

According to ENERGY STAR, restaurants use from five to seven times more energy per square foot than any other commercial building type. When looking at Quick Serve Restaurants, or QSRs, that number can even be as high as 10 times more.

At the same time, overwhelming demands and limited space and resources can make lowering energy consumption a difficult task for foodservice operators. It doesn't have to be, though.

Here are seven tips for saving energy in your restaurant or foodservice operation:

1) **RETHINK YOUR LIGHTING.**

Lighting accounts for around 13 percent of total energy usage on average, and because it can generally just involve changing the types of bulbs, it's a great place to start an energy-savings program.

Consider using energy-efficient bulbs, dimming switches, or movement-activated sensors to keep lights off when they're not needed. LED lighting can also be implemented for signage, and train employees to shut off lights in areas of the establishment when they're not in use.

2) **REDUCE HEATED WATER CONSUMPTION.**

Heating water can be a big drain on a restaurant's energy bill. Ways to conserve include using ware washing machines that efficiently convert heat exhaust to increase water temps, or simply make sure ware washing machines are completely full before running a cycle. In addition, heat can even be transferred from refrigeration compressor systems to pre-heat hot water.





3) CREATE AN EFFICIENT VENTILATION AND HVAC SYSTEM.

Poor kitchen ventilation has a range of negative effects. From unbearable ambient air temperatures that are horrible for employees, to inefficiently making up air, these can have a negative impact on an operation's bottom line.

Consider on-demand kitchen ventilation systems that only operate when they're needed. With high grade sensors, it's possible for ventilation fans and exhaust hoods to only be in operation when needed. This saves money in two ways. First, the equipment is only using electricity when it's needed. Second, the operation isn't required to "make up" as much conditioned air.

To show staff it's important, consider a meeting on energy consumption or post signs in the kitchen.

4) RE-TRAIN STAFF.

Let's face it. The people who use the equipment are the ones who are ultimately responsible for using the energy. As we mentioned above, when you train your staff to turn off lights or switch off equipment when it's not in use, the operation will ultimately use less energy. To show staff it's important, consider a meeting on energy consumption or post signs in the kitchen.

5) USE ENERGY-EFFICIENT EQUIPMENT.

Sure, we touched on this in pretty much every section above, but what does using energy-efficient equipment actually mean? First of all, operators should research their needs and their expectations from an energy consumption standpoint to find out which options are the most economical from a long term perspective. In addition, consider efficiency rating standards like ENERGY STAR to make sure equipment is meeting standards.

Another aspect of energy-efficient equipment is to make sure it is well-maintained. Equipment in less-than-ideal operating conditions will ultimately wind up consuming more energy. Create a maintenance schedule.



6) CONSULT WITH POWER COMPANIES.

Utility companies will often provide consumption assessments that tell restaurants and foodservice operations how much energy they use and how much that power costs. This is a great benchmark opportunity to begin a conservation plan.

7) USE EFFICIENT REFRIGERATION SYSTEMS.

Commercial kitchen refrigeration can be one of the most expensive aspects of any foodservice business. Whether it's a walk-in freezer or refrigerator, those units need to have a proper seal, an efficient compressor system, and the ability to operate only when needed in order to save energy.

Using the right refrigeration solutions can result in reduced energy savings by up to 50 percent, while at the same time gaining built in redundancy on the entire system. Likewise, a smart defrost system in a walk-in freezer will only operate when the risk of frost build up is present, also reducing energy consumption.

**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](#).