



Small Business Energy Reduction Guide

for the food services and sales industry

A small food sales and service business in the Midwest spends roughly \$34,000 annually on energy¹. High energy consumption and volatile energy rates can leave a business owner feeling out-of-control over their utility bills. However, there are many simple measures that can be undertaken to save up to 10% on these costs. That's an average of \$3,400 annually! Try implementing some of the no/low, mid, and high-cost, measures below and start saving!

No-cost/Low-cost, (*investment of less than \$100*)

- Replace incandescent bulbs with CFLs
- Set air conditioning up 2 degrees and furnace down 2 degrees
- Clean coils on refrigeration units
- Switch to LED signage – open/closed signs, exit signs
- Maintain tight gaskets on freezers and refrigerators
- Install low flow pre rinse valves for dish rinsing
- Turn off kitchen equipment when not in use
- Tune-up HVAC and change filters quarterly
- Calibrate and test controls on fryers
- Install a programmable thermostat
- Weatherstrip exterior doors



Mid-cost, (*investment of between \$100-500*)

- Install night covers on open refrigeration units
- Install new gaskets on walk-in freezers and refrigerators
- Install a Cooling Miser on refrigerated coolers



High-cost, (*investment of greater than \$500*)

- Install new ceiling fans
- Replace T12 fluorescent light fixtures and bulbs with T8
- Install variable speed controls for kitchen exhaust hoods and makeup air units
- Install high efficiency evaporation and condenser fan motors on walk-in refrigerator and freezer units



1. Estimates based on a 7,500 square foot restaurant using energy use intensity factors from the 2003 Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey - Midwest Region or Climate Zone 1.

Resources

Rebates

Minnesota Energy Smart
www.mnenergysmart.com

Consortium for Energy Efficiency
www.cee1.org

DSIRE Database
www.dsireusa.org



General Information

The Green Institute
www.greeninstitute.org

ENERGY STAR
www.energystar.gov

Food Service Technology Center
www.fishnick.com

Restaurant Conservation
www.conserve.Restaurant.org

Architectural Energy Corporation
www.archenergy.com/services/food/

Small Business Environmental Web
<http://www.smallbiz-enviroweb.org/>

The Bottom Line

Food sales and services businesses use roughly five times more energy than other types of businesses. With an average profit margin of 5%, managing your utility costs can have a direct impact on your bottom line.

Example: Switching to a low flow pre-rinse sprayer for one hour per day could save you \$325 annually. To generate \$325 worth of profit with a 5% profit margin would require \$6,500 in gross sales. Simply, \$325 in savings directly to your bottom line is equivalent to \$6,500 in sales!

This example demonstrates how optimizing your energy consumption can quickly impact your profitability.

Rebates

Before you begin working on energy efficient retrofits, get in contact with your utility providers and inquire about applicable rebates and incentives. Programs throughout the country are coming on-line offering thousands of dollars to incentivize energy conservation/efficiency. Many programs offer rebates for projects; if you cannot find one for your specific project, many utilities are willing to work with you on a customized rebate!



Follow Through

It is a good first step to assess your energy usage and to identify energy saving opportunities; however, the real difficulty comes in the implementation phase. We encourage you to:

- Discuss the changes (low and high tech) with employees
- Create an implementation plan and timeline with real outcomes
- Assign a point person per project for follow-thru



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