

# Make Smart Choices When It Comes to Household Electronics

Lately it's popular to buy the biggest, brightest television available, but doing so without considering energy usage can be costly.



New plasma TVs offer a great picture, but in general they consume four times the amount of energy used by old cathode ray tube televisions. A typical 55-inch plasma TV consumes 507 watts while turned on—about what a typical refrigerator uses.

Luckily, not all flat-screen televisions are quite so energy hungry. A similar-sized LCD flat-screen TV uses 307 watts, and if you're willing to buy a slightly bulkier unit, a new rear-projection model uses just 150 watts while switched on.

“The best way for people to reduce the energy household electronics use in their homes is to select the most energy-efficient models and use them wisely,” said Debra Cole, general manager of HILCO Electric Cooperative.

Even when electronic devices are switched off, many still pull electricity. For example, a microwave oven may have a clock running continuously. It's best to unplug some of these devices when you are not using them. Many new televisions and computers also come with power-saving modes that can help reduce electricity drain. It helps to turn down the brightness on your television set so it doesn't use as much energy. Watching TV with room lighting turned down can allow you to greatly reduce the brightness of your set, letting you run the unit at a lower cost.

“Any time we can offer our member-customers tips on reducing energy use in their homes, we are doing our job well,” said Cole.

HILCO Electric Cooperative, headquartered in Itasca, serves over 22,000 meters in parts of Dallas, Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and McLennan counties.