



## Task of the Month Household Energy Saving Program for Congregations

### INTRODUCTION

Although most of us would happily use less energy, knowing where to start can be challenging. What actions make a real difference? How do we take them? And how can we find the time in our busy lives to figure this out and do it?

The Task of the Month Program focuses on one action at a time and encourages our whole community to accomplish that one task. It provides all the information we need to take each step. In this way, it helps us fulfill the sacred obligation to tend – and not waste - God's gift of creation.

**Overview:** The program is simple.

- **One task each month.** With this program, the whole congregation focuses on completing one specific task. *Promote and encourage participation throughout the month.*
- **Information included.** For each task, there is an information sheet explains how to do that task. *Provide the support congregants need to accomplish each task.*
- **Promotion made simple.** Each monthly task has its own poster. Many monthly tasks have tips to help you engage congregants. Be creative, make it fun.

**Although this program is simple, implementing it well requires up-front planning. Please review the suggestions on the following pages and familiarize yourself with the materials.**

**Then find a few people who will help you get things started in your congregation. Include your clergy person. Think together about how best to engage your community. You'll reap the results.**

## GETTING STARTED

Taking time to plan before launching the program will increase participation. Here are some suggestions to start and sustain your community's involvement.

**Advance Planning.** If possible, give yourself two to three months to plan before you launch your congregation's program.

***Assemble a team.*** Include your clergy person and as diverse and representative group of lay leaders as possible.

### ***Introduce the program in services and holiday celebrations:***

- Announce it from the pulpit during services
- Ask your clergy person to give a sermon on it
- Make it a theme of religious education and mission work
- Ask members to sign the household energy conservation pledge
- Engage youth through religious education and the youth group

### ***Make the program visible***

- Make information sheets available
- Place articles and member stories on the monthly task in all your newsletters
- Display the poster for each month's task
- Place brochures where pamphlets are displayed
- Feature the program on the congregation's website

### ***Provide incentives for participation***

- As people sign the household energy conservation pledge, put their names in a hat for a drawing when the program launches – e.g., a chance to win some LED bulbs
- Consider continuing drawings throughout year: completing this month's task puts your name in the hat for winning something that helps with next month's task.

### **When your program begins, establish a weekly presence:**

- Set up a monthly task info table and display during the weekly coffee hour.
- Have someone on hand to answer questions, encourage others, and take suggestions.

### **Help people get the tasks done:**

- Negotiate a bulk discount for supplies
- Have sign-up sheets for requesting and offering help available alongside info sheets
- Post information sheets on the congregation's website; send them to members by email
- Organize a sharing session, demonstration or workshop on each month's task
- Solicit donations for a fund to provide materials for members who can't afford them

### **Maintain momentum throughout the year:**

- Announce each new task in services, newsletters, on your website, etc.
- Set up a display if applicable
- Report cumulative results

## **Celebrate achievements!**

**TASK OF THE MONTH PROGRAM  
Checklist for Organizers**



**Get the word out!** Announce and remind in as many ways as possible. Some ideas:

- Newsletter
- Website
- Announcements from the pulpit
- Sermon
- Bulletin board with info sheets for the taking
- Announce and demonstrate tasks in religious education classes; send fliers home
- Posters

**One-on-one outreach.** People respond to personal invitations. Ask your team to personally ask their friends to participate – widening the circle through personal connections.

**Information station.** Have materials and information on hand when people gather:

- Info sheets explaining the monthly task
- Household energy conservation pledges and a place to return them
- Sign-up sheet for people requesting and offering assistance with the monthly tasks
- Comment box or other way of receiving feedback
- Brochures describing the Task of the Month Program
- Sample items, photos, models (if applicable)

**Modeling.** Ask your clergy person and trustees to model leadership by signing a household energy pledge themselves. Let the congregation know that their leaders have signed on. Keep them informed of the total number of pledges.

**Other Possibilities:**

**Involve youth.** Might your young people be trained to assist with simple tasks – changing retirees' light bulbs, wrapping water heaters or sealing cracks with caulk? Be sure that they are adequately trained and supervised.

**Provide incentives.** If it suits your congregation, everyone who completes the month's task could earn a ticket in a raffle for an item related to the task (i.e. a shower timer, kill-a-watt, rain barrel, etc.). Perhaps a larger item could be raffled at the end of the year; completing more tasks would mean more chances to win. Tickets could also be earned by assisting others in completing the tasks.

**Purchase in bulk.** Consider purchasing items in bulk, passing the discount onto members, or using the savings to help people who need fund to undertake some actions.

**Financially assist those who need it.** You might solicit donations for a fund for people who wish to take energy-saving actions but are constrained financially.