






translate into another \$125 savings a year. This “phantom” electricity wastes \$4 billion a year in the U.S. alone.

 **Turn off all lights** when you leave a room, shut down computers and printers when not in use, and unplug all cell phone, laptop, camera, mp3 and Ipod cradles and toothbrush adapters when not in use. You'll save \$125 a year.

 **When buying a new appliance, be sure that it bears an Energy Star label** (energystar.gov). Just by using Energy Star appliances in 2006, North Americans saved \$15 billion on their utility bills and reduced CO2 emissions equivalent to taking 27 million cars off the road.

 **Consider installing solar heaters or solar panels, and take advantage of a 30-percent renewable federal tax credit.** If you live within the city's boundaries, there's also Palm Desert's low interest, long-term loans program (cityof-palmdesert.org/Index.aspx?page=116).

 **Turn off the tap when you brush your teeth** and only use the dishwasher when it's completely full to save another \$72 per year.

 **Install ultra low-flow toilets, aerating showerheads and faucets, and conserve 9,000 gallons of water a year.** That will take an average of \$175 off your yearly water bill.

 **Convert your landscaping to native desert plants** and you'll not only save thousands of gallons of water but you'll also promote a welcoming habitat for birds, butterflies, moths and bees.

Go green, have fun and watch your piggy bank expand while you admire all the wonders of nature that you're helping to preserve in the Coachella Valley.

Dr. Reese Halter is a public speaker, conservation biologist and his upcoming book is entitled “The Incomparable Honey Bee,” from Rocky Mountain Books. He can be contacted through DrReese.com.



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