



ENERGY STAR® Action Workbook for Congregations

Practicing and implementing efficient energy and water use are the fastest, least costly, and largest solutions for simultaneously saving money and preventing pollution. Through the market-based partnerships of ENERGY STAR, the EPA is helping congregations and their members lower utility bills, create jobs, and reduce pollution to protect human health. Your congregation and community have much to gain from efficient energy and water use.

To help faith communities better steward natural and financial resources, ENERGY STAR provides the **ENERGY STAR Action Workbook for Congregations**. Many resources and the guidelines outlined below have been developed over 20 years working with thousands of partners, and they summarize the more detailed information found in the Workbook. Download it today at www.energystar.gov/congregations.

Step 1: Make a Commitment to Saving Energy

Join ENERGY STAR as a partner and find tools, training, and technical support for improved cost management at www.energystar.gov/joinbuildings.

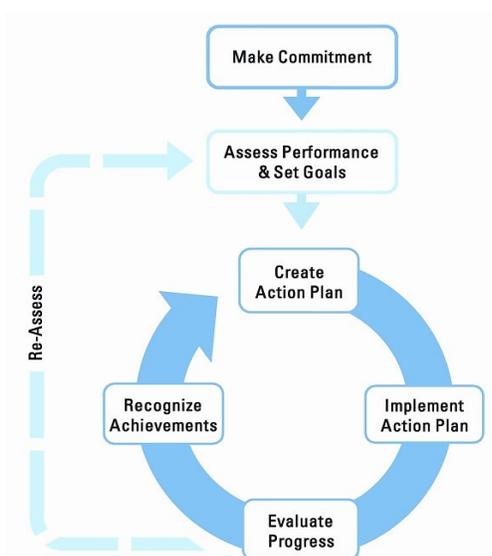
Build a Green Team. One dedicated individual or a group—large or small—can succeed. Help “Bring Your Green to Work” with resources from www.energystar.gov/work.

Step 2: Assess Performance

Benchmark to determine baseline utility use and to track your improvements. Print the Data Collection Worksheet for worship facilities at www.energystar.gov/datacollectionworksheet and then set up your free, online, password-protected Portfolio Manager® account. This tool helps you compare to typical U.S. worship facilities, set savings goals, factor out weather-driven costs, and accurately calculate savings and pollution prevention. Learn more at www.energystar.gov/Benchmark.

Find Portfolio Manager training webinars at www.energystar.gov/buildings/training. You can also download slides and fact sheets, see short videos and email the Help Desk.

Conduct a walk-through survey and act on the “Sure Savers” (low-cost/no-cost, reliable, low-risk actions) found in the Workbook. Ask your utility what services and financial incentives they offer.



ENERGY STAR Guidelines for Energy Management

Step 3: Set Goals

Determine your goals: You can focus on dollar or percentage savings, energy or water, on a single facility or specific equipment across multiple franchises based on rebates, “return-on-investment” (ROI), “positive cash-flow/shared savings,” or equipment needing replacement. ENERGY STAR has information, tools, training and technical support to help you.

Step 4: Create an Action Plan

Define targets and projects. Use Portfolio Manager—and facility/equipment audit reports if available—to compare your baseline with the goals you set. The gaps between goals and your baseline can help identify and prioritize projects and their magnitude.

Determine roles and responsibilities. Identify which upgrades you can implement internally, and which will require external help from contractors and utility representatives.

Find funding for your projects. Determine how much you can spend on projects from savings or pledges, and when the payback justifies borrowing. Ask your utility about rebates and “on-bill-financing” that fronts the capital, which you repay on your utility bill with savings from the upgrade’s “positive cash-flow.” Check on “shared savings” contracting from product vendors.

Step 5: Implement the Action Plan

Consider a brief outline or communication plan to educate and motivate staff and members with your commitment to stewardship and general sustainability. Engage youth and other groups.

Manage the Action Plan. Consistently track your projects, your utility savings, and pollution prevention in Portfolio Manager—monthly entry of each utility bill will keep you on track.

Step 6: Evaluate Progress

Track progress. Monitoring progress against your goals helps your congregation look toward the future, create new action plans, evaluate which elements of your Action Plan worked and which didn’t, and to set new performance goals to continue improvement. Were there unsuccessful projects providing lessons learned?

Step 7: Recognize Achievements

Provide internal recognition for everyone who helped the project succeed. For external recognition, **tell your story to the community on social media and to local news media.**

Join or START a friendly competition. Ask your interfaith community, denomination, or local government to host a savings competition with tips from the *ENERGY STAR Competitions Guide* at www.energystar.gov/CompetitionGuide.

Have a “Treasure Hunt” at your congregation or across your local community with resources at www.energystar.gov/buildings/treasure_hunt. Saving money can be fun!

