

Go Green to Stay out of the Red this Holiday Season

Small steps can make a big difference when saving money

Toronto, ON – The festive season is on its way, but Canadians may not be fiscally prepared. A recent survey conducted by Panasonic Canada/Decima Research reveals that, for 50 per cent of Canadians, saving money on a day-to-day basis is difficult. At a time when many Canadians are plotting and planning which gifts to purchase for friends and family, being low on funds can create tension. So what can Canadians do to adjust for this year's big spend? It could be as easy as introducing some green alternatives into your home to save energy and money at the same time.

"There are many simple, environmentally sound steps Canadians can take to save money on a daily basis," says Brad Emond, Certified Energy Advisor with the Energy – a company that regularly provides home energy efficiency solutions to everyday Canadians. "Programming your thermostat, using low-energy/high efficiency light bulbs and rechargeable batteries are quick and easy ways to conserve energy and cash without making huge sacrifices."

It *is* easy being green

While the most popular savings method Canadians have tried recently is to cook at home instead of eating out at restaurants (81%), 77 per cent have also attempted using less energy at home as a means to save – but many of us still don't know where to begin. According to Brad, the following tips provide solid starting points from which to start saving energy – and money:

- **Get with the program:**
 - Program your thermostat for different temperatures throughout the day. Set the dial to 16-18C (61-64F) for when you're home, and throw on a sweater if need be. Program your thermostat for lower temperatures for times of day when you aren't at home. If you're not there to enjoy the heat, why pay for it?
- **There's something in the water:**
 - Your hot water heater uses a lot of energy getting and staying hot. To reduce heat loss, wrap your tank in a thermal blanket. Also consider setting your hot water heater to its pilot setting when you go out of town. Why waste energy keeping water hot that no one is there to use? Another tip – to save energy (and to keep your colours bright!) wash your clothes in cold water.

(more)

- **Recharge your wallet:**
 - Rechargeable batteries, such as Panasonic's R2 batteries, can be charged up to 1,000 times, saving thousands of used batteries from becoming waste. This savings is also passed on to your wallet – it would cost approximately \$5,000.00 in disposable alkalines to deliver the same amount of power available from a one-time purchase of a rechargeable battery kit.
- **Lighten up:**
 - If you replace a single 100watt high-use light bulb, such as the light bulb in your hallway, with an energy efficient light bulb, you can save over \$35 a year. The more bulbs you change, the more money you shave off your energy bill!*
- **Gone with the wind:**
 - Drafts in windows and doors can cause houses of all sizes to lose heat (and energy). But how do you check to see if your home is properly draft proofed? Grab a feather on a windy day and walk around your home, holding it to all your doors and windows. If the feather moves, you've found a draft!

These saving solutions will not only hold your fiscal hand as you approach the holidays, but will help you keep a firm grip on your pocketbook through the new year too.

Recharge, reuse – right now

Most Canadians take the environment into consideration when making purchase decisions (a whopping 86%, in fact)* – and when are more purchases made than during the festive season? In today's tech savvy culture, high drain, battery-operated gifts such as such as MP3 players, digital cameras, or electronic toys and gadgets are popular choices on holiday wish lists. Stocking up on rechargeable batteries before the season is a small way to turn the holidays green.

Unlike many rechargeable brands, R2 Technology batteries can be used right out of the package, just like ordinary disposable batteries. They feature a super low self-discharge rate and retain up to 80 per cent of their charge even after six months in storage. Instead of charging your batteries before use, R2 Technology batteries should be charged after use and prior to storage – so they will stay charged and ready when you need them.

R2 Technology NiMH batteries are available in AA and AAA sizes, with a manufacturer's suggested price of \$24.99 for a pack of four. Full kits with charger can be used anywhere thanks to its worldwide voltage and are available starting at a manufacturer's suggested price of \$49.99 up to \$79.99.

Panasonic batteries are marketed in Canada by Panasonic Canada Inc. (PCI). PCI is a principal Canadian subsidiary of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd., (MEI) of Japan, one of the world's largest producers of electronic and electric products for consumer, business, and industrial use. All prices are in Canadian dollars. Consumers seeking more information on the company's products can call Panasonic's Customer Care Centre at 1-800-561-5505 or access Panasonic's home page at www.panasonic.ca.

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* Calculation based on replacement of 100watt light bulb with a 13watt energy efficient light bulb, assuming bulb is in use for an average of 10 hours daily at a cost of \$0.12 per kilowatt of energy consumed.