

Five Simple Steps for Saving Money, Energy, and the Environment: A Guide for Building Owners and Managers

There are many easy and affordable ways to improve the overall energy efficiency of your building. Whether you replace older, less efficient appliances and systems



with new high-efficiency units, convert your lighting to compact fluorescents, or improve the weather sealing of the building, you can deliver all of the services your tenants expect while using just a fraction of the energy. In addition, partnering with your tenants to help them better understand how to conserve energy is a great way to build a relationship while reducing costs for all involved.

1. Conduct an Energy Audit and Become Eligible for Financial Assistance for Efficiency Upgrades

■ Work with NYSERDA and a third party Energy Service Company (ESCO) to benchmark your energy usage relative to a set of similar buildings. By agreeing to reach an energy efficiency performance target, you can qualify to receive a variety of NYSERDA incentives and reduced loans if you achieve those targets. For example, a building with more than 30 apartments would receive an initial \$2500, \$300 per unit when the energy plan is 50 percent complete, and another \$300 per unit upon completion. Additional incentives are available for affordable housing.

An Energy Reduction Plan may include: energy management systems; boiler and water heater replacement; insulation, duct sealing, and weatherstripping; high efficiency lighting upgrades; and many more items which are eligible for the NYSERDA multi-family performance program.

Further resources (including auditors, contractors, and other partners) are available at the NYSERDA website at www.getenergysmart.org.

2. Work with Tenants and Unit Owners on Energy Efficiency Projects

■ Provide tenants with information and access to materials on efficiency and conservation. NRDC and REBNY have prepared a flyer for you to distribute to occupants of your buildings that includes tips for simple ways to save energy like replacing incandescent lighting with compact fluorescents (CFLs) and taking advantage of energy-saving settings on appliances when available.

■ Additionally, you may want to have your building staff offer to help find and seal air leaks and insulate windows or install ceiling fans and low-flow showerheads, faucets, and toilets in individual apartments.



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3. Swap Appliances for Energy Star Models

■ As you replace old appliances, or install new ones, use only those models with Energy Star certification. This ensures they meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by the U.S. EPA and U.S. Department of Energy. Energy savings here count towards your NYSEERDA performance targets, which qualify you for the incentives mentioned above.

■ Installing Energy Star appliances in laundry rooms is a particularly good way save energy and money in your building.

4. Reduce Energy Demands for Heating Water

■ Look into tuning your boiler and heating systems. Insulating hot water pipes and hot water tanks can be an effective method to save money, as can operating the heater at 120°F. Through reconfiguration and tuning of the existing heating

system, a typical 15 to 30 unit building can save 200 to 300 gallons of heating fuel per apartment per year.

■ Installing a rooftop solar thermal system can meet 25 percent to 55 percent of a small residential building's water heating needs and can pay back the investment in four to eight years through fuel savings.

5. Update Lighting Systems to Use Less Energy

■ Connect lights to automated timers or install motion sensors to reduce use of electricity where allowed, such as storage rooms, bike rooms, laundry rooms, supervisor's offices, and tool rooms. In addition, switch all incandescent bulbs in common areas to compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and switch all T12 linear fluorescent lights to T8 linear fluorescent lights with electronic ballasts.

The following chart details cost savings and CO₂ emissions reductions gained by switching out older lights with new Energy Star lighting.

Lighting Upgrade	Upfront Cost	Annual Cost Savings	Annual Reduction in CO ₂ Emissions
Install motion sensors	\$600 to 900	\$845	7,675 lbs
Switch to CFLs	\$300	\$1,690	15,350 lbs
Switch to T8 fluorescents with electronic ballasts	\$3,400	\$800	n/a

Reduce Pesticide Use and Get Better Pest Control

■ Switch to prevention-based pest control practices that address the underlying causes of a pest problem (e.g. eliminate food sources, entry points, and shelters) instead of spraying when pests are present. Ask your pest control company to provide you with an environmentally friendly pest control service as certified by Green Shield Certified (www.greenshieldcertified.org). For even more impact, you can get your entire facility certified by Green Shield.

■ Adopting a prevention-based pest service can result in increased short-term costs to address deferred maintenance issues (e.g. installing door sweeps, caulking to keep pests out, improving sanitation, etc.), but these costs are likely to be offset by reduced future pest control costs as pest pressure decreases. In addition, the adoption of prevention-based pest control practices will result in reduced pesticide exposures, reduced pesticide run-off, and improved pest control.

For more information and additional ways to save energy and money, please visit us at www.nrdc.org and www.rebny.com.

