

Top energy saving tips for restaurants



In the dining room:

☛ Switch to energy saving lighting

- Tungsten halogen spot lighting is commonly found in restaurants. Savings can be achieved by using 35W bulbs with an infrared reflective coating (IRC) instead of the standard 50W bulbs. The IRC reduces the power required to light the lamp but gives the same equivalent light output as a standard 50W bulb whilst achieving a 30% energy saving.
- If you have old fashioned T12 or T8 fluorescent tube lighting in the restaurant have them replaced with newer energy efficient T5 type tubes using converter kits. Up to 30% can be saved on energy.
- Did you know - Fluorescent tubes use only a few seconds' worth of power in start up, therefore, energy is always saved by switching them off when they are not required.
- Replace all incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs and make savings of up to £25 over the lifetime of each bulb. Compact fluorescent and LED bulbs are now available for many spotlight fittings, such as GU10 fittings, which means all your light fittings can be energy efficient. A good place to start looking for energy efficient lamps is www.megamanuk.com.
- Put your toilet and stockroom lights on timer switches or motion sensors to cut your lighting bill.

☛ **Turn down the thermostat in your restaurant.** Don't leave your diners shivering, but a 1°C reduction in temperature will hardly be noticed and can shave 7% off your energy bills. Fit thermostatic radiator valves (TRVs) in the kitchens. TRVs will reduce the amount of heat output from radiators as the kitchen fills with heat from staff and food preparation activities.

☛ **Maintain boilers and pipework:** Have boilers serviced regularly by a reputable firm. Gas-fired boilers should be serviced once a year. A regularly serviced boiler can save as much as 10% on annual heating costs. Boilers, hot water tanks, pipes and valves should be insulated to prevent heat escaping. Payback can usually be expected within a few months of installation, with additional savings in subsequent years.

☛ **Set appropriate hot water temperatures:** Excessive heating of hot water is wasteful and could scald staff or diners. The optimum temperature for stored hot water is 60°C which is adequate to kill Legionella bacteria and is sufficiently warm for staff and guests to use.

In the kitchen:

Around 25% of the energy used in catering is expended in the preparation, cooking and serving of food. By far the largest proportion of this energy is consumed by cooking apparatus and much of this is wasted through excessive use and poor utilisation.

☛ **Appoint 'Energy Champions':** members of staff who turn off lights, ovens, equipment etc when not in use between service and make sure that the heating and hot water are set at the right temperature. Elect one for the kitchen and one for front of house.

 **'Switch off' policy – involve staff and increase awareness.** Some organisations have achieved savings in excess of 15% simply through the adoption of good housekeeping measures, reinforced through effective staff training and regular refresher courses. Make it easy for staff to save energy. Gas burners are often left alight when not being used because of the inconvenience of finding a light during busy periods. Fit in-built piezo-electric spark generators to stop this. Similarly, minimise oven door openings by fitting easily visible oven thermometers – this also helps to achieve more accurate cooking times.

 **Label switches, sockets and equipment.** Most kitchen staff switch everything on when they arrive without thinking about whether the equipment needs to be on or not. Labelling switches and sockets encourages staff to read the labels a switch on only what is necessary. Similarly, switching on at the right time can make a big difference. Most modern catering equipment reaches optimum temperature quickly. Label all equipment with preheat times and educate staff to switch on only when required.

 **Fit an E-Cube to your refrigerator.** This small wax cube ensures cycles are less frequent and last longer, while food temperature remains constant, meaning that it could cut your energy bills by up to 30 per cent. Make sure refrigeration temperatures are set appropriately; refrigeration temperatures set 1 °C too low can increase running costs by 2-4%. Refer to the Food Standards Agency or your food supplier for more specific information relating to temperature control and your food storage requirements.

 **Ventilation units and extractor hood grease filters should be cleaned at regular intervals,** as recommended by the manufacturer. Regular cleaning of ventilation systems can increase efficiency by as much as 50% compared with systems that are not maintained. Energy consumption can increase by up to 60% if regular maintenance is not undertaken. Dirty or faulty fans, air ducts and components directly affect system efficiency and will increase running costs and risk of breakdown.