



# Energy conservation

Despite what most people think, lighting, heating and cooling are not fixed costs – energy is a variable component of a business's operating expenses. Computers, fax machines, printers and photocopiers are indispensable to running many small businesses today. However, there are ways you can cut your electricity costs that will save you money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



## Tips for minimising energy use

### Lighting

- Maximise the use of natural daylight.
- Ensure lights are not left on unnecessarily.
- Replace incandescent globes with compact fluorescent globes wherever possible. Incandescent globes have a short life, are expensive to run and produce more greenhouse emissions than alternatives.
- Extra low voltage small halogen lights are better than incandescent, but they require transformers and heavier wiring. They have much lower efficiency than fluorescents and should be used only for specific display areas, not for general lighting.
- Install lighting controls such as daylight or occupancy sensors, or timers.
- Ensure lighting near windows have separate light switches. Turn them off on bright days.
- Use desk lamps to reduce the amount of light required for the whole room.
- Remove fluorescent tubes in areas where less light is needed. For example, near windows, storage areas etc.
- Clean reflectors regularly to boost illumination output.

### Heating and cooling

- Don't let heating and cooling run 24 hours a day. Turn off heating and cooling when not required.
- The temperature of a cooled room in summer should be about 21-24°C.
- The temperature of a heated room in winter should be about 18-21°C.
- Place an air conditioner on the shady side of the building and ensure airflow around it is not obstructed.
- Keep external doors closed where possible.
- Zoning systems allow heating and cooling to be turned off to some areas of the building where heating and cooling is not required all the time.
- Insulation and draught proofing will help decrease heating and cooling expenses.
- Use shade and fans instead of air conditioners.
- Make sure thermostats are installed in the main serving area of internal walls away from heat sources and draughts.

## Tips for minimising energy use continued...

### Water heating

- Locate the water heater as near as possible to the point of most frequent use.
- Wrap hot water pipes in insulation.

### Office equipment (general)

- The first step to saving energy is to turn equipment off when it is not needed, i.e. at night and on weekends.
- Timers are available from most hardware stores and can be set to turn power on and off at certain times of the day.
- All office equipment uses energy when not in use and just standing idle.

### Computers

- Switch off computer monitors when not in use. Monitors usually use more energy than the computer itself.
- Screen savers do not save energy, they merely help to maximise the life of the screen. Set the computer to switch to 'sleep' mode instead.
- Use laptops where possible. A laptop draws about one tenth the power of a conventional desktop computer.

### Printers

- Purchase a printer with a double-sided printing option and 'power save' mode.
- Inkjet printers generally use less energy per page than laser printers.
- Avoid printing unnecessary documents, such as email.
- Use circulation lists and noticeboards for notices, rather than printing copies for everyone.
- Set default to print double-sided.

### Fax machines and scanners

- Purchase an energy efficient facsimile that can scan double-sided documents.
- Avoid printing status or transmission reports. Set the fax machine to only print when the fax did not transmit.

### Photocopiers

- Photocopiers can be energy guzzlers. Set the copier to use the 'energy saver' or 'stand-by mode'.
- When making several copies, run them in batches to reduce energy consumption.
- Use double-sided copying as much as possible.
- Program the photocopier to turn itself off in the evenings and on weekends.
- Turn the photocopier off at the point when not in use

### For all equipment

- When purchasing equipment, ask suppliers about the energy consumption and energy star rating.
- Keep equipment in an optimum state of maintenance and repair any faults promptly

Material source: Sustainable Energy Authority and Origin Energy websites.

## For more information

To find out more about conserving energy in your business, contact the Sustainable Traders Project Officer on (03) 9209 6474 or email [karcher@portphillip.com.au](mailto:karcher@portphillip.com.au), or visit [www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/ecoedge.html](http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/ecoedge.html)

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