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## Defeating the Deficit

### Employees respond to CEO's call to action

Deficit-defeating TIP OF THE DAY from ITS Chief Information Officer Elizabeth Bennett:

Taking some time off for the holidays? Pick up a 'green' habit and help 'defeat the deficit' by turning off your computer when you leave the office.



- Send your idea to [DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net).

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Dec. 18, 2008) One week into CEO Roger Snoble's call to action to 'Defeat the Deficit,' suggestions are pouring in to the monitoring e-mail box of the Office of Management and Budget.

"The ideas are really great!" said Shawn Lowe, financial services manager who's coordinating the project. "They are really very well thought out; some are already complete with cost analysis," she said. "And many can be implemented at no or very low cost."

The ideas traverse a healthy range of savings from million-dollar ideas to simple savings per workstation that can add up depending on how many employees participate.



At the busy ITS Help Desk, analysts never forget to turn their monitor and CPUs off overnight and on the weekends and while away for longer periods, such as vacations.

One suggestion that costs nothing to implement but can amount to an overall savings in the range of \$150,000 to \$250,000 a year, is this:

Turn your computer, monitor, and peripherals off every night.

"That's right," said Elizabeth Bennett, ITS chief information officer. "Turning off PCs during periods of inactivity can save companies a substantial sum. In fact, Energy Star, a company that rates computer energy consumption, estimates organizations can save up to \$75 per workstation (\$30 for the monitor and \$45 for the CPU) per year."

Multiply that by 2,000 work stations turned off overnight and you come up with a savings equal to a low-ball estimate of \$150,000 a year. Make it 3,000 work stations, and the savings rises to \$250,000 a year.

Leaving your computer on does more than generate energy bills. It may also cost you loss of information, such as the system updates ITS routinely installs during the off hours.

Leaving your electronics running may not be causing a technology problem, said Bennett, "but it is a consumption one. In this age of 'green,' managers may want to remind staff to turn off equipment and lights when not in use to save energy and money."

In addition, Bennett noted, if you are in the habit of always leaving your computer on at home, you need to know that it's connected to the Internet without adequate security protection and therefore is an open invitation for hackers to use your computer as a 'bot.' (A 'bot' is a type of malware that allows an attacker to gain complete control over the affected computer. There are literally tens of thousands of computers on the Internet which are infected with some type of 'bot' whose owners do not even realize it.)

The holiday season is a good time to start a new habit, said Bennett, especially if you are taking some time off. Going on vacation? Please turn off your computer and monitor and, don't forget your printer!

"Keep those cards and letters coming," said Lowe. In advance of the January Board Meeting, when the Board must take a hard look at the quandary posed by high expectations for traffic improvement against the reality of budgetary shortfalls, CEO Snoble is convinced employees can come up with ideas to cut costs and increase efficiencies enough to help reduce the structural deficit.

Contribute your ideas by Jan. 5 to [DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net](mailto:DefeatTheDeficit@metro.net). Your ideas will be evaluated by the Office of Management and Budget in time to go to review by Board Committees, which will convene beginning Jan. 12. If your idea is developed and implemented, you will be acknowledged and commended in the CEO's personal recognition program.