

## ***SIMPLE ENERGY TIP RESULTS IN BIG SAVINGS!***

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Thanks to a combined effort of many staff members, thousands of dollars were saved in the State College Area School District during the summer of 2008.

**Background-** The Physical Plant Department of the State College Area School District has been actively involved in energy conservation for many years. The department first began employing energy conservation efforts in the 1980's. More recently, the department staff has been monitoring utility data and benchmarking schools since 1999. Additionally, energy conservation has been an active goal of the Physical Plant Department since 2005, the District has identified energy conservation and environmental stewardship in its Strategic Plan, and the Board has adopted a resolution on Sustainable Buildings.

**Summer 2008-** The Physical Plant Department has been distributing energy savings tips to all staff members on a bi-monthly basis over the last few years. While reviewing these

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tips in February of 2008, a staff member questioned why many of the district refrigerators remained plugged-in during the summer. This simple observation led to a simple but important idea; what if we unplugged every idle piece of equipment during the summer? The Physical Plant Department got to work with Food Services and

Computer Services to identify what items could be "shut down," and "Operation Summer Shut Down" was underway! Teachers helped by cleaning out refrigerators before they left for the summer, Food Service helped by consolidating their inventory, Computer Services worked to identify equipment that was not likely to be used, and Physical Plant staff began pulling the plugs during the first week of summer break.

**The Payoff-** While energy conservation measures often include capital investment to improve the building envelope as well as the mechanical and electrical systems, some energy conservation measures are as easy as "turning things off." This little idea paid big dividends. During the summer of 2008, the district saved over 300,000 KWH (against the 5-year average). Not only did this save the district money, it also conserved resources and reduced the carbon footprint.

Go to [www.scasd.org/physicalplant](http://www.scasd.org/physicalplant) to read more about the Physical Plant Department's efforts around Sustainability and Conservation.