

Tips for Saving Energy at School

- **Make it a group effort**

The adage "four hands are better than two, and eight hands are better than four" is especially applicable where energy conservation is concerned. By creating a school-wide campaign to reduce energy consumption, involving students, administrators, teachers and staff, you will reduce the amount of work to be done by a small task force and engage hundreds of "hands" to expedite and enhance the process.

- **Seal air leaks**

One of the biggest energy wasters involves losing hot or cold air through windows, doors or openings that are not airtight. These can be detected by placing your hand near the place in question to determine if you can feel a slight breeze or difference in temperature. Placing airtight seals around doors and windows and plugging cracks or unused openings will help to alleviate these energy wasting leaks.

- **Use energy efficient lighting options**

Making the switch to energy efficient light bulbs reduces energy consumption by about 75 percent. These bulbs can have a usable life that is up to 10 times longer than traditional incandescent light bulbs.

- **Power down**

So often, energy is wasted by powering rooms or areas that are not being used. Making a conscious effort to turn off lights, close blinds and shut vents when these areas are not in use will significantly impact energy consumption in large facilities.

- **Take the day off**

When hot or cold temperatures reach extremes, it expends so much more energy to maintain desirable temperatures in a large building. Amending school policies to call for closures when temperatures reach extremes can significantly reduce the impact of energy consumption.

- **Watch the thermostat**

Adjusting the thermostat by only a couple of degrees can make a tremendous impact on energy consumption when you are attempting to heat or cool an entire school. Try turning the thermostat down two degrees in the winter and up two degrees in the warmer months.

- **Change with the seasons**

During winter days, take advantage of our greatest natural resource, the sun. Open shades and blinds on southern facing windows to create additional natural heat. Close all shades and blinds after school hours to keep in warmth during the evening hours. If utilizing the school's facilities during the warmer months, keep all blinds closed to conserve cool air.

- **Shut the door**

Keeping classroom and office doors closed during class and not propping doors open between classes will ensure that the comfortable air in the classroom isn't lost in the hallway.

- **Turn on the fan**

The time tested effectiveness of the fan is not to be argued. From ceiling fans to smaller desk and floor fans, keeping the blades turning will keep the air in classrooms and common areas circulating and cooler in the warmer months.

- **Install skylights in common areas**

This may prove to be more permanent and costly than the other solutions, but installing skylights in common areas can significantly reduce both cost and energy consumption used in lighting these areas.