

Seven Energy-Saving Resolutions for 2011

Key Points

- The New Year presents an opportunity to change the way your organization uses energy.
- Measure and track energy use, establish a conservation culture, and get everyone involved.
- Efficiency and conservation should be a part of your business strategy all year long.
- Take the next step and make your business more energy efficient. Learn about energy-saving opportunities and rebates available from Progress Energy. Click [here](#) to learn more.



Source: <http://www.sxc.hu/>

The New Year is a time for resolutions—a good time to make a fresh start. For many businesses, the beginning of January will mean a new operating budget as well. Developing an energy-saving strategy provides a real opportunity to change the way you do business by cutting costs, reducing emissions, and increasing profitability. Ranging from simple measures like tracking and assessing energy use, to integrating efficiency and conservation into your management strategy and corporate culture, the seven energy-saving resolutions that follow will not only reduce energy costs at your facility, they will change the way your company uses energy as well:

1. Conduct an energy investigation. An energy audit of your facility is a great way to begin the New Year. In the midst of day-to-day operations, it is difficult to monitor energy use and determine what efficiency measures would prove most effective. An energy audit will help you identify energy losses that can be corrected through regular maintenance, improved operating practices, or building retrofits. Conduct a walk-through energy audit or hire an energy consultant for a more detailed analysis. As a first step, try the [Facility Assessment Wizard](#).
2. Look for energy-saving opportunities. This sounds easy, but often it is harder than you might think. The key is to be proactive. In most facilities, energy-saving opportunities abound in places where you might not think to look. For example, networking printers can save a surprising amount of energy in office areas. Well-placed landscaping can significantly reduce your heating and cooling costs. For more examples, see [Ten Energy-Saving Ideas \(That You Might Not Have Thought About\)](#).
3. Focus on energy-efficient operations and maintenance. The primary goal of preventive maintenance (PM) is to optimize equipment reliability and lifespan. Through poor control strategies or over-scheduling, even well-maintained equipment can waste significant amounts of energy. PM should be redefined to include activities that emphasize energy-efficient operations. To optimize efficiency, a PM plan should include:
 - Periodic reviews of space conditioning, lighting schedules, and temperature setpoints to be used in conjunction with defining occupant use requirements.
 - Seasonal adjustment of control strategies for the heating and cooling seasons and months in between
 - Procedures for tracking actual equipment performance against expected performance
4. Account for every kilowatt. You cannot manage your energy costs unless you know what they are. Energy accounting will provide real data on how much energy your organization uses and the associated costs. It communicates this information to management and staff, serving as a framework for energy management efforts. Energy accounting will help you make comparisons among different facilities, monitor changes over time, prioritize energy investments, and track their progress. For more information, see [For the Record: Energy Accounting Helps Manage Costs](#). To note: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy offer an energy management tool that would allow a user to track and assess energy and water consumption across the entire portfolio of buildings. It is called Portfolio Manager. For more information click [here](#).
5. Start a conservation culture. While energy-saving retrofits and efficient equipment are vital to a more sustainable future, it is easy to lose sight of how energy is used. Energy consumption behavior is equally

important. Companies that take a back-to-basics conservation approach of turning things off, turning things down, cleaning, and maintaining, quickly realize significant energy reductions at little or no cost. See [Saving Energy the Old-Fashioned Way](#) for examples of how organizations have achieved significant energy and cost savings through simple conservation measures.

6. Get everyone involved. Efficiency and conservation cannot just be the province of the facility manager and a few dedicated individuals. It takes the cooperation of everyone involved. Energy awareness throughout an organization has to be more than just a policy statement; it involves training, incentives and assigned responsibilities. For more detail, see [Get Energy Savings Working for You](#).
7. Make energy efficiency a part of your business strategy. Efficiency and conservation reduces energy use. A sustained energy management program that is part of your overall business strategy will also reduce operating costs, increase productivity, lower emissions, and improve workplace safety. Also these types of initiatives may also qualify for rebates from energy efficiency incentive programs offered by your local utility company. Please refer to your local utility company for what incentive programs are offered. A successful energy management program should be a company-wide effort, integrated with other management programs such as quality, safety, and environmental. See [Best Practices in Energy Management](#) for details on how other organizations have benefited from this approach.

Saving Energy is a Year-Round Effort

New Year's resolutions are notoriously difficult to maintain. That is why these resolutions are designed to make energy efficiency and conservation part of your organization's business strategy. By following through on these resolutions, your organization will have a profitable and productive year in 2011 and beyond.

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