Green Up! FAQs about PCs and Power

Many people know that by shutting down your PC when it is not in use saves energy consumption. However, there are some myths and legends out there regarding PCs and power. Here are some frequently asked questions about PC power consumption.

1: If I constantly turn my PC on and off, doesn't that use more energy than if I leave it on all day?

No. There are benefits to turning off a PC when it is not in use. Although a small surge of power occurs when turning a PC on that amount is still much smaller than the total amount that is used when keeping a PC powered on for long periods of time.

2: Will turning my PC on and off wear out the hard drive?

No. Although true of computers manufactured over 10 years ago, computers made today are designed to work properly under more rigorous conditions. The average PC today can easily manage 40,000 on/off cycles before any wear or tear. It is likely the average user will not power cycle (turn on / off) a computer 40,000 times in 5-7 years of normal PC use.

3: Does my screen saver save power?

No. Power is always being consumed when your monitor and PC are operating. Screen savers at their lowest settings use on average about 42 watts of power. Some animated screen savers with 3-D graphics use as much as 114.5 watts!

4: PCs use so little power that turning it off won't make a difference.

Not true, every little bit helps! Take a look at energy consumption and costs. Lab tests conducted by engineers at the Dell corporation show that a PC uses on average about 42.7 watts, operating at that rate for 365 days, for a cost of 7 cents per kilowatt-hour, the power consumption costs would be $26.18 for the PC. Monitors running for the same length of time and also at the same kilowatt-hour cost about $45.99. With the monitor and PC combined that amounts to an average cost of $72.17 for the workstation.

Sources:

Enbysk, M. (2009). Do I have to turn off my PC?

http://www.microsoft.com/windows/explore/turnoff-pc.aspx