



Save energy when shutting down commercial buildings

Save energy when leaving a building unoccupied. Just follow these simple energy-saving tips from Avista. The larger your facility, the more you can save.

Leaving Lights On

If you are concerned about security, it's smart to leave at least one light on to deter burglars (or to put a few lights on an automatic timer). If you do leave any lights on, just make sure they are all LEDs, which use the least amount of energy. Businesses with a security fence should turn off all their lighting. Just make sure to close and lock your fence.

Unplug Energy-Nabbing Devices

Few people realize it, but electronics and appliances use energy even when they are off. These "parasitic load" devices include printers, scanners, personal entertainment systems, personal computers and other at-the-ready equipment that may be located throughout your offices. Unplugging these devices before you leave will save energy while you're temporarily away.

Curtains and Blinds

Save on heating and cooling by making sure all the windows of your building are closed and locked and that curtains and blinds are shut. This helps heat from coming in during the summer and prevents heat loss in the winter.

Refrigeration

A refrigerator can use up to \$80 a year in electricity—even if it's not opened. To save energy, empty the contents of all refrigerators, unplug them, and open the doors (block them so they stay open). The same goes for any miniature refrigerators as well, and be sure to turn off lights in walk-in refrigerators. Also check to see if you have other types of refrigeration systems that can be shut off. You'll save money by pulling the plug on water coolers not being used, as well. If your business uses air compressors, shut them all off if there is not work occurring in the building. Although air compressors may not sound as if they're running, they will come on every time there is a slight drop in pressure. Last but not least, as you turn devices off, put sticky notes on them to remind people that they should be off (and as a reminder for you to turn them back on when you return).

HVAC Systems

If you must shorten the occupancy hours of your building, also shorten the operating time of your HVAC system and automated lighting systems by changing the programming in your EMS system, programmable thermostats, or manual thermostats. If your building will be unoccupied for several weeks, consider lowering your HVAC heating set point to 45°F. This will create a noticeable drop in HVAC usage and should not pose a problem to the building, as long as you monitor for extended periods of freezing temperatures.

Water Heater

Save electricity or natural gas by turning down your water heater when you leave. A water heater consumes 25% of its energy to keep the tank of water warm—even if hot water is not being used. When lowering the water temperature, set it above 115°F or below 75°F to prevent the growth of Legionella bacteria, which can cause illness. If you think you'll be away for an extended period, shut off your water heater completely. Make sure your circulation pumps are off, as well.