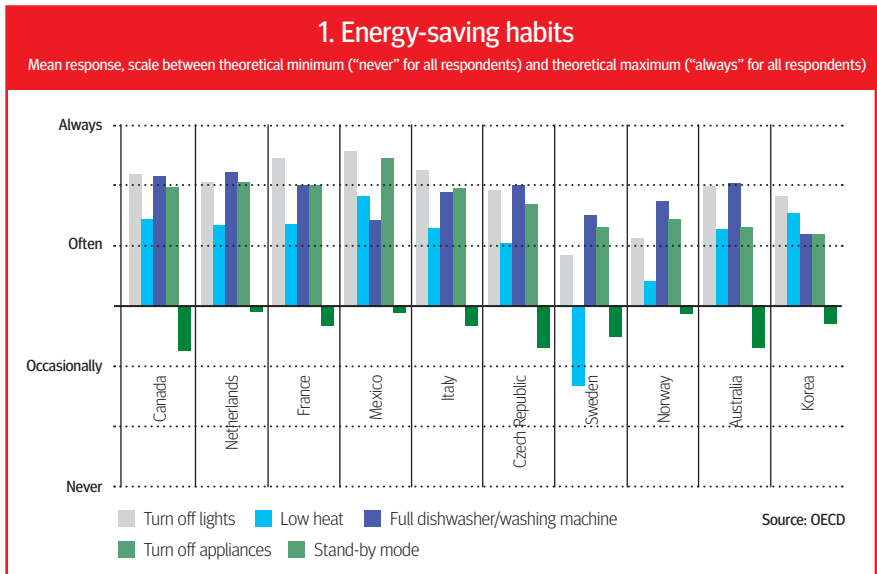


# Saving energy

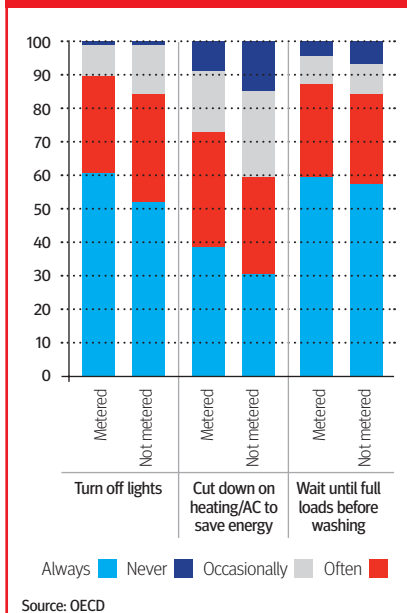
**Environmental policies can change people's daily habits, as a new OECD survey shows.**

Did you know that Norwegians are more likely to have invested in solar panels and wind turbines than other OECD countries? Or that the Dutch are the most likely to turn off their electrical appliances, rather than leave them on standby? These are just two of the findings that emerge in an illuminating OECD survey of people's behaviour towards the environment in 10 OECD countries and five areas, including energy. The survey was based on more than 10,000 responses gathered in 2008. As the survey suggests, environmental policies do make a difference.



## 2. Meter effect

Personal habits depending on whether electricity use is metered or not metered, 2008



Governments have introduced a wide variety of initiatives to improve energy efficiency and develop the use of renewable energy to tackle climate change, including providing grants to firms and households for installing renewable energy appliances, encouraging consumers to reduce standby power and phasing out incandescent light bulbs. While the survey shows that those who say they are concerned about the environment are taking action, it also shows that other people will change their behaviour too if given the right incentives and information.

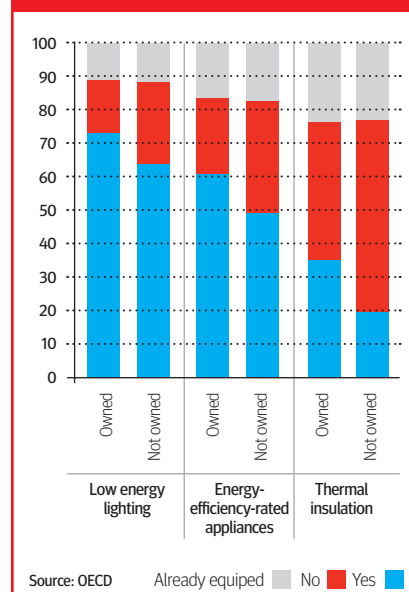
Take energy charges (Graph 2). Results confirm that these work, since respondents paying charges are more likely to save energy, whether by adopting energy-saving behaviour, such as turning off lights or investing in appliances rated high in energy efficiency. Pricing policies are key to encouraging people to save energy.

Homeowners are more likely than tenants to invest in energy-saving equipment and renewable energy technologies (Graph 3). People who own their houses are more likely to have invested in thermal insulation or efficient heating boilers, for example, over the past 10 years than those who do not own their homes. This is largely because they are able to recover the costs of their investment. This has several possible policy implications; for instance, landlords could be given incentives to “green” their rental properties, and tenants could be given the right to recover from their landlords the cost of making such improvements. While the French are most likely to have received support for installing thermal insulation and renewable energy technologies, few respondents in all the countries surveyed report having received government assistance for those investments.

Just under 20% of households report that

## 3. Home installations

Energy-saving equipment installed over the past 10 years, according to whether home is owned or not owned, 2008



they “take special measures to buy renewable energy from their service providers”. The Netherlands and Korea report the highest percentages of respondents who opt to buy renewable energy from their electricity companies, while in countries with a large ratio of hydroelectric energy in their standard fuel mix, such as Canada and Norway, those percentages are much lower. The survey also shows that almost half of all respondents are not willing to pay too much more to use green energy. Almost 50% of households were not willing to pay any premium to use renewable energy; in a few countries, only 25% of respondents say they would pay more than 5% above their current electricity bill to use green energy.

More survey results are available at [www.oecd.org/environment/households](http://www.oecd.org/environment/households). For more information, contact [Ysé.Serret@oecd.org](mailto:Ysé.Serret@oecd.org) or [Nick.Johnstone@oecd.org](mailto:Nick.Johnstone@oecd.org)