



Energy Star: Low- and No-Cost Energy Efficiency Measures

Energy Star has listed some great low/no-cost energy efficiency measures in the link attached to this piece.* You may not notice, but there are potentially low-hanging fruits left in your facility. In this piece, I will go into more detail with regards to some of the measures.

Operations and Maintenance:

- Conducting a nighttime audit. This involves going through your facility after hours to see what equipment is running. Often, you may find things like lighting or fans/pumps running when they don't need to be. For added benefit, review interval utility data prior to see if this is the case and try to pinpoint the loads.
- Revise janitorial practices to reduce hours that lights are turned on during each day. This may be tougher due to the COVID-19 pandemic however, during after hours, you can work to create a process that is efficient for both cleaning and energy.
- Visually inspect insulation on piping, ducts and other equipment. You'll easily be able to detect leaks and torn insulation especially on make-up air units. See Figure 1.



Figure 1 - Torn Insulation on a MUA Unit

Lighting:

- Remove unnecessary lamps and de-lamp overlit areas. It's easy to visually make out when an area is overlit with an eye test and you can even use a lux meter to see if that's the case.

Office Equipment:

- Enable the power management function on office computers. Most monitors have the ability to switch into off or power-saving modes. If you are a tenant, ensure that there is a policy within the office and if you are a landlord, try to work with the tenants to implement best practices such as this one.
- Use a smart power bar where you can. This will allow you to control which devices can be turned off when they are not in use.

Heating and Cooling:

- Replace filters regularly and ensure there is a schedule that is being followed. Air-handling unit filters need to be replaced and if you do not change them in time, the motors work harder resulting in greater energy consumption.
- Using shades or blinds to control heat gain. This is an important one which is often overlooked and can work wonders when implemented.
- Keeping doors closed can save a lot of energy as well. Doors may be open in the loading dock areas and other places where conditioned space meets unconditioned space.

Communication and Education:

- Educate employees and building occupants about their behavior and the effects on energy use. Create a "Green Team" in the facility and have members from tenant firms be on the team to increase user engagement.
- Reward tenants or employees for displaying change in their environment. This can be used to create healthy competition between employees and tenants.

*Energy Star Article:

<https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/existing-buildings/save-energy/stamp-out-energy-waste>



Written by Irfaan Hasham