

Small Businesses: An Overview of Energy Use and Energy Efficiency Opportunities



Energy Use in Small Business

The nation's small businesses spend more than \$60 billion a year on energy. To reduce these costs, ENERGY STAR helps small business owners and operators improve the energy performance of their facilities. Small businesses that invest strategically can cut utility costs 10 to 30 percent without sacrificing service, quality, style, or comfort, all while making significant contributions to a cleaner environment.

By becoming more energy efficient, small businesses help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve their own financial bottom line. Small businesses can typically save as much money and prevent as much pollution, per square foot, as large corporations.

Energy Efficiency Opportunities

There is no substitute for a comprehensive energy survey and analysis. However, these energy efficiency "sure savers" offer simple savings if you:

- > Measure and track energy performance.
- > Turn off lights and equipment when not in use.
- > Purchase energy-efficient products like ENERGY STAR qualified office equipment.
- > Install lighting occupant sensors in proper locations.
- > Tune-up heating/air-conditioning (HVAC) system with an annual maintenance contract.
- > Regularly change or clean HVAC filters and install a programmable thermostat.
- > Replace incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR qualified compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) wherever appropriate.
- > Install light-emitting diode (LED) exit signs.
- > Control the direct sun through windows in both summer and winter to prevent or encourage heat gain.

How to Talk to Small Businesses About Energy Efficiency

When a small business owner pays the monthly electricity or gas bill, he or she probably doesn't care too much about kilowatt hours or therms. Whether the business owns a building or rents space, it needs light, hot water, air-conditioning, and other services at the lowest possible cost.

Often, the small business owner wears many hats, from salesperson to CEO. Frequently, he or she lacks the time and technical expertise to identify and implement energy saving opportunities.

"I don't have the time."

Respond with an ENERGY STAR message: "We understand how important your time is to your business. We've also documented that energy-efficiency upgrades are well worth your consideration due to the savings and improved comfort they achieve. Here are some strategies to help you jump-start energy savings for your business with a modest investment of time and money:"

Small Businesses Making a Difference:

Vic's IGA Market in Sacramento, CA, is increasing shopper comfort, saving more than \$48,000 a year, and preventing about 850,286 pounds of CO₂ emissions. Vic's installed brighter, efficient T-8 lamps/electronic ballasts, a new chiller compressor, and new, enclosed freezers to replace old, open multi-deck freezers.

Schmidt Veterinary Clinic in Cedarburg, WI, used programmable thermostats, T-8 lamps/electronic ballasts, efficient water heating, LED exit signs, occupancy sensors and outdoor high-pressure sodium lamps with photocells to achieve \$540 in annual savings and prevent over 10,000 pounds of CO₂ emissions each year.

River Run Bed & Breakfast in Kerrville, TX, is saving \$2,400 a year and preventing more than 47,440 lbs of CO₂ from being released into the atmosphere by installing efficient lighting, insulation in all areas, high-efficiency heat pump units, programmable thermostats, and variable speed drives on air circulating fans.

Music Mart, Inc. in State College, PA, is saving \$1,840 a year while reducing CO₂ emissions by nearly 47,000 pounds annually. These reductions were achieved by upgrading their lighting in the retail area with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) with reflectors. The upgrade to CFLs not only reduced lighting energy usage, but also improved customer and worker comfort by decreasing the heat while maintaining lighting level and quality. Music Mart also replaced two old air conditioners with ENERGY STAR qualified units with timers. As a result, the 1,275 square foot store has reduced its electricity consumption by 29,000 kWh per year.

ENERGY STAR® is a government-backed program helping businesses and individuals protect the environment through superior energy efficiency.



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How to Talk to Small Businesses About Energy Efficiency (cont.)

- > Ask your utility if they offer free or inexpensive energy audits and/or equipment rebates.
- > Invite contractors to your facility to suggest upgrades and provide free estimates. For a list of service and product providers in your area, visit ENERGY STAR's directory at www.energystar.gov/spp.
- > Leverage your time by drawing on ENERGY STAR's expertise, tools, and information.

"I don't have the technical expertise"

Most small firms lack the technical expertise and staff to identify and implement energy efficiency projects. However, help is available. The ENERGY STAR Small Business Network provides a variety of free resources to assist business owners and operators in making sound, money-saving technology decisions.

ENERGY STAR Offers

- Guides and calculators
- Business benchmarking
- Online training
- Rebate locators
- Technical support
- Financing resources
- Third-party recognition
- Motivational campaigns

ENERGY STAR Resources

Putting Energy into Profits: This online guide is designed to educate and assist the small business community in achieving the benefits of energy efficiency. This guide can help identify cost-effective opportunities to upgrade building equipment and systems for bottom-line savings.

Portfolio Manager — Measure and Track Energy Performance: By measuring, setting goals, and tracking energy use, small businesses can manage energy expenses. Small businesses can use ENERGY STAR's Portfolio Manager tool to benchmark buildings and track savings.

www.energystar.gov/benchmark

Technical Assistance: E-mail your questions to epasmallbiz@energyandsecurity.com. ENERGY STAR assistance ranges from calculations on energy costs and savings to answering questions about specific technologies.

ENERGY STAR Small Business Network: Join the ENERGY STAR Small Business Network to take advantage of everything ENERGY STAR has to offer. Small businesses that join the Network receive a free monthly update by e-mail that can save them valuable time by highlighting the latest news and information on energy efficiency pertinent to small business owners.

www.energystar.gov/smallbiz

Recognition for Achievements

Annual Awards: Each year, ENERGY STAR recognizes outstanding small businesses across the nation that are saving energy and money while preventing pollution. These national award winners receive engraved plaques and local and national public recognition as great examples of financial and environmental stewardship. www.energystar.gov/smallbiz and click on "Apply for the Annual Awards."

Become an ENERGY STAR Leader: ENERGY STAR Partners who demonstrate continuous improvement system-wide may qualify for recognition as ENERGY STAR Leaders. EPA will recognize systems that have achieved reductions of 10, 20, 30 percent, or more.

www.energystar.gov/leaders

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