggestions of what to specifically discuss with your IT professional:
- Where can the energy saving settings be found on your computers, and where should they be set?

- How to control brightness levels, and what levels are an ideal balance for the eyes and for energy efficiency
- How to turn off screensavers -- which are not energy savers in the slightest!
- Can they set up Windows to automatically shut down every night?
- Are there any unused and unnecessary peripherals (graphics cards, DVD/CD drives) draining energy from the machines that could be removed?
- How can other peripherals like printers, scanners, and speakers be turned off when not in use?
- If you're considering replacing your computers soon, what Energy Star devices might they suggest for purchase?
- Would they recommend purchasing smart power strips or uninterruptible power supplies?
- Do they have any other suggestions or tips for cutting down on energy use?

[Click here](#) to visit the website of Technology Services at Illinois.