

Department of Climate Change,  
Energy, the Environment and Water

# NSW Consumer Energy Strategy

Powering our people  
and communities

Energy saving tips for small businesses



[energy.nsw.gov.au/energy-strategy](https://energy.nsw.gov.au/energy-strategy)



# Saving money and power across NSW

The NSW Government's new \$290 million plan helps households and small businesses benefit from our transition to more sustainable energy.

Our goal is to ensure everyone can access energy saving technologies. Whatever your situation, there is support available for you.

## Using this guide

This guide is for you if you have a small business in a non-residential property which uses less than 100 megawatt-hours of electricity or 1,000 gigajoules of gas per year. It provides clear steps on how to save money, and make your work environment more comfortable and sustainable.

We start with free and simple steps, before moving onto more substantial investment options. You can work your way through each step or jump straight to the guidance most relevant to you.

Throughout, you'll see links and references to helpful resources that are easy to find online.

## Start saving energy at your business today

STEP 1

Easy, low-cost tips

STEP 2

Simple upgrades

STEP 3

Longer-term business investments

# Step 1. Easy, low-cost tips

Many of these tips are suitable for tenants as well as building owners.

Start saving money and energy with quick, low-cost actions you can take today.



## Get the best deal

Visit [Energy Made Easy](#) to compare your energy plan with others and see if you could be getting a better deal. This simple check could save you over \$1,000 a year.



## Measure and understand your energy use

It's much easier to reduce your costs when you know how you're using your energy. You can assess this with the following actions:

- Install a smart meter – a device that connects with your electricity provider to measure how much energy you use, and when you use it.
- Book an energy audit with a local service provider who can advise you on energy efficiency for your business.
- Get a [NABERS assessment](#) for your non-residential building. If you're a tenant, speak to your agent or building manager.



## Adjust your workplace habits

Small actions can save you a lot of money. Did you know that adjusting your heater or air conditioner by just one degree can reduce its energy consumption by 10%?

Train your staff to reduce energy costs with the following habits:

- Switch off lights, computers, coffee machines and air conditioning when not in use and turn them off at the wall. This could save a medium sized cafe about \$800 a year.
- Clean any fridge door seals to improve their efficiency.
- Set your thermostat to 23-26 degrees in summer and 18-21 degrees in winter, saving a medium sized cafe at least \$145 a year.
- Put your air conditioner on a timer, or use the automatic switch-off setting at a certain temperature.



## Key resources:

For more energy saving tips, visit [energy.nsw.gov.au](https://energy.nsw.gov.au)

# Step 2. Simple upgrades

You can boost your energy savings by choosing relatively simple upgrades to maintain and replace items on your premises.



## Replace your lights

Swap any halogen light bulbs for LEDs, which use 75% less energy and last up to 10 times longer.



## Upgrade your appliances

If you have a business appliance, such as a fridge, coming to the end of its life, choosing a more efficient replacement could save you money. Look for a high star rating through the [Energy Rating Label](#) to know if you're choosing an efficient option.



## Upgrade your water system

Your hot water system can account for a larger portion of your electricity bill than you might think. You could:

- Install water-efficient tap fixtures.
- Install a hot water heat pump, which is eligible for incentives under the Energy Savings Scheme.
- If your hot water is centralised, speak to your building manager about replacing it with an efficient heat pump system.



## Upgrade your heating and cooling system

Heating and cooling large business spaces can be very energy intensive. If your air conditioning system reaches its end of life, look at options to replace it with an energy-efficient alternative.

If you're a tenant, arrange a meeting with your building manager to recommend an efficient alternative system.

There are incentives available for all of these upgrades through our [Energy Saving Scheme](#).



### Key resources:

To learn more about the Energy Savings Scheme and upgrading business fridges, air conditioning and hot water systems, visit [www.energy.nsw.gov.au/business-equipment-upgrades](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au/business-equipment-upgrades)

Many of these tips are suitable for tenants as well as building owners.

## Energy upgrades in action

### Meet cafe owners, Priya and Dev

Priya and Dev recently purchased a cafe in Newcastle. They wanted to reduce their energy costs and lower the cafe's emissions.

Priya first decided to see if they were paying a competitive rate for their energy. She visited Energy Made Easy and found they could be saving money by switching to a more competitive offer.

Dev found a local provider to conduct an energy audit. This found that the cafe's air conditioner was nearing the end of its life, its hot water system had a few years left and its lighting was inefficient, but its electric induction cooking system was excellent for efficiency.

After their initial research, Priya and Dev decided to:

- speak to a local electrician and swap out all the lights in the cafe for LEDs
- invest in a new efficient split AC system, with incentives under the Energy Savings Scheme
- replace their gas hot water system with a hot water heat pump, with incentives under the Energy Savings Scheme
- disconnect their gas supply.

In total, these actions will save Priya and Dev **\$2,860 a year**, leaving more money in their pocket for running their business!



# How Priya and Dev saved money with an energy efficient cafe

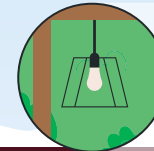
They save **\$285** in annual gas supply charges by having an all-electric cafe



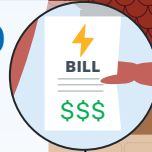
They save about **\$740** per year with efficient air conditioning



They save about **\$250** per year with LED lighting



They save about **\$1030** per year by switching to the most competitive retail electricity plan



They save about **\$555** per year with an electric hot water heat pump



NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water analysis, 2024

# Step 3. Longer-term business investments

Many of these tips are suitable for tenants as well as building owners.

With the support of NSW Government resources and incentives, there are larger energy upgrades you can make to your business. These will provide secure, sustainable and affordable energy into the future.



## Install a solar and battery system

Generating and storing your own energy through solar can provide significant long-term cost savings.

You could be eligible to receive a discount on a new [battery installation](#).



## Review your building efficiency

To improve the efficiency and sustainability of your building, consider renovating to increase its NABERS rating. This can help yield long-term savings, as well as ensure a more comfortable work environment for your team.

Alternatively, whether you rent or own, look at moving to a more efficient office with higher environmental standards.



## Upgrade your company vehicles

If you use company vehicles, an electric vehicle (EV) or fleet could save you thousands. For vehicles held and used since 1 July 2022, employers do not pay fringe benefits tax on eligible EVs and associated expenses. You can make charging easy by installing charging infrastructure at your workplace.

You could also save on fuel costs by choosing a more efficient, lower emissions vehicle and comparing options using the [Vehicle Emissions Star Rating](#) system.



## Key resources:

To learn more about solar and battery systems, read the Solar Consumer Guide at [energy.gov.au/solar](https://energy.gov.au/solar)

To learn more about NSW Government incentives and the Energy Security Safeguard, visit [energy.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry](https://energy.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry)

To learn more about the NABERS program, visit: [nabers.gov.au](https://nabers.gov.au)

To learn more about EV fringe benefits and fleets, visit [ato.gov.au/businesses-and-organisations](https://ato.gov.au/businesses-and-organisations)

