

Energy Efficiency Checklist for Small Businesses

Use this checklist to locate areas where your small business can save energy—and money.

BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Keep curtains or drapes closed in unoccupied areas. Install blinds or solar screen shades to cool the office.
- Inspect door and window alignment to prevent excess air flow (check seals, caulking, weatherstripping).
- Add reflective or heat absorbing film on west and south facing windows to minimize solar gain.
- Check ceiling/roof insulation for adequate thickness. If damaged then repair or replace.
- Install wind screens to protect exterior doors. This can be done with plantings or architectural devices.
- Consider installing outdoor shading devices.

BUILDING OCCUPANCY AND AIR TEMPERATURE

- Check that thermostats are set to 78 degrees (summer) and 72 degrees (winter).
- Shut down air conditioning at night, on weekends, and on holidays.
- Adjust thermostat for unoccupied areas.
- Lock thermostats to prevent unauthorized adjustments.
- Ensure that thermostats are calibrated correctly, and that thermostat controls are working properly (air temperature is accurate, building is being adequately conditioned).
- Clean and/or replace filters regularly.
- Reschedule off-hour business (or custodial) activities to accommodate partial shutdown of building systems.
- Experiment with air conditioning startup times and duration of operation; turn off air conditioning one hour prior to closing, allowing building to "coast."
- Verify that ductwork is unobstructed and free from loose insulation, turning vanes, and the like.
- Consider relocating business activities to smaller spaces that can be cooled separately.
- Rewire restroom exhaust fans to operate in tandem with lights.

LIGHTING

- Switch off lights when daylight is sufficient.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with fluorescent or compact fluorescent bulbs.
- Retrofit T12 lights with magnetic ballasts to T8 lights with electronic ballasts.
- Remove excess fluorescent lights and install reflectors.
- When repainting, use paint with highly reflective coatings or coverings to maximize available light.
- Install light sensors and dimming equipment that automatically compensates for varying light conditions. Install motion sensors to control lighting in frequently unoccupied areas such as restrooms and copy rooms.
- Retrofit incandescent or fluorescent exit signs with long-lasting, low-energy LED exit signs.
- Clean dusty diffusers and lamps every 6-12 months for improved light output.
- Rewire restroom fans to operate with the lights.

EQUIPMENT

- Use a power strip (multiple outlet with an on/off switch) to make it easy to turn off all desktop hardware (including transformers).
- Switch off monitors and computers at night and on weekends, and place on "stand by" during the midday break.
- If taking a short break, turn off the monitor (screen savers do not save energy).
- If the printer is not rated as an ENERGY STAR® device then it only needs to be turned on when being used.
- When purchasing PCs, monitors, printers, fax machines and copiers, consider ENERGY STAR® models that "power down" after a user-specified period of inactivity.
- Laptop computers consume 90 percent less energy than standard desktop computers. Also, ink-jet printers consume 90 percent less energy than laser printers.

- ❑ Coffee should be kept hot in a thermos flask not on the hot-plate. Thermos flasks can save energy and preserve the aroma.
- ❑ Use a timer on the hot water heater so that the hot water is available only during working hours.
- ❑ Check refrigerator temperature. It should be close to 45°F or 7°C. Butter is still spreadable at this temperature.

HVAC

- ❑ Consider replacing old HVAC systems with new energy-efficient systems.
- ❑ Install time clocks or setback-programmable thermostats to maximize efficiency.
- ❑ Perform scheduled maintenance on units including cleaning condenser coils, replacing air filters regularly, and checking ducts and pipe insulation for damage.
- ❑ If the printer is not rated as an ENERGY STAR® device then it only needs to be turned on when being used.

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