



## ACTIVITY TIPS

## What's a Watt?

The What's a Watt? activity helps students explore the concepts of amps, volts, and watts and how they relate to some common, everyday appliances.

### Getting It Across

Discuss with students the definitions of amps, volts, watts, and megawatts.

**Amps:** The measure of the amount of electricity used.

**Volts:** The measure of the pressure or force of electricity.

**Watts:** Amps multiplied by the volts gives you the watts. This is the measure of the work that electricity does per second.

**Megawatts:** One million watts.

This activity asks students to use the formula  $\text{amps} \times \text{volts} = \text{watts}$  to figure out how many watts these typical appliances use. Most homes are served by 120-volt electricity, so students are asked to use that as the value for volts in their equations.

### Extension

- Have students research what types of appliances in their homes might use very few watts (*clock, flashlight, or phone*) or lots of watts (*clothes dryer, oven, or central air conditioner*) and report back to the class.
- Discuss with students when megawatts might be used. (*For measuring the watts used by cities or generated by power plants.*)