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Neighbors Compete In 'Energy Smackdown'

Competition Helps Families Go, Save Green

Wednesday, October 22, 2008 – updated: 11:19 am EDT
 October 22, 2008

BOSTON -- A friendly competition called The Energy Smackdown is under way in towns across the Bay State, pitting neighbor against neighbor and using the spirit of one-upmanship to help families go green while saving green,

Boston news station WCVB reported.

Breakfast isn't the only item on the agenda for the Hunt family. The Medford family of four is hunting for savings. Every day Alicia and Jonathan Hunt, along with their 3-year-old twins, search for ways they can save energy.

Towns Participate In 'Energy Smackdown'

They are one of a handful of families taking part in a program called the Energy Smackdown. It's a good-natured competition pitting families against each other in the hopes of reducing each family member's carbon footprint.

"Just trying to do better for the environment -- save some money here and there, reduce our energy use, reduce the money we are paying out every month to the electric utility gas company," Jonathan Hunt said.

With the help of a local nonprofit, the Hunts have learned simple steps to save big. They've swapped out every light bulb for CFL bulbs. They use Energy Star appliances. They've installed programmable thermostats. They time and record each shower, with none taking longer than five minutes. They unplug electronics that aren't being used.

"While it's a lifestyle, it's not a change in our quality of life. We try to maintain the same lifestyle we had before. We actually have a little extra money," Alicia Hunt said.

Since starting the project 18 months ago, the Hunts have reduced their energy use by 30 percent. They said that they are saving hundreds of dollars by making small changes.

The savings continue outside, as well. The Hunts compost all their food waste. They also collect rainwater that they use to water their garden.

For more information, visit the [Energy Smackdown Web site](#).

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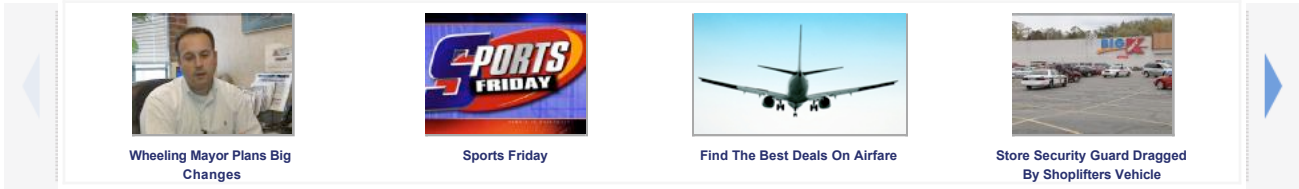


Table of Contents

News

- [Local & National News](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Going Green](#)
- [Most Popular](#)
- [Discussions](#)
- [TOV Tube News](#)
- [DTV Countdown](#)
- [Jobs](#)

Weather

- [Latest Forecast](#)
- [Severe Weather Alerts](#)
- [Snowbird Report](#)
- [WTOV9 Weather Plus](#)
- [Tower Cam 9](#)
- [Weather Maps](#)
- [TOV Tube Weather](#)

Sports

- [Local Sports Coverage](#)
- [High School Sports](#)
- [Steelers](#)
- [Browns](#)
- [WVU](#)
- [OSU](#)
- [Penguins](#)
- [TOV Tube Sports](#)

Classifieds

- [Free Classifieds](#)
- [WTOV9 Autos](#)
- [Just Pay Half](#)
- [Find It Ohio Valley](#)
- [Real Estate](#)

High School

- [High School Super Site](#)
- [Education](#)
- [TOV Tube High School](#)

Health/Life

- [Health Connections](#)
- [Get Fit](#)
- [Health News](#)
- [Consumer Education](#)
- [Going Green](#)
- [Ohio Valley Living](#)
- [Moms For Moms](#)
- [Dining Guide](#)
- [Baby Boomers](#)
- [Ohio Valley Homes](#)
- [First Birthdays](#)
- [Mr. Food](#)
- [Coats For Kids](#)
- [Wall of Heroes](#)

Entertainment

- [Dining Guide](#)
- [What Would Deb Do?](#)
- [Entertainment News](#)
- [TOV Tube Jamboree](#)
- [Jamboree In The Hills](#)
- [Lottery Results](#)
- [Community Slideshows](#)
- [Travel](#)

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