

## Energy/Water/Waste

The **League of Women Voters** has long been a leader in social change. We take the time to understand the issues and find a passionate place to stand that allows us to become examples of positive transformation. This committee puts forward a challenge to members, one that again puts us in the position of altering behaviors in hopes of building a better tomorrow. We contend, that as stewards of the home we call “Earth,” we are responsible for standing up to support Society in being the best it can be.

### Knowing how to Play

**The Challenge:** How much can you change in your life? We’re going to survey each of the St. Louis LWV units in March of 2011, and come back and do the same in 2012.

Our **SUPER SIX home targets** - **Leaky/Un-insulated Home, Heating/Air-Conditioning, Water Heating, Electrical Usage (EU)** - (*Refrigerator/Freezer, Lighting, General Appliances, Clothes Washer/Dryer*), **Water Usage and Recycling**

And Remember the **TREMENDOUS TWO travel users** – Our Automobile(s), Planes

My Unit is:  University City/Clayton  Webster Groves/Kirkwood  Chesterfield/Creve Coeur  
 Evening Unit  St Louis City Unit

### TRACKING AND UNDERSTANDING ENERGY USE

1. Do you look at your Energy Bills (electricity and gas) to track your energy use?  
YES  NO  SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH

2. What about tracking the gas you use to drive?  
YES  NO  SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH

*Many families are turning this into a game, trying to get better each year. Remember, it's more fun and easier to improve when you can see the results!*

### Leaky/Un-insulated Home/Heating/Air-Conditioning

3. Have you gotten an energy assessment for your home to help you identify areas that could be more energy efficient? (*You can get free ones!*)  
YES  NO

4. Have you added insulation to your walls and attic, installing weather stripping or caulking around doors and windows? (*This can lower the amount of energy you need to heat and cool your home.*)  
YES  NO

5. Do you have your heating and cooling equipment tuned annually by a licensed contractor?  
*(This can save energy and increase the comfort of your home while at the same time reduce greenhouse gas emissions.)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
6. Do you turn down the heat while you are sleeping at night or away during the day and keep temperatures moderate at all times? *(Setting your thermostat by just 2 degrees lower in winter and higher in summer could save about 2000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> each year.)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
7. Do you clean your air filters regularly? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
8. When you need to replace your old HVAC systems, will you choose a high efficiency model and make sure it is properly sized and installed?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

## **Water Heating**

9. Have you set your water heater to 120 to save energy?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
10. If your water heater is older than 5 years, do you have it wrapped with an insulating blanket?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
11. Have you replaced your showerheads with low-flow to save hot water and water? *(A low flow showerhead can save about 350 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> per year)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
12. Do take shorter showers to conserve water?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

## **EU – Refrigerator/Freezer**

13. Is your refrigerator/freezer Energy Star Rated? *(Older refrigerators and freezers use as much as three times the amount of energy as new ones and consume 1000 and 2000 kilowatt-hours per year. They consume 9-15% of a household's total energy consumption because they run day and night. The 2001 standard reduced this consumption to 476 KWh/yr.)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
14. Do you have a second unit running in your home? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
15. Do you keep your unit(s) full? *(This will help cut consumption of electricity.)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

16. Do you keep the coils free of dust and debris, which will help it operate more efficiently?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

17. Do you run your unit(s) in “energy-saver” mode? *(If you have a unit that has an “energy-saver” switch turn it on. Refrigerators are equipped with mullions in the door, which heat the door to prevent condensation on the outside of the unit. Counter-intuitive, right? You betcha! Turn the mullions off by turning the power saver switch ON.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

## EU – Lighting

18. Have replaced light bulbs with CFL or LED? *(Replacing just one 60-watt incandescent light bulb with a CFL will save you \$30 over the life of the bulb. If every US family replaced one regular light bulb with a CFL it would eliminate 90 billion pounds of greenhouse gases, the same as taking 7.5 million cars off the road. Burning one 100-watt lamp for 1 hour uses 1 pound of coal. 75% of the electrical energy is wasted during production and delivery to our homes. One can see the exponential affect of electrical usage. We can take a bite out of this waste with CFL’s which save 75% energy usage over incandescent bulbs and LED lighting which saves 75% over CFL’s.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOME, AS THEY NEED REPLACING \_\_\_

19. Do you turn off lights when you leave a room?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

20. Do you use motion sensors to turn off lights that are commonly forgotten?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

## EU - General Appliances

21. Do you turn off appliances including televisions, stereos and computer when you are not using them?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

22. Do you have items such as computers, printers, TV, DVD etc connected to power strip that allows you to turn the power off when not in use, or smart strips that power down automatically? *(This is a great way to further reduce electricity use.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

23. Do you unplug charging devices (phones, laptops...) when they are not in use?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

24. Do you use the energy saving settings on your dishwasher and let the dishes air dry?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

25. Do you only run your dishwasher when it is full to save energy and water?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

26. When you replace older appliances, will you consider those with Energy Star ratings?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

## EU - Clothes Washing/Drying

27. Do you wash your clothes in cold water? *(This change alone can save 500 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> annually)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

28. Do you air dry clothes? *(Over its lifetime, a single t-shirt can contribute 9 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere. An estimated 60 percent of the energy associated with an article of clothing is used washing and drying it.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

## Water Usage

29. Do you turn off the water while you are brushing your teeth?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

30. Do you use mulch around plants?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

31. Do you collect rain water to water your garden?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

32. Do you choose plants in your yard/gardens that need less water?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

## Waste

33. Do you recycle? *(Many of the products you have lying around your home, from CFL lamps to batteries and electronics, can be recycled. Visit [www.earth911.com](http://www.earth911.com) to find the nearest recycling location for the products you are looking to discard.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

34. Do you use re-usable shopping bags?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

35. When you shop, do you look for items with minimal &/or recyclable packaging?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

36. Do you purchase products made from recycled materials?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

37. Do you pay your bills on line? *(If every house in America paid bills electronically, 2.1 million tons of GHG emissions would be avoided each year.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

## GENERAL

38. Have you planted a tree? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

39. Have you installed solar panels? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

40. Do you encourage others to conserve? *(Share information about recycling and energy conservation with your friends, neighbors and co-workers and take opportunities to encourage public officials to establish programs and policies that are good for the environment.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

41. Do you compost your yard waste?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

42. Do you maintain your lawn mower engine or use a push mower?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

43. Do you purchase locally produced food and items? *(Support local farmers and farm markets. It helps reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from transporting food from the far corners of the planet. Every less gallon of fuel needed to transport your food from factory farm to table saves between 17 and 19 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub>.)*

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

44. Are you a vegetarian or do have a "meatless day" of meals one more day per week?

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

45. Do you select "Green" cleaning products or make your own such as vinegar and newsprint to clean windows, glass and mirrors? *(See LWV Sustainability Web Page for links to resources and Green Cleaning recipes! <http://www.lwvstl.org/Sustainability.html>)* ⓘ

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

46. Do you recycle household items and materials when doing renovation work? ⓘ

YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_ ⓘ

47. When purchasing wood for decks, fences and other garden structures do you use only Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) wood? *(This certification helps to guarantee that the wood was produced in a responsible, sustainable way.)*<sup>2</sup>  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

## **Driving/Flying**

Practice driving less and driving smart: every gallon of gas you save not only helps your budget it also keeps 20 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> out of the atmosphere.

48. Do you car pool to LWV meetings?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
49. Do you car pool, ride share, walk, bicycle or take public transportation to reduce driving?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
50. Do you maintain the air pressure in your car tires?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
51. Do you maintain your car engine to optimize fuel efficiency?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
52. Do you drive a fuel-efficient vehicle (>30mpg)? *(Every mile less you drive in a compact car can avoid approximately 1.1 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions-bigger the car, more emissions.)*  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
53. Do you drive a hybrid? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_
54. Do you park in the shade?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
55. Do you avoid travel during congested, peak rush-hour traffic?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
56. Do you try to smooth your driving by accelerating and decelerating gradually, anticipating stops and starts for traffic lights, changing traffic speeds and so on?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_
57. When it is time to buy a new car, will you consider choosing one that offers good gas mileage?  
YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ SOMETIMES, BUT NOT ENOUGH \_\_\_

***Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rethink!***