Christmas colors can comply with conservation of energy

Story and photo by Joe Schmitt, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) has specific guidelines for lighting displays. It also has set measurements for when heating gets switched on to buildings under its command.

These are mandatory actions enforced by the command but, there are plenty of optional choices you can make to increase energy efficiency at your home and office.

"Most people are probably familiar with the old school incandescent bulb Christmas lights. Those get wicked-crazy hot and probably most of the energy is going into creating that heat," said Tom Bawden CFAY base energy manager. "The Navy Exchange does have some better options."

The lights Bawden is referring to are called light emitting diode or LED lights. They use a different method of creating light that uses less electricity and do not generate as much heat as the incandescent lights.

Bawden plugged the lights into a watt meter that measures the amount of electricity being used by a device, he put the incandescent and LED lights next to each other and left them plugged in for a few minutes.

"The box says the LED lights are 85 percent more efficient but as they keep going here, it looks like that number is going to keep creeping up," said Bawden.

After a few minutes, the numbers leveled out with the incandescent using more than a hundred times the amount of electricity as the LED lights.

"It seems like the LED lights are even a little brighter, and they cost less per string of light," said Bawden. "It still a good idea to turn them off when you are not using them. Lights outside have to get turned off by 10 p.m. and the inside displays should also get turned off when you go out or go to sleep. They also sell timers to turn them off at a certain time."

Lights are not the only appliance that can use more electricity during the holidays. "Vampire loads" are devices or appliances that are not turned on but are still drawing power. Some TV's, radios, computers or game systems can still use a lot of electricity over time even though they are off, explained Bawden.

"The biggest use of electricity in a household is still the heating systems. Heaters or space heaters use a lot," said Bawden. "But, you can find lot of places to save power. If you let food cool down before you put it in the refrigerator then it doesn't have to work as hard. Or letting food thaw before cooking, it will take less energy to cook it. Once you start looking, you can find lots of ways to reduce how much [electricity] you are using."

Tom Bawden, base energy manager, plugs in and arranges a set of incandescent and LED christmas lights before measuring how much electricity the different strings use. Lights can be a big drain on electricity over the holidays but, a few simple choices can help save some electricity.

CFAY displays holiday spirit with Festival of Trees 2011

Story and photo by MC2 (SW/AW) John Smolinski, CFAY Public Affairs

Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY) opened its doors to the local Japanese community for the holiday season with the Festival of Trees 2011 in the C-2 Auditorium Dec. 3-4.

The Festival of Trees gave the opportunity for all of the tenant and sea commands at CFAY to decorate a Christmas tree and put it on display for the community.

"I think the festival of trees is a great way to begin the holiday season," said Capt. Charles F. Williams, chief of staff, U.S. 7th Fleet. "Because even though it is not snowing outside, in fact, today it's a beautiful day, you still have all the Christmas trees and holiday cookies to make you realize that it's the holiday season."

The event showcased talents from The Sullivans Elementary School, Yokosuka Middle School, CFAY Community Center and Japanese groups to make the event a fun holiday experience for all.

Entertainment included performances by choirs from The Sullivans Elementary, Yokosuka Middle and Nile C. Kinnick High Schools and the Seika Kindergarten Band.

Additionally, there were dance performances from the CFAY Community Center including toddler ballet, Jenny's ballet class, Hiroko's ballet class and tap/jazz and hip hop class. Other performances from the local Japanese community included the Yassa Komachi Dancing from Chiba.

Sunday's events included a Japanese *taiko* (drum) performance by B-Style Group, an umbrella dance by Enbu Group, a children's song sung by Yokosuka Dowa no Kai, belly dancing by Yoko Buyoudan, country line dancing by Diamond Shoes Group, Soran dance by the Sukakko Soran Group and Soran Suifuyo Group, Utahime performed by Narita Aiko, Suzu bell dance by Endu Group and koto music.

The event also had Santa, ready to hear all of the children Christmas wishes.

"We have a festival of trees back at home in Washington state," said Donna Conner, an event observer. "We would go and see Santa and the gingerbread houses at the festival every year, so when we found out that there was a festival here we thought, 'Cool, just like back home.'"

"I really liked to see how each tree was decorated differently in a colorful style." said Conner's son, Sean.

The Soran Suifuyo Group performs the soran bushi, a famous Japanese sea chantey and dance at CFAY's Festival of Trees 2011 Dec. 3-4.