

11 Tips for Food Service Businesses to Stay Energy Efficient

Energy Upgrade California (EUC) – an education initiative dedicated to informing the public about energy management and efficiency— in partnership with the Green Business Network, has developed a list of tips for how the food service industry can become more energy conscious and therefore hopefully reduce their carbon footprint.

- 1) **Toss your incandescent bulbs and pick up some LEDs.** LED bulbs use 25%–30% of the energy and last 8 to 25 times longer than halogen incandescent bulbs. Less time climbing ladders and more time keeping your customers happy.
- 2) **Install motion sensor lights.** You'll never again have to remember to flip the switches off before you leave a room if you install motion-activated lights. Using less artificial light is one of the easiest ways to cut down on energy costs.
- 3) **When replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high-efficiency, low-noise models.** ENERGY STAR® certified exhaust fans with lighting save 70% more energy than typical models. By choosing an energy-efficient fan, your business can save money on electricity and enjoy a quieter space.
- 4) **Install low-flow faucets.** In bathroom and kitchen sinks, low-flow faucets reduce excessive use of water. Heating water can be extremely costly and using less is good for your energy bill and California's reservoirs.
- 5) **If you have an old water heater tank, wrap it with an insulating jacket.** While making sure to be careful not to cover the air intake valve, giving your water heater a coat can save up to 10% on water heating costs.



- 6) **Use a programmable thermostat.** If you're all about installing motion sensor lights, you might as well go ahead and save an extra 10% on annual heating and cooling costs by installing programmable thermostats that will regulate the temperature of your building so you don't have to. For more savings, setting that thermostat just one degree warmer than you normally would in the summertime will typically save you 2-3% on cooling costs.
- 7) **Insulate and seal ducts.** If your ducts aren't in a row, you're losing out big time. Sealing and insulating ducts properly can help to reduce up to 20% of a cooling system's energy consumption.
- 8) **Change air filters regularly.** While the lifespan of an air filter can vary from product to product, it's important to regularly check your HVAC equipment's filters. A good rule of thumb is to change your air filter any time it looks dirty, no matter how long ago you replaced it. A dirty air filter makes the HVAC system work harder and reduces air flow anyways, costing you money and potentially turning into a bigger issue that requires mechanical maintenance.
- 9) **Choose ENERGY STAR® certified kitchen appliances and office equipment.** Refrigerators and freezers that are ENERGY STAR® certified will use far less energy than older models and help you save \$150-\$1,100 on energy costs over the course of their use. Good for the environment and good for your wallet! In Northern California, Frontier Energy assists Food Service Facilities with energy efficiency needs and puts businesses in touch with rebates. <https://fishnick.com/> or <https://frontierenergy.com/home-foodservice>. In Southern California, the SCE Food Service Equipment Center provides free training, guidance and rebates for businesses: <https://www.socalgas.com/for-your-business/education-and-training/food-service-equipment-center>



- 10) **Get an energy audit.** Not sure why your bill is so high when you think you're being energy savvy? Request an energy assessment from your local energy provider! The auditor will come out and inspect your workplace to try to identify any issues and areas where you can save energy and money. Best part? Many electric utility companies offer them for free.

- 11) **Become a Certified Green Business.** Don't know where to start? Check with your local energy provider to assist your business in reducing its carbon footprint. The California Green Business Network encourages all businesses to use (or find) an organization or group that can assist in reducing your energy use. For more information, visit <https://greenbusinessca.org/how-to-get-certified/>.

