

# The Neighborhood Energy Party

## Host Guide

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Thanks – We appreciate your hospitality and willingness to get behind our Lake Street Energy Challenge. It's exactly this kind of support that will make a difference.

Your neighborhood energy party is part of bigger effort to cut emissions by reducing and conserving energy with greater efficiency—and increasing the use of renewables in households.

In short, our over-arching goals are to create an energy future that is:

- Affordable
- Stable
- Healthy
- Environmentally sustainable
- A job creator

**Thanks again for stepping up!**

## You Have Support

Remember, should you have any questions while planning your home energy party, feel free to contact your Lake Street Energy Challenge coordinator, Elizabeth at [henle012@umn.edu](mailto:henle012@umn.edu), or call our Partners in Energy hotline at **1-800-369-4362**.

To help you get started, we've created this guide for hosts. Use it as a basic starting point to help put your Neighborhood Energy Party in motion. For more information about Partners in Energy, visit [xcelenergy.com/PartnersInEnergy.com](http://xcelenergy.com/PartnersInEnergy.com).

| What to do  | When to do it  | How to do it  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Check out your energy party kit supplies.</b>                            | It's never too soon to figure out the contents and quantity of what is in your party bag.    | Identify the different handouts and make sure you have enough for the number of guests you are anticipating. Put your VISA® card in a safe place until it is time to buy party supplies.  |
| <b>Make some noise!</b><br>Get your neighbors interested in your gathering. | One to three weeks in advance, or as soon as you can.  | Create a flyer or invitation and post at coffee shops, or even go door-to-door. Use email and phone calls as reminders. Ask us about simple ways to create a flyer!   |
| <b>Supply the party.</b><br>The promise of snacks will help attendance!     | A few days before  | Use the VISA card for purchasing tempting goodies like finger food or savory snacks. You might want to turn your party into a potluck. Sorry, no liquor, wine or beer can purchased with the VISA card.   |
| <b>Create an intriguing agenda.</b><br>See example.                         | A week in advance  | Use your imagination to set the tone. Create an ice-breaker or choose one from our list below. Work through the different topics of the event and time required for each. If you need discussion ideas, our 101 Home Energy Saving Ideas is great place to start. |
| <b>Sign-up sheet</b>  | Day of event.  | Collect names, addresses and emails of those who attend. This sheet will need to be turned in after the meeting.  |
| <b>Guest name tags</b>  | Have them ready for your event if your guests don't already know each other.                 | Have each guest include their address to add a "sense of neighborhood", and start conversations.  |
| <b>Distribute materials</b>   | Determine what fits your party style best!   | You may want guests to sign in, wear name tags, or have information pieces on a table for arriving guests or pass each one out as you introduce topics. You may want to delay until the end to pass out the complimentary LEDs.                                   |
| <b>Entertainment</b>  | Plan ahead as needed.  | Set the stage with music, poetry, games, and videos to keep guests engaged! Also, a guest speaker, movie screening or even training on energy issues may work well. You could use your VISA card to purchase a door prize!  |
| <b>Introduce the Go-Guide</b>   | Add this to your agenda. You should receive copies for each guest as part of your party kit. | Talk through the five or six elements that make up the Go-Guide.  |
| <b>The call to action</b>   | Take the Pledge! Challenge your guests to commit.  | Complete the pledge form and provide each guest with a copy of the Pledge Follow-Up form. Reach out and remind attendees of their commitment to make a difference for the Lake Street Energy Challenge.   |
| <b>Keep the support going</b>   | Post-party follow up via email or phone call.  | Reach out and see how everyone is doing. Remind attendees that their commitment MAKES A DIFFERENCE. This could be set up on a Facebook page or maybe your guests will want to Instagram or tweet it out.  |

## Ice Breaker Activity Ideas

1. Ask guests to check their energy bills and bring their numbers—kWh use per household member for the last month—to the party. List these on a piece of paper on the wall or if have your guests line up in order of their usage. Lowest users might have tips to share but be sure there's no shame in being on the high end—just greater potential to reduce!
2. Ask guests to bring a light bulb they plan to replace with their new LED. Go around the group and find out which light they selected and why.
3. Name your favorite appliance and describe why. Least favorite works too! Guests can think about how they use energy—such as cooking family meals, those warm relaxing showers brought to you by the hot water heater, or the time saved with their dishwasher.
4. State one thing you do to save energy now. Make a list of the different ideas. This may be something to post on Facebook or email out to guests after your party.
5. Share with the group what you would do with the money you saved if you could cut your energy bill by 10%. Do the math and have fun.

## Sample Agenda Items

Design a program that feels comfortable and works for you!

- **Meet and greet with introductions** (20 minutes)  
An ice-breaker activity can really set an inviting mood and engage your guests in the topic of energy.
- **Goals of the Challenge** (5 minutes)  
Make sure people understand why they are there. Explain the Lake Street Energy Challenge goals and how each person can make a difference. Encourage people to go read the Frequently Asked Questions or visit [mcwsustainability.org](http://mcwsustainability.org) to learn more. If you've got a computer available you can have the page up and ready to share.
- **Brainstorming/idea sharing** (20 minutes)  
No bad ideas—if possible use an easel to collect thoughts. Start with a theme like free things to do to save energy, how to engage the rest of the neighborhood, should we set a conservation goal? Reward participants for ideas—it doesn't have to be much, a piece of candy or a drawing prize.
- **Break – stretch, snack, chat** (15 minutes)  
Everyone needs a break.

- **Going forward – take on the Go-Guide** (20 minutes)  
Run from top to bottom, spend about five minutes on each topic, encourage dialog on solutions. If you know that one of your guests has participated in the Home Energy Squad®, Refrigeration Recycling or changed the lights out in their home to be more efficient have them talk about the experience.
- **Take the Pledge** (3 minutes)  
It's been proven, writing your goals down will make it 77% more likely that you'll achieve them. Make sure you've got pens available.
- **Wrap-up, provide any materials and free LEDs** (3 minutes)  
Close up with a positive and encouraging tone. Ask if anyone wants to meet up in six months to recap the progress.

## Questions?

Feel free to contact your energy coordinator, Elizabeth at [henle012@umn.edu](mailto:henle012@umn.edu) or call our Partners in Energy hotline at **1-800-369-4362**.



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**Learn More!**  
**[mcwsustainability.org](http://mcwsustainability.org)**

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