

Arizona Success

Current News and Practical Tips
for Arizona's Business Community

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APS
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Energy efficiency for your business

With energy costs on the rise, you'll be hearing a lot more about "energy efficiency." You may be wondering about what exactly "energy efficiency" is, what it means to you as a business owner, and how do you go about making your business "energy efficient" without spending a lot of money.

Simply put, energy efficiency means using less energy or electricity for your business' lighting, refrigeration or air conditioning needs. More specifically, energy efficiency refers to products, systems and practices that use less energy — or reduce the amount of energy required — to do the same or better job than standard products, systems or processes. By using less energy in operating your business, you save money on your utility bills. And since saving money on utility bills lowers your expenses, you can realize greater profit margins. How much you save depends on the type and extent of energy efficiency measures you take.

Making your business energy efficient isn't as difficult or as expensive as you might think. In fact you can easily incorporate low-cost and surprisingly simple do-it-yourself projects into your operations that can really pay off. Below is a list of basic, tried and true energy efficiency steps. Some may seem surprisingly simple, others you may not have thought of. Read on and start saving!

Lighting

Lighting alone consumes up to 30 percent or more of the electricity used by businesses. Fortunately you can easily take control of your lighting expenses. All it takes is a few changes to your lighting practices and through simple, cost effective modifications you can realize significant opportunities for energy savings.

- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Install "occupancy sensors" that automatically turn off lights when you or your employees leave an area and back on when you return.
- Replace traditional incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) where feasible. CFLs are up to 75 percent less costly to operate and last about 10 times longer.
- Convert fluorescent T12 lamps and magnetic ballasts to T8 lamps and electronic ballasts to reduce your lighting energy use by up to 40 percent.
- Adjust lighting to meet your actual needs and use daylight to your advantage.
- Replace incandescent or CFL exit signs and install light-emitting diode (LED) or electroluminescent exit signs.



The APS Business Solutions program has incentives for many of these types of energy efficiency lighting improvements. For more information, call 866-277-5605.

Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC)

Operating HVAC systems consumes upward of 40 to 60 percent of the energy used in commercial buildings. With today's efficient technologies, you can take a small amount of time to do a few things that can save you a lot of money.

- Plug or fill cracks or leaks around doors, windows, utility switches and outlets, and any other holes between the outside and inside. Weather stripping and caulking from your local hardware store does the trick.

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- Change air filters or clean reusable filters at least every three months during peak cooling times. You may not realize that each dirty filter wastes up to \$5 per month by over working equipment.
- Use ENERGY STAR rated ceiling fans to increase air movement and comfort levels. Fans can delay or reduce the need for air conditioning. An A/C temperature setting 3 to 5 degrees higher feels as comfortable with fans as the lower setting does without fans. Each degree of higher temperatures can save you about 3 percent on your cooling costs.
- Have your HVAC system tuned up twice a year. Setting up a semi annual maintenance contract automatically ensures a system check up before the heavy cooling season.
- Install a programmable thermostat. Automating your HVAC system 24–7 optimizes its operation based on your needs and lowers related energy costs up to 30 percent. A “smart thermostat” is inexpensive, usually costing less than \$200, thus helping you realize a quick payback on your investment.
- Implement a dress code for warm weather. Allow employees to wear comfortable clothing during warm weather. Why crank up the A/C — and your costs?
- Control the direct sunlight received through windows. In Arizona’s warm climate, limit sun shining through eastern exposures in the morning and those west facing windows in the afternoon.

The APS Business Solutions program also has incentives for the testing and repair of your HVAC unit and incentives for programmable thermostats and new HVAC units as well.

Office equipment

From computers to printers, to copiers and beyond, office equipment is one of the fastest growing use of energy. When purchasing new office equipment, be sure to buy ENERGY STAR-labeled office equipment and other products whenever possible. ENERGY STAR is the national symbol for energy efficiency. And did you know that energy efficient office equipment lowers utility bills not only by consuming less energy, but also by reducing the need for air conditioning. Cost savings and payback on your investment depends on the type of equipment.

Until you are ready to buy new equipment, here are two energy savings tips already at the tip of your finger.

- Turn off equipment when not in use.
- Activate the “stand-by mode” function on your equipment. This automatic “sleep mode” for office equipment saves energy and money when the equipment is not in use. The equipment automatically “wakes up” when you need it again.

Refrigeration

If you own and operate a restaurant, a convenience store or any other business that requires refrigeration you know just how expensive it can be to run your cooling systems. Aside from investing in new refrigeration units, here are a few efficient refrigeration basics that can help you save.

- Keep the refrigerator doors shut
- Replace Leaky Door Seals
- Make sure temperature settings are not lower than necessary
- Properly load the refrigerator, make sure its neither overfilled or under filled
- Clean the cooling coils and check that the door seals are tight
- Install strip curtains or night covers to decrease refrigeration load.

The APS Business Solutions Program has incentives for refrigeration controls, and high efficiency refrigeration and ice making equipment, that can cover up to 75% of the incremental cost of these improvements.

Want help getting your business energy efficient? APS Business Solutions offers support and cash rebates for various energy efficiency improvements. Call us at 866-277-5605 and start saving through energy efficiency. More information can be found at aps.com

The APS Business Solutions Program is ACC approved and customer funded.