



The

Broadcasters' Desktop Resource

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Tools You Can Use **Kill A Watt Graphic Timer**

[March 2010] Trying to determine what appliances and gear are contributing to your electrical bill can be a time consuming hassle. On the other hand, the Kill A Watt series of products give you a quick, clear look at energy usage.

Many of you are familiar with the original Kill A Watt, the little box you plug into the wall and then can use it to read the voltage, current, and power usage of many different pieces of appliance or gear (up to about 15 Amps or 1875 VA). It is a great way to analyze and control power usage at work and home.

Last year, Kill A Watt added a power strip (P4320) to their line, making it easy to evaluate and control several items at the same time. And now there is an enhanced version of the original: the Kill A Watt Graphic Timer, Model P4480, with several new features.



Kill A Wall P4480

As with the older products, the P4480 starts out as both a power meter and surge protector – protecting your gear from spikes, over/under voltage conditions, etc., even turning the electrical outlet off when it detects a problem. Added to that is a seven-day graphical timer and a battery backup. Together, this is a tool for which you will find many uses.

POWER CHECK

Start by inserting a few AAA batteries. This keeps the clock going in the event of a power failure – and prevents the loss of any cumulative data on the power meter.

Immediately upon plugging the P4480 into a socket, you can get an immediate readout of the line voltage. Plug something into the P4480, and you will instantly see the power drain, expressed in Amperes or kW hours. By measuring the appliance in both the on and off condition, you will two important things.

First, you can measure the power usage, in kW and in kW Hours. Then, with the appliance off, you can measure what some call the “vampire” usage, or the drain from power supplies, etc, in the “standby” mode.

Check out your television for example. If it is the “instant on” type, you might be surprised to see what the drain is when you are not home. If you routinely leave your 5.1 amplifier and speakers on, you can see the total.

Another quick example is to show the difference in electrical use by turning your computer off when not in use, as opposed to running it 24/7. (Of course, there are other factors, including convenience of having the computer running and polling for email, that may transcend pure power costs.)

THE TIMER

Another feature that sets the Kill A Watt P4480 apart from other similar models is the ability to program the unit to turn the outlet on and off at will. This could be used to light the house during the evening, either as a burglar deterrent or as a way to ensure the lights are on when you get home.

The P4480 timer is extremely flexible. The timer can be programmed for different sets of time for each day of the week, and for multiple on/off cycles during each day.

The only problem you may have with the P4480 is that you may find that one unit will not be enough – you might end up buying several for home and office!

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