



10 Ways to Lower Energy Costs in Your Facility

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Volatile energy prices continue to skyrocket, making it more important than ever to adopt practices and procedures to control what you can—the amount of energy you consume. The good news is that saving energy, and money, may be easier than you think. Implement the easy tips below to see how small changes can make a big difference in your energy bills.

1) Replace old appliances. If your equipment has been around a while, you're throwing money away. New refrigerators, for example, use one-third as much electricity as they did 20 years ago. Appliances that bear the Energy Star certification use 10-50% less energy than standard models. Visit www.energystar.gov for more information.

2) Keep your fridge cool. Vacuum condenser coils at least twice a year. Be sure that your refrigerator is level, or else the door gasket may seal improperly and leak cold air. Check refrigerator door seals for cracks, as well. If possible, locate refrigerators and freezers away from ovens and stoves so carry-over heat doesn't force the fridge to work harder. Refrigerators are most efficient at 38 to 40 F, while freezers should be set to 0. Check the owner's manual for capacity guidelines—fridges work most efficiently when they are full but not overstuffed.

3) Maintain your building. Weather stripping doors and caulking windows can save as much as 6%. Replace air filters regularly. Have heating and cooling systems inspected annually by a professional to identify any problems that might compromise efficiency.

4) Install smart thermostats. Of course, keeping your restaurant refreshingly cool in summer and toasty warm in winter is a big part of providing a pleasant dining experience. But there's no reason to maintain that temperature when the restaurant is closed. Install programmable thermostats, which can significantly reduce the energy used for heating or cooling.



5) Change your light bulbs. Switching out lighting can save you 15-50% on energy bills, depending on the project. There are several categories of energy-efficient changes to consider, but one of the most common is switching from incandescent to compact fluorescent bulbs, which can net a 30-50% savings. Switching out ballasts from multiple T12s to fewer T8s with reflectors is estimated to save 30-70%.



6) Turn off computers. It's tempting to leave your computer on all the time so it's ready whenever you need it, and you may even have it set to sleep or hibernate after a certain amount of time. Turning it off when you're not in the office, however, is a better choice. Desktop computers use about 160 watts/hour. If you're paying \$0.18/kWh, turning it off can save \$160/month, or \$1,920/year!



7) Stop the leaks. Believe it or not, even electronics and appliances that are turned off are using power. Nearly 20% of the electricity used comes when devices that are turned "off" are in a standby mode, like a TV waiting for a signal from a remote control. A small stereo can draw 9 watts of power while it's "off." Plug your sound system components, computer printers and other equipment into power strips, and then switch the power strips off when you close up at night to stop the leaks.

8) Shop around for energy rates. In areas where energy is deregulated, meaning there is competition among energy suppliers, you can shop around for the best energy rate. Pricing multiple suppliers can be time-consuming, but an energy advisor can do most of the work on your behalf, with no out-of-pocket costs to you. You can even include renewable energy in your supply contract. While wind energy, for example, may cost a penny or two more per kWh, purchasing it can help hedge against the rising cost of fossil fuels.



9) Use motion sensors. Motion sensors make good sense for lighting in areas that spend long periods of time unoccupied. Try installing motion sensor lighting in restrooms and storerooms so you're not lighting these spaces when no one is there.

10) Use solar lighting. There are many attractive outdoor lighting options that work on photocells. The photocells charge themselves all day and automatically light up when it gets dark enough. Solar lighting can be used anywhere on the grounds since they don't need any electricity.

To learn more about energy management for your facility, visit Tradition Energy at www.traditionenergy.com/syscoicare or call 713-609-9929