



10 Recommended Low/No-Cost Guidelines to Improve Energy Efficiency

Many of the most effective energy efficiency measures for small and medium-sized office spaces can be implemented at little or no cost to building owners and tenants. Check out these industry best practices to help guide your energy management efforts and achieve cost savings:

Recommended Low or No-cost Energy Efficiency Opportunities:

- 1. Revise janitorial practices to reduce daily lighting usage.** Consider scheduling office cleaning services biweekly, monthly, or during work hours to limit the need for additional lighting beyond regular office hours.
- 2. Maximize daylighting.** Open or close blinds to make the best use of natural daylight and take advantage of skylights or other natural light sources to reduce lighting use during daytime hours. This can reduce lighting expenses 10-40%. Using shades and blinds to control direct sunlight through windows can also help prevent or encourage heat gain, leading to additional heating and cooling savings.
- 3. Install occupancy sensors and daylight dimmers to reduce unnecessary lighting.** Occupancy sensors detect the motion of room occupants, turning off lights in unoccupied areas and turning them back on when movement is detected. Daylight dimmers are special sensors that automatically dim room light based on the amount of free and natural daylight available.
- 4. Ask your utility if they provide free or discounted energy audits.** Although inexpensive energy audits tend to be less comprehensive than higher-priced options, they can still provide you with a good understanding of your facility's current energy performance and help inform next steps for your energy management program.
- 5. Utilize "smart" power strips to control power settings for electronic devices.** "Smart" power strips optimize power savings by allowing you to designate whether devices should be powered on or off when they are inactive. Electronics can be automatically powered off when they are in standby mode.
- 6. Ensure that thermostats are adjusted to reflect building occupancy and seasonal changes.** Set back thermostats when the building isn't occupied, such as evenings or weekends, and readjust seasonally to account for temperature changes. This is easily done by installing [programmable thermostats](#), which can help achieve energy and cost savings while improving employee comfort in the office.
- 7. Clean the evaporator and condenser coils on heat pumps, air-conditioners, or chillers.** Dirty coils can reduce airflow, inhibiting heat transfer. Regularly inspecting and cleaning coils can help ensure that HVAC systems are running efficiently, which can reduce energy use as well as improve air quality.
- 8. Keep exterior doors closed while running your HVAC.** Prevent wasteful loss of heated or cooled air by closing exterior doors and making sure that doors are well-insulated and sealed.
- 9. Make sure heating and cooling ducts are properly sealed.** A well-designed duct system can improve the efficiency of your heating and cooling system by as much as 20%, as well as improve indoor air quality and occupant comfort.
- 10. Develop a preventative maintenance plan to ensure building operations are running efficiently and properly.** Regularly inspect and maintain key operational aspects of your facility such as HVAC systems and major appliances to ensure they are running as efficiently as possible and to avoid costly repairs.