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The Amy  
TEAM

A special thank you to all our clients from 2014, we wish you the best in your new homes.

From all of us at The Amy Flowers Team



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## Create an energy-efficient home for the holidays

'Tis the season to be festive, and that usually means stringing up hundreds of twinkling lights to create a welcoming glow on dark winter nights. Some people view the holiday season as their chance to go all out with regard to decorating their homes with an abundance of lights, inflatable lawn ornaments and maybe even some mechanical figures.

While these decorations certainly may be symbols of the season, it's easy to forget just how much energy and resources they consume. A typical strand of lights uses around 300 watts of electricity. Multiply those figures by the dozens of strings of lights people use and it's easy to see how quickly energy usage can add up.

In addition to lights, lit candles, animated dolls, wreaths, trees, and scores of imported ornaments contribute to the energy consumption per household. Even so, environmentally conscious individuals need not skip the holiday décor and entertaining. Fortunately, there are various ways to be energy efficient with holiday décor this season.

### **Switch to LED lights.**

LED lights consume a fraction of the energy traditional incandescent bulbs do. While a standard string of 50 lights consumes 300 watts, LED sets only consume four watts. This not only saves energy, but also considerable amounts of money over the course of the holiday season.

### **Use fiber-optic decorations.**

Fiber optic items are lit by one light. The illumination carries through the fiber optic cables to the entire decoration.

### **Use a power strip and timer.**

Plug decorations into a power strip (be sure to follow the recommended power load for safety) and hook everything up to a timer so lights are not on when no one can see them.

### **Check light strands.**

Always inspect lights for frayed wires and any damage. Frayed lights are less efficient and pose a considerable safety risk.

### **Enhance decorations.**

Use mirrors and reflective ornaments to give the appearance of more lights without actually adding more.

### **Turn off ambient lighting.**

Christmas tree lights or the lights framing a picture window should be sufficient to light up a room. Keep lamps and overhead lighting off while the tree is lit to save money and energy.

### **Lower the thermostat.**

When entertaining, turn the thermostat down a few degrees. Having extra people in your home will raise the temperature. Similarly, heat generated by the oven and other cooking appliances can warm up a home. Don't waste energy by keeping the heat turned on high.

### **Invest in rechargeable batteries.**

According to Energy Quest, 40 percent of all batteries are purchased during the holiday season. To power those many gifts and devices, use rechargeable batteries which can be used again and again.

### **Change your cooking practices.**

Smaller appliances use less energy. Put



those toaster ovens, slow cookers and electric fryers to good use. Only use the oven if you are cooking a large meal.

### **Wait until the dishwasher is full.**

Pack in the dishes from holiday meals, and only run the dishwasher when it is full.

### **Reuse items whenever possible.**

Many items around the house can be put to good use as decorations, holiday servers or gifts. Take inventory of what you have before you go out and purchase new decorations.

[www.metrocreativeconnection.com](http://www.metrocreativeconnection.com)

**Decorative lights can consume a considerable amount of energy. Scale back or invest in LEDs, which are more energy-efficient lights.**