

Computer Bits by Mark Eggert of Raad One Network Solutions, Inc.

Welcome to Computer Bits, a series of articles on computers and network information. In this month's article I'm going to look at a free and interesting utility.

One thing that we all see on a monthly basis is our power bill from our local utility company. We all probably wonder where we're using all of that power. Well, this utility call "Local Cooling" from Uniblue can tell you about how your computers are doing. The program is available at www.localcooling.com and it's currently only available for Windows XP. They are working on a version that works with Windows Vista although no release date has been given yet.

This utility integrates with and expands the Power Options Properties of Windows. Not only does it give you finer control on when the computer should go into power savings modes but it also shows you how much power the various components of the computer is using. You can also register for a free account on their website so that you can compare your power usage and savings with others.

I feel I should give you a word of caution on some of the power savings modes. While most computers and applications suffer no ill effects from shutting off the monitor or spinning down the hard drive(s), there can be problems with going into hibernation or shutting down completely. These problems can be quite serious if the computer is part of a network and therefore I would recommend consulting your IT staff or advisor before using these settings.

I hope you find this utility useful and interesting. Also, let me know if you have a utility that you use and think it would be useful to others and I'll put it in an article.

If you have a computer or network question you'd like answered and you think others would like to know the answer too, please forward them to me. My email address is meggert@wi.rr.com, my phone number is 262-679-7704 and my fax number is 262-679-7664.