

Energy Efficient Restaurants Here's a Hot Idea

Businesses across Maine are taking action to save money on their electric bills. Efficiency Maine's cash incentives are helping businesses lower their energy and maintenance costs while improving comfort, safety and security. With rising energy prices and cash incentives available, now is the time to act.

Fans on Demand Federal Jack's

KENNEBUNKPORT— Federal Jack's Restaurant and Brew Pub in Kennebunkport needed to change its exhaust system for its 160 seat restaurant. The restaurant's business had increased over the years, and the original system was causing smoke and temperature fluctuations in the dining area. The new energy efficient variable speed system monitors the temperature of the air and controls all the hood fans so the ideal ambiance is maintained for guests and staff. Jim Bunting, Director of Operations said, "While we are grateful for the incentive check and the energy savings, the real benefit to us is that the fans allow us to control the temperature in our dining rooms, game area and kitchens.

Control over these distinctly different zones has resulted in a dramatic improvement in the comfort level for our guests which is fundamental to our business."



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Jim Bunting added, "Perhaps of equal importance is that our kitchen's ambient temperature remains steady and comfortable, which we know contributes to a happier, more productive kitchen and improved staff retention."
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Bright Lights, Big Savings Bull N' Claw Restaurant

WELLS — When Daryl Tudisco opened his restaurant in Wells over thirty years ago, his motto was “Think smart...work harder...give the customer more for their money.” Today, Daryl continues to operate his 250 seat restaurant with that motto in mind and sees energy efficiency as an important part of giving his customers value. Tudisco’s energy saving effort doesn’t stop there. He is continually looking for ways to save on energy, including switching from one large walk-in freezer to chest freezers. He also recently converted his truck to run on the waste fryolator oil from the restaurant kitchen.



Tudisco said, “When we did the numbers, we realized we could save thousands of dollars per year by replacing many of our incandescent bulbs with CFLs and switching to LED exit lights. Now that the prices of CFL bulbs are dropping, it makes sense for everyone to use them where they can.”



Owner Sharon Sevigny said, “We only had the new air conditioner for part of the summer but are thrilled with the effectiveness of our new unit. It cools everything off much faster.”



Cool Comfort Jonesy's Café

BIDDEFORD — When Jonesy's Main Street Café needed a new central air conditioning system last summer, owner Sharon Sevigny was pleased to learn that for a few hundred dollars more she could upgrade to a more energy efficient unit. The owner of the 60 seat Biddeford café, which serves breakfast and lunch, liked the idea of the energy savings she would receive from the more efficient unit. She said, “Our vendor told us we were eligible for the Efficiency Maine incentive, which paid the difference between the standard and the higher efficiency equipment. It was a no-brainer, especially when they told us the energy efficient unit was a much better piece of equipment.” Sevigny was also pleased to learn that the lower energy usage of the new unit had a significant impact on the café's demand (kW) charge.

Top Ways to Invest in Efficiency

1. Upgrade the lighting, especially in areas where you are still using incandescent bulbs for general lighting in rooms and throughout your building. The new compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) provide good quality light and last longer than incandescent bulbs. If you have decorative lighting that operates 24/7, consider using CFLs or LED (Light Emitting Diode) bulbs.
2. Replace T12 lamps and ballasts with T8 or T8 high performance systems.
3. Replace incandescent exit signs with LED or solid-state exit signs. These newer technology exit signs save enough energy to pay for themselves in less than one year and will last for at least ten years, and require no maintenance.
4. You may also want to consider replacing incandescent and neon signage with LED signage. This technology has advanced rapidly and prices have dropped considerably in recent years.
5. Use occupancy sensors in less frequently used areas, like storage rooms and restrooms.
6. Proper maintenance of your freezers and refrigerators can dramatically improve efficiency. Clean cooling coils several times a year. Make sure the doors on your freezers and refrigerators seal tightly and repair any damaged door seals.
7. Make sure the temperature settings in your cooler and freezers match the requirements of the product being cooled and use "on demand" defrost control settings rather than timed defrost.
8. When it is time for new refrigeration/freezer equipment, cooking equipment, HVAC and lighting, take into account what it will cost to operate the equipment. Look for ENERGY STAR® qualified commercial solid door refrigerators and freezers, fryers, hot food holding cabinets and steam cookers.
9. Variable speed controls on your exhaust hoods can dramatically reduce the amount of time the fans run.
10. Create a start-up and shut-down schedule for appliances so that fans, lights and other equipment are only operating when required. Post a list to make it easier for employees.
11. Consider upgrading your air conditioning unit to a high efficiency unit. You may find that the cost savings and increased comfort for both your customers and employees make it a worthwhile investment.
12. Regular maintenance of your heating, ventilation and cooling equipment is critical to having it operate at maximum efficiency.
13. Install programmable thermostats to reduce the energy used to operate your heating, ventilation and cooling system.
14. Use a VendingMiser® or CoolerMiser™ on your vending machine and cooler. These easy to install plug-ins can reduce a vending machine's energy use by 46% and have a payback of less than a year.
15. Check to make sure your hot water temperature is set at the minimum level. Any higher is unnecessary and wasting money.

Check with the Efficiency Maine Business Program before purchasing new electric equipment or supplies to find out how you can receive cash incentives. If you aren't sure how to get started, call us at 866-376-2463.

Referrals

Talk to your supplier or vendor about how you can improve the energy efficiency of your restaurant. If you need to locate a contractor who will assist you in determining the energy savings potential in your facility, or who can install or maintain energy efficient electric equipment, we have a network of Efficiency Maine Qualified Partners throughout the state who can offer guidance on how best to work with the program. You'll find the list at efficiencymaine.com or call 866-376-2463, ext. 1.

Training & Education

We offer training on a variety of topics in building and equipment management, including Building Operator Certification. For a list of current offerings, visit efficiencymaine.com or call 866-376-2463, ext. 1.

The Efficiency Maine Business Program offers self-survey tools and fact sheets. Of particular interest to those with restaurants:

- Fluorescent Lamps and Ballasts
- Vending Machines
- Water Heating
- Exit Signs
- Rooftop HVAC Units
- Programmable Thermostats
- Commercial Ice Makers
- Energy Efficient Refrigeration

Support & More Information

The Efficiency Maine Business Program staff will assist you with qualifying and applying for Efficiency Maine incentives, as well as other incentives and opportunities, such as the Small Business Energy Conservation Loan Program. Call us at 866-376-2463, ext. 1, for guidance on eligibility and resources. Or visit the website, efficiencymaine.com.



How EM Can Help Your Restaurant

Restaurants across Maine have received cash incentives for purchasing and installing qualifying energy efficient electric equipment through the Efficiency Maine Business Program. Efficiency Maine's Business Program offers:

Pre-established Cash Incentives

For all Maine businesses, the Efficiency Maine Business Program has pre-established cash incentives for:

- Qualified lighting
- Qualified HVAC equipment
- XLerator® hand dryers
- Adjustable speed drives for HVAC equipment
- NEMA Premium® motors

In addition, businesses employing 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees are eligible to use the "Quick & Easy" application and receive cash incentives on specified equipment, including:

- T8 lamps and ballasts
- Occupancy controls
- Solid state and LED exit signs
- Compact fluorescent bulbs
- Programmable thermostats
- VendingMiser®
- LED signage

In most cases, you must have your application pre-approved before you purchase equipment to be eligible for an incentive. Pre-approval is not necessary if you average 50 or fewer full-time equivalent employees corporate-wide, are applying for pre-established incentives using the Quick & Easy application, and are applying for an incentive of \$5,000 or less.

Custom Incentives

Other electric efficiency projects may also be eligible for "custom incentives." Custom incentives are calculated on a case-by-case basis and always require pre-approval. Call us at 866-376-2463, ext. 1, to discuss your ideas.

Showing its Best Light Geddy's Pub



BAR HARBOR — Arthur Davis, owner of Geddy's Pub, a 120 seat restaurant in Bar Harbor, had been looking for ways to reduce his electric bill. A couple years ago, he had looked into changing to more efficient lighting but was unable to find bulbs with the quality of light that he wanted. He was also unhappy that the lighting in his retail store was generating a lot of heat — a clear sign of wasted energy.



Davis commented, "The lights we recently bought for the restaurant and our retail store weren't available two years ago. We have to have lights that create the right atmosphere and show off our merchandise. The market now offers CFL bulbs that do that. We probably have better lighting in the kitchen line now, and we have put energy efficient lighting in most areas, including the basement and the office."