

According to the National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS), the United States c-store industry has more than 150,000 stores that account for roughly \$550 billion in total sales each year. These numbers are continuing to rise.

By digging a bit deeper into the numbers compiled by Statista and as they relate to foodservice, it's easy to see how prepared foods are by far the leader when it comes to in-store foodservice sales by more than tripling the second product segment of hot dispensed beverages. The final two categories of foodservice products sold in order of sales are cold dispensed and frozen beverages.

On a more general level, c-stores are trending in ways reflected by foodservice as a whole. They are becoming more and more versatile in their product offerings, and in many cases, they even include quick serve restaurants and are bordering on the fast casual segment. As foodservice operations at large look to diversify their appeal, so too are c-stores.

Powering a C-Store (and Tips for Saving)

The standard c-store will use on average more than 52 kilo-watt-hours of electricity per square foot and 38.2 cubic feet of natural gas. These numbers can be quickly increased depending on a variety of factors, though.

1) LIGHTING

An easy way to save energy is by changing out lightbulbs. Compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) are three times more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs, and they can last nearly 10 times as long. LED lamps are also a great way to reduce energy consumption by switching.

Another energy-saving fix is to provide light sensors when and where they make sense. Keeping in mind well-lit stores are often a beacon for nighttime consumers, sensors that are strategically placed can also save money.

2) HEATING, COOLING, AND VENTILATION

One of the easiest ways to save energy on heating and cooling is to make sure all equipment is operating properly. This can be as simple as changing filters at least once a month or as complex as adjusting and recalibrating your thermostat settings. For one major c-store, raising air conditioning set points by two degrees and lowering heating set points by two degrees saved more than 6,000 locations by as much as five million dollars annually.

3) REFRIGERATION

The bad news is refrigeration can be one of the largest consumers of energy in the c-store environment. The good news is there are some easy fixes operators can implement right away to help make a difference in energy saving efforts.

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Start by checking settings on refrigerators and freezers so they're running at optimal temperatures. Also check to make sure doors are sealed properly and that air is not leaking in or out.



A longer term solution for saving energy in a c-store's refrigeration program is to make sure the compressor system is efficient and has the ability to operate only when needed. Think about a defrost system that runs on timed cycles, for example. Even though the defrost might not be needed at that particular moment, when it operates on a timed cycle, it's wastes energy.



Likewise, using a refrigeration system that can reduce energy savings by as much as 50 percent while reducing the number of compressors required is also a great long-term idea, especially when those systems can also add built-in redundancy in the process.

DISCOVER THE BENEFITS OF AN ON-DEMAND DEFROST SYSTEM FROM ECO-SMART

Watch the Eco-Smart video, and discover this innovative solution that provides intelligent defrost control.

Click [here](#).

SEE HOW YOU CAN SAVE 50% ON YOUR REFRIGERATION BILL WITH ECO-COOL

Take a look at the award-winning Eco-Cool animation, and learn about all the benefits of single scroll compressors.

Click [here](#).