

Program automatically shuts down office PCs when not in use

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NEC Corp. says it has developed the country's first software that automatically controls power consumption by personal computers in accordance with the patterns of its user's PC activity.

The company said Sunday it would start shipping the software, enepal PC, to corporate customers in December.

The software is intended to help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases generated by companies by cutting down on the amount of electricity used by office computers while allowing for the setting of energy saving goals at each section of companies using it.

The new software may encourage areas of the business sector -- especially large offices -- that are lagging behind the industrial sector in implementing measures against global warming to start strengthening their measures.

The software is capable of tracking how a PC has been used in the past three months through the user's keyboard and mouse activity patterns. It also determines the hours when the user tends not to use the PC, such as during a regular morning meeting or when visiting clients.

During those idle hours, the PC goes on standby or into the sleep mode if the user has left the room without turning off the power switch.

The software can be installed in individual PCs in a company. Data on

each networked PC's [power consumption](#), electric power charge and greenhouse gas emission level can be managed comprehensively.

A company can set the emission reduction goal for each department and section as well as for the whole company. If the goal looks unattainable, the company can send a message to each employee's PC to alert him or her to take action.

According to NEC, in experiments conducted at local governments and companies, the amount of electricity consumed to run the PCs was reduced by more than 20 percent.

The price of the software is 960,000 yen annually per 1,000 PCs. But purchases can be made for a single PC.

The greenhouse gases generated by the business sector, through the use of electricity in such locations as offices, was 240 million tons in fiscal 2007, 18 percent of the country's total emissions, far less than the 35 percent attributed to the industrial sector.

However, the growth rate of the emission level in the business environment when compared to the 1990 level is the highest at 44 percent. A large-scale reduction in the emission level in the business sector is essential for achieving the emission reduction goal of 25 percent of the 1990 level, which was declared by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama.

The government has announced the Green IT initiative for saving energy spent on home electrical appliances and information devices by making the most of information technology. The government also sees it as important to encourage users to save energy by making power consumption on PCs and other devices visible, as the NEC [software](#) does.

However, demand for PCs at offices is expected to grow. One estimate suggests that in 2025 the power consumed by information technology devices will be five times as much as the current level.

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