



Top Energy Saving Tips – the Energy Smart Office Tenancy

by Andrew Fairs

These tips are in general order, but it is possible to start at any point.

Assumed is: buy-in from organisational Executive – *but this is a big assumption, and must be obtained in order to achieve results!*

The Top Energy Saving Tips include organisational, behavioural and simple technology tips – all will give quick energy saving gains:

1. **Make someone responsible** – and allocate a title such as *Energy Executive*, or *Energy Manager*. Set up an Energy Management Team with representatives from different areas of your operations.
2. **Energy Management Policy and Action Plan** – develop a clear policy and list of actions to improve energy efficiency in your office and ensure that the Executive signs off on them. This is an existing requirement of the Energy Smart Government and *CitySwitch* programs.
3. **Set up energy benchmarking** – Monitor energy use to learn about the usage patterns in your office and see the effect of initiatives you implement. If possible, read the energy meters in your office regularly, or alternatively check energy usage from your bills. Use the NABERS Energy rating tool to benchmark your office.
4. **Get buy-in from staff** – set up appropriate awareness and behaviour changing programs for staff. Look at using posters and stickers to promote the message, educational and information materials with competitions and award recognition for *Energy Champions*.
5. **Regular reviews of energy data and benchmarks** – provide regular feedback to staff and the Executive. There are many suitable avenues including weekly e-mails, office intranet and organisational sustainability reporting. It is essential to publicise results and achievements to staff on a regular basis.
6. **Lighting; review and de-lamping of existing lighting** – use a light meter and lighting knowledge to bring about a reduction in the number of lamps utilised. This may also identify and address any areas with low light. Include staff in the process and ask for feedback (but be ready for issues as they may not have been asked anything like this before).
7. **Lighting; clear labelling of light switches** – ensure staff know which switch operates the lights in their area. Combine this with a policy that outlines responsibilities for turning on and off to provide direction to staff. Ensure that cleaners are also educated to turn lights off when finished.
8. **Switch off PCs & other office equipment** – ensure equipment is turned off outside work hours when it isn't required. Check with your IT department to ensure equipment can be safely turned off and how to enable *Energy Star* and other energy saving features on PCs, photocopiers etc.
9. **Purchase Energy Smart** – use Energy Star Labelling to choose energy efficient office equipment. Purchase high star rated refrigerators and other kitchen appliances - *Reach for the Stars!* Choose laptops or PCs with LCD screens rather than CRT monitors and look for the Energy Star logo on all electronic equipment. Tip: purchase of energy efficient office equipment is often missed in development of **Action Plans**.
10. **Work with the Building or Facilities Manager** – they have a lot of knowledge and also have control over central services such as air conditioning. Engage with the Building Manager and make them an extension to your Energy Management Team. Ask them if the temperature set-points can be adjusted to reduce energy use, or if the operating times can be changed to be consistent with your operations.