## SAVING ENERGY IN YOUR OFFICES

A practical guide on how humanitarian and development organisations can save money and protect the environment by using less energy



## WELCOME

This practical guide has been designed for humanitarian and development organisations who want to reduce the environmental impact of their operations, such as running their offices, and managing logistics and procurement. It aims to support them in how to use energy more efficiently and make greater use of energy from renewable sources. Saving energy brings multiple benefits: It helps organizations **save money**. It is also **good for the environment**, because using energy from non-renewable resources such as diesel, gas or coal causes air pollution and emits harmful emissions that contribute to climate change.

This document will help you understand:

- Which measures can save the most energy?
- How much time and money do they require?
- How can you implement them?
- What should you be careful about?

The guidance encourages organisations to choose the measures that are most realistic and effective in their context. It is part of a larger **package of resources designed to help organisations operate in a more eco-friendly manner**. Other resources in this package include a step-by-step guide on how to introduce various environmental measures in your organisation, an easy-to-use planning and reporting tool, practical checklists and guidance on additional topics, such as ensuring more eco-friendly transport, saving water, minimizing waste, making procurement more sustainable, and organizing events in an eco-friendly manner. You can access these additional resources through <u>this website</u>.

The guide is offered through the <u>Civil Society Now</u> platform that supports civil society organisations in developing their capacities. It was prepared in 2024 by <u>People in Need</u> as part of its efforts to **increase the environmental sustainability of humanitarian and development operations**. If you have any questions or suggestions on how to improve the guidance, please contact <u>petr.schmied@peopleinneed.net</u>.





## WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT SAVING ENERGY?

- Saving energy is one of the most effective ways to ensure that your office operations have a less negative impact on the environment.
- Different energy saving measures have **different levels of effectiveness** sometimes one measure can be more effective than ten others. This guide will help you focus on the most effective ones.
- An energy audit can give you accurate data on what consumes the most energy in your offices and how it can be reduced. Find out if an organisation or company can carry this out for your organisation.
- Some measures require larger **investments**, but most do not. Focus now on what you can do given your financial situation and try to find ways to finance the more expensive measures later.
- Some measures do not even require any investment they are about simple **behavioural changes** capable of bringing significant impact.
- When selecting energy-saving measures, it is crucial to **take a holistic approach** by assessing their fit with your organization's specific needs, budget constraints, local conditions, and all aspects of operations, from individual behaviours to system-wide processes, to ensure they are both realistic and impactful.

## **KEY TERMS TO UNDERSTAND**

- Climate change refers to long-term shifts in the Earth's weather patterns caused by human activities and natural processes. Effects include rising temperatures and altered precipitation.
- Greenhouse gas emissions refer to the release of greenhouse gases (e.g. carbon dioxide and methane) into the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat, warm our planet and lead to climate change.



- Energy efficiency is about using less energy to perform the same task. For example, efficient LED lights consume much less electricity than traditional lights.
- **Renewable energy** is energy that comes from natural sources that can be replenished, like sunlight, wind, and water.
- **Carbon footprint** refers to the total amount of greenhouse gases emitted due to activities of an individual, organization, or country (e.g. using diesel generators to produce electricity). Essentially, it's a measure of how much our actions contribute to climate change.

## HOW CAN YOU SAVE ENERGY?



There are dozens of different measures your organization can take to save energy and make greater use of energy from renewable sources. This guidance helps you **focus on the four most effective priorities**:

#### Priority #1: Heating and Air-Conditioning

- \$ <sup>(S)</sup> Inspect offices for any heat or cool air loss caused by poor insulation and address them
- \$ <sup>(S)</sup> Reduce the use of heating or air-conditioning
- \$\$\$ (3) If you use heating, consider whether more eco-friendly alternatives are available
- \$ (3) Regularly maintain heating and cooling systems to ensure their efficient operation
- \$ <sup>(III</sup>) Add greenery for natural insulation and cooling

#### Priority #2: Source of Energy

- \$\$\$ (3) (3) Switch to renewable energy, depending on available and context-relevant options
- \$\$ <sup>(S)</sup> Consider alternatives to a short-term use of generators

#### Priority #3: Energy-Efficient Appliances

- \$ (3) When purchasing appliances, prioritize those with the highest efficiency rating
- \$ (3) Eliminate standby power consumption
- ③ Change the setting of all computers so that they go into sleep mode after 20 minutes of inactivity
- ③ Regularly remind colleagues to delete bulky data they store on a cloud
- \$ (S) Ensure proper maintenance of appliances to achieve optimum performance and efficiency
- \$ (3) Do not purchase air conditioning units or fridges that contain harmful refrigerants

#### **Priority #4: Efficient Lighting**

- \$ (3) Change inefficient lighting to efficient LED lighting
- \$ <sup>(IIII</sup>) Ensure that lights are not left on unnecessarily
- <sup>(S)</sup> Make the most of natural light

TIME (S) AND MONEY \$

For each recommended measure, the symbols of money (\$) and time (<sup>(S)</sup>) indicate how demanding it is to implement the measure. The more symbols of \$ / <sup>(S)</sup> there are, the more initial funding / time investment is required. If the \$ symbol is not shown, it means that the measure does not cost (almost) anything to implement.

## **PRIORITY #1: HEATING AND AIR-CONDITIONING**



Heating and air conditioning often consume the most energy; significantly more than lights and other appliances. Therefore, it makes sense to focus on them first.

#### (S) Inspect buildings for any heat or cool air loss caused by poor insulation and address them as much as possible

**Why**: Heat or cool air leakages are like pouring water into a bucket with holes – a lot of it gets wasted. Addressing at least some of the leakages can significantly decrease your heating / cooling costs and reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

How: Inspect all the offices visually and ask colleagues to tell you about any instances when warm / cooled air unnecessarily leaks. The most common instances are likely to be:

- doors to an air-conditioned room are left open to a space that isn't air-conditioned
- poorly insulated doors (e.g. air leaking below the door)
- windows of a heated / cooled room are not closed properly or are not well-insulated
- gaps by the lights, wiring, and electrical outlets

Additional sources include uninsulated basements, walls, and roofs; however, these are much more expensive to insulate, and insulation might be unfeasible since most organizations rent their offices. Focus on what you can influence the most; also, consider how long your organisation is likely to use the given premises and any restrictions included in the rental contract. Possible measures might include:

- fixing any gaps below the doors or by the windows, which is likely to be most effective
- agreeing with staff that doors to a heated / cooled room will be kept closed
- using visual reminders to help people remember to keep the doors or windows closed (see example)
- using door closers (see image)
- addressing any other obvious gaps where air leaks



#### **\$** <sup>(1)</sup> **Reduce the use of heating or air-conditioning**

**Why**: It is essential that people feel comfortable in the office. At the same time, there is no reason why air conditioning should run at 18 degrees or a room be overheated. Even slight differences, such as 2-3 degrees, greatly impact how much energy is used and how many emissions are generated. Avoiding overly cold or overly warm room temperatures also benefits our health and work productivity.

**How**: Discuss with your colleagues possible ways to ensure that your heating or air-conditioning are used more efficiently while ensuring a comfortable working environment. Prioritize measures that are likely to save the most energy, are feasible, and acceptable for your colleagues.

Recommended temperatures for office spaces generally range from 20-22°C (68-72°F) for heating and 23-25°C (73-77°F) for cooling, though specific recommendations may vary by country or region. Check local recommendations for your region to ensure compliance with its guidelines.

#### Possible ways to use air-conditioning more efficiently include:

- Using fans instead of air conditioning during less hot days / parts of the day. Fans use about 95% less electricity than air conditioning units, so this simple measure can generate significant savings. Ensure fans' availability and encourage their use.
- *Preventing rooms from becoming too hot* can be achieved in multiple ways, such as:
  - opening windows in the morning when the air is cooler and keeping them shut during the day
  - using window blinds to keep the room cooler
  - if your office doesn't have window blinds, then using inexpensive UV blocking film on windows to keep the rooms cooler
  - additional options include using shade nets to protect the most exposed windows, placing plants near walls to
    reduce the heat that penetrates the walls, and painting the roof white so that it reflects more sunlight and absorbs
    less heat (<u>read more here</u>)
- Using friendly reminders (see example) asking people to switch the air conditioning off when leaving the room and encouraging everyone to do so.
- Agreeing with colleagues on a temperature below which you will not set your air conditioning (e.g. minimum being 24 degrees). To ensure that the agreement is followed, use reminders placed at air conditioning controllers and on posters. Some air conditioning units also allow you to manage their temperature via a phone app where you can set the minimum temperature.





#### Possible ways to use heating more efficiently include:

- Agreeing with colleagues on a maximum temperature for heating helps ensure energy efficiency while maintaining comfort. Use stickers / posters as reminders. In colder months, encourage colleagues to wear an extra layer of clothes if needed.
- Using smart thermostatic valves (see image) that measure the room temperature and automatically adjust the temperature to the pre-set level. These inexpensive and easy-to-install systems also allow you to pre-set slightly lower temperatures for weekends and other off-peak times when rooms are empty. Consult competent sellers to help you choose the most suitable option.
- *Heating efficiency:* Ensure that radiators or heating vents are not blocked by furniture or other items, as this can reduce their efficiency and increase energy consumption.
- *Reducing or switching off heating in rooms that are not used* for longer periods of time, such as entrance rooms, storage rooms or rooms for occasional visitors.
- For hand washing, use cold water it saves energy, is more gentle on the hands than hot water, and is as effective in removing germs. You can do so by ensuring that the taps used for washing hands are connected to the cold water supply only.
- *If you need hot water* (e.g. for showering), programme the water heater's temperature to 50 °C, as heating water to higher temperatures is not necessary (on the other hand, using lower temperature than 50 °C is not safe as it can lead to bacteria developing inside the water heater).

Discuss all the introduced measures with your colleagues so that they understand why they are required, and are supportive of them. You and senior management staff should set positive examples by following the measures in your offices and during meetings.





#### \$\$\$ (3) (3) If you use heating, consider whether more eco-friendly alternatives are available

**Why**: Using more efficient heating of the office rooms and water is for many organizations the most impactful, energy-saving measure they can take. It can help them reduce their heating bills by more than 50%. Efficient heating systems also tend to be safer and contribute to a more pleasant working environment.

**How**: The choice of the most appropriate energy-efficient heating for your office depends on many factors, including what types of energy is available in your area, market availability of efficient heating solutions, their costs as well as what changes can be agreed with the owner of your office. The best thing you can do is to consult with companies / experts who specialize in efficient heating solutions about your situation. They can then understand your situation and propose possible options. Consult several companies / experts so that you can compare their opinions and choose the best solution. Negotiate with your office owner about co-financing the new heating system, as the initial costs can be high (but pay off and generate substantial savings over time).

#### **\$** (b) Regularly maintain heating and cooling systems to ensure efficient operation

**Why**: Regular maintenance of heating and cooling systems ensures they operate efficiently, which reduces energy consumption and lowers utility bills. It also extends the lifespan of the equipment and improves indoor air quality.

**How**: The maintenance requirements depend on the type of heating and cooling systems you use so the best you can do is to ask a competent professional to inspect and tune up the systems. Ensure such checks regularly, depending on the professional's recommendations.

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#### **\$** (b) Add greenery for natural insulation and cooling.

**Why**: Incorporating plants into your office environment has multiple benefits. First, plants can act as a natural barrier against heat. When strategically placed, they can reduce the amount of heat entering a building, helping to maintain a cooler interior temperature. This can decrease the reliance on air conditioning systems. Certain plants also release moisture vapor during transpiration, which can help in maintaining a balanced indoor humidity level. This can make the environment more comfortable without overburdening the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. And last: Plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen, which can improve indoor air quality and provide a more comfortable working environment.

How: There are many ways you can incorporate plants into your office environment:

- Desk plants: Encourage your colleagues to decorate their desks with plants. Offer easy-care options like spider plants, snake plants, peace lilies, and pothos, which are known for improving air quality. Teach staff simple plant care tips to help their plants flourish.
- Vertical gardens: Add vertical gardens or living walls to your office, which can be placed on indoor or outdoor walls, making them perfect for offices with limited floor space. Choose a variety of plants that grow well in the available light and space.
- Window planters: Place planters on windowsills to block direct sunlight. Select plants that thrive in your office's light conditions and have wide leaves for better shade. Make sure planters are secure and have good drainage to avoid water damage.
- *Green roofs:* If possible, consider arranging a green roof. This means growing plants on the roof, which can help reduce heat and control rainwater. Work with a professional to check the roof's strength and select plants that can handle the local weather.

Whatever option you choose, ensure that that the benefits outweigh any environmental costs related to installing the plants. For example, if setting up a vertical garden would require using a metal structure, dozens of plastic pots, etc., the negative impact related to producing all the materials would likely be higher than all the greening benefits. Encourage your colleagues to come up with ideas on how to green your office in a truly eco-friendly manner that does not require extensive purchases of new materials.



The source of the energy your organization uses to power its offices has a large impact on how sustainable its operations are. Organizations often rely on diesel generators that emit harmful gases, contributing to air pollution and climate change. Even if they use electricity from the grid, it is usually produced using primarily non-renewable sources of energy, such as coal, oil, and gas. Using electricity from renewable resources, such as solar energy, can make the operations of your organization much more eco-friendly and significantly reduce its energy-related expenditures.

#### \$\$\$ (3) (3) Switch to renewable energy, depending on available and context-relevant options

**Why**: Utilizing renewable energy options, such as solar panels, solar water heaters, and heat pumps, helps with reducing greenhouse gas emissions and lowering energy costs. While the initial costs of some of these technologies can be high, the return on investment is often only several years. This measure will help your organization operate more efficiently, as it won't have to spend so much on energy bills.

**How**: To decide what solution is the best for your operations, you first have to understand your current energy consumption, available space, any contractual restrictions (if renting the office), and the specific context of your location. In each country, there are companies and experts who specialize in designing the most appropriate solutions, so take advantage of their expertise. Key options include:

- Solar panels generate electricity and can significantly reduce energy bills.
- Solar water heaters heat water using solar energy, helping reduce water heating costs.
- *Heat pumps* extract heat from the air and are suitable for both heating and cooling. Heat pumps are effective in a variety of climates, though their efficiency decreases in extremely cold temperatures. They can be a good alternative or complement to solar energy, especially in regions with lower solar radiation.
- *Suppliers of electricity from renewable resources:* If local suppliers offer renewable electricity, switching can reduce reliance on fossil fuels without the need for on-site installations.
- *Smaller solar devices:* Solar-powered torches, outdoor lights, and other small devices can be practical and cost-effective for specific applications.





If you are considering the installation of a **solar system for electricity production**, you will need to consider the following:

- What do you need it for? Should it provide a 24/7 supply of electricity or should it primarily help with covering grid power cuts?
- What is the maximum amount of electricity you might need? This will require preparing a list of all the appliances used in your office that need to be powered, including the maximum amount of electricity they need. Such information is necessary to calculate the required capacity of your solar system and to estimate the price.
- Do you have enough space to install the solar system?
- Does the office owner agree with the installation?
- How big is the likelihood that you might be moving your office anytime soon?
- Are there any professional companies offering quality installations and follow-up service available nearby?

The design of a solar system, preparing a tender, selecting the best offer, and supervising the installation requires a good level of technical expertise. Contracting a specialist who can support you in this process can help you avoid costly mistakes. As much as possible, ensure that the solar system can be moved to another location in case you decide to move office.

Remember that the production, installation, and disposal of solar panels (as well as other products, such as water heaters) come with their own environmental costs. Their use only benefits the natural environment if they are fully used over a longer period of time in order for the benefits to outweigh the costs. Therefore, only consider their installation when you are confident that your organization (or someone else) will keep using them long-term. Also ensure that the solar system is protected against (un)intentional damage – the contracted company should be able to offer adequate solutions.

#### **\$\$ (S) Consider alternatives to a short-term use of generators**

**Why**: Generators are often used to cover periods when electricity from the grid is not available. Their use is often expensive, generates noise and air pollution, and emits greenhouse gasses contributing to climate change. Using more eco-friendly alternatives can save money, contribute to healthier working environment and protect the climate.

**How**: If you need a generator solely to cover occasional power cuts, consider instead using a battery backup system capable of providing electricity for several hours, and that is recharged once the power returns. The system consists of a battery, inverter, charger, and cables. To choose the right battery backup system, you need to consider:

- For how many hours you might need to use the battery (i.e. the usual duration of power cuts).
- Which appliances should be powered by the system. For example, you might want to exclude electronics that consume lots of electricity, such as air-conditioning, and focus primarily on laptops, fans, lights, Wi-Fi router, etc.
- How much electricity you need to power each appliance during power outages. This information is usually included on the label of the appliance (look for Watts, or if only Ampere (A) and Volt (V) data is included then calculate Watts by using Watts = Volts x Ampere).
- To calculate the total power needed per each appliance, multiply Watts (e.g. 10W) by the number of such appliances (e.g. 20 lightbulbs) and hours of use (e.g. 3 hours). Add up the total power needed for all the appliances that should be covered by your back up system. This information will help you decide on the required capacity of your backup system.
- There are many types of batteries, some having much longer lifespans than others, so you will need to research what is available at the local market. Ask sellers, specialists, and people / organizations who are already using such batteries. As much as possible, invest in better quality batteries they are more expensive but they do not become a polluting piece of waste after a few years of operation.

## **PRIORITY #3: ENERGY-EFFICIENT APPLIANCES**

Opting for energy-efficient appliances is a smart way to save money and protect the climate. These devices typically use significantly less electricity than their conventional counterparts, despite a similar appearance. Although they may have a higher upfront cost, their reduced energy consumption helps you spend less money on their operation.

#### **\$** (b) When purchasing appliances, prioritize those with the highest efficiency rating

**Why**: Fridges, air conditioning, and other appliances require a lot of electricity to keep them running. At the same time, the most efficient appliances use much less electricity than others, allowing you to lower electricity bills and greenhouse gas emissions.



**How**: Most appliances should have an energy efficiency label that says how efficient they are. There are different energy standards in different regions. The European Union uses the system shown in the image, where "A" is given to the most efficient appliances and "G" to the least efficient appliances. Other systems use "energy stars" where the more stars a product has, the more efficient it is. If no label is available, look at how much energy the appliance uses and compare it to similar alternatives.

It is recommended that your organization integrates in its procurement policy (or any other official guidance for making purchases) an official rule saying that all newly purchased products must meet the highest (or, if not possible, the second highest) efficiency standard. Ensure that all staff are aware of the rule and consider it when budgeting for and purchasing new electronics.

Additionally, always consider the size of the appliance you need. Only buy the size you need, as larger items will use more energy and end up costing you more. For example, if you buy a large fridge that remains half-empty for most of the time, you will be wasting energy and therefore also money. Consider also what functions are really necessary – for example, it might not be necessary for your fridge to have a freezer.

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#### $\$ $\$ $\$ Eliminate standby power consumption

**Why**: When computers, printers, chargers and other appliances are in a standby mode or switched off but still plugged in, they keep consuming electricity. This "standby" or "vampire" power can account for 5 to 10% of your office's total energy consumption. Eliminating standby power consumption is a simple way to use less electricity, thus saving money and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

**How**: The easiest way to prevent standby power consumption is by unplugging appliances when they are not used (e.g. at night, during the weekends) but that is easier said than done, as people often forget. More realistic options include:

- Using inexpensive smart power strips (see image) that disconnect power supply when appliances are not in use and reconnect it when power is needed again. If you don't need multiple plugs, you can also buy smart single plugs (see image).
- If the set-up of your office allows, install a central switch that allows the last person who leaves the office to switch the electricity supply off, with the exception of essential functions such as the alarm and fridge. Alternatively, in some countries there are low-cost technologies that allow you to switch on / off your electricity supply remotely, via a phone app. In such a case, you can set up a time when the electricity will be switched off and on automatically.

#### (S) Change the setting of all computers so that they go into sleep mode after 20 minutes of inactivity

Why: This easy measure will reduce the amount of electricity used by your and your colleagues' computers. Their batteries will last longer, and their use will generate fewer greenhouse gas emissions.

**How**: Agree with your colleagues to set all computers so they go into sleep mode after 20 minutes of inactivity (unless some computers require a different setting). If any checklists for setting up new laptops are used, include this task in the checklist.





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#### (S) Regularly remind colleagues to delete bulky data they store on a cloud

**Why**: Storing data online (in the clouds) takes a large amount of energy because data centres house thousands of servers that store and process data. Existing data shows that storing 100 GB of data in the cloud results in a carbon footprint of 200 kg of CO2 each year. This is the same amount as if you drive 1,000 km by car. While storing data online brings us many benefits, it is our responsibility to ensure that we do not store data that we do not need anymore.

**How**: Regularly encourage colleagues to review what data they store online, and in case there is any bulky data (such as photos, videos, etc.) they do not need anymore, delete these or store them on a hard drive only. Discuss the reasons for doing so; otherwise, people will have little incentive to do so. Additionally, consider storing data on clouds that are powered by energy from renewable resources only, such as Google, to further reduce your carbon footprint.

#### **\$** (b) Ensure proper maintenance of appliances to achieve optimum performance and efficiency

**Why:** Regular maintenance of appliances, such as fridges and water heaters, ensures they operate efficiently, reducing energy consumption and lowering utility bills. It also extends the lifespan of the equipment and prevents unexpected breakdowns.

**How:** List the appliances that need regular maintenance and specify what service they require (use the operations manuals that come when buying the appliances and advice of relevant technicians). Prepare a maintenance schedule and agree who is responsible for ensuring that the maintenance gets done on time and to the required extent.



#### \$ (b) Do not purchase air conditioning units or fridges that contain harmful refrigerants

**Why**: While this measure is not related to saving electricity, it concerns the choices you make when choosing two commonly purchased electronics: air conditioning units and fridges. These appliances use chemicals called refrigerants, many of which are extremely potent greenhouse gasses contributing to climate change. The damage happens when they leak, mostly during incompetent maintenance and after unsafe disposal. While the most harmful refrigerants were forbidden in some countries, in others they are still commonly used. Choosing air conditioning units and fridges that do not contain harmful refrigerants is another way you can protect the natural environment.

**How**: Only purchase fridges or air conditioning units that use eco-friendly refrigerants. In the case of fridges, among the best choices is R600a (isobutane), and in the case of air conditioning units, R290 (propane). Such alternatives are also more energy-efficient than other refrigerants. If products using these refrigerants are not available on the local market, R32 is another option – its global warming potential is higher than in the case of R600a and R290 but considerably lower than in the case of more harmful refrigerants, such as R-410A, HFC-134a, and R-22 (whose purchase is not recommended). The type of refrigerant used is usually included on a label included on the product (inside or outside) or in accompanying documents.

*Important:* Environmental damage occurs when refrigerants leak. This happens during incompetent maintenance or incorrect disposal. If your fridge / air conditioning unit isn't working well, do your best to ensure repairs are done by a professional, especially if there are signs that the refrigerant is leaking (hissing sound followed by a drop in cooling power). The same applies to disposing of a fridge / air conditioning unit that does not work and cannot be repaired: as much as your context allows, ensure that it is done by a company that prevents any leakages of refrigerants.

## **PRIORITY #4: EFFICIENT LIGHTING**



In offices, lighting represents a significant portion of energy consumption, often only surpassed by heating and air conditioning systems. Making office lighting more eco-friendly is relatively easy and inexpensive, so the following three measures are worth your attention.

#### **\$** (b) Change inefficient lighting to efficient LED lighting

**Why**: The lighting emitting diodes (LED) saves up to 90% in energy consumption compared to incandescent lighting and some 50% when compared to fluorescent light sources. They are widely available and inexpensive, allowing you to save energy, contributing to lower expenditures and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

**How**: There are at least two primary considerations you have to make:

1) <u>Which inefficient lighting will you replace</u>: The aim is to replace as much lighting as makes sense, considering:

- how long your organization is likely to use the given office: the longer you expect to stay, the more sense it makes to make more significant investments
- your rental contract: some owners might allow you to replace lighting, others not
- the existing lighting: the priority should be to replace lighting with the lowest efficiency (see more information on which lights to replace and which to keep)
- the available budget: you can start with some replacements only and gradually do more, as the available budget allows

2) <u>What types of efficient lighting will you purchase</u>: Prioritize purchasing the most efficient types of LED lighting. Be careful about selecting lighting with the correct lumen value, as those with small lumen values may not be bright enough. Ask a competent seller or electrician for advice. <u>This website</u> compares the wattage of traditional bulbs and the approximate equivalent lumen values of LED lights. LED lights also come in different colours - 'cool white' or 'pure white' are suitable for office spaces.

Be careful of a so-called 'rebound effect', when people become less careful about switching the lights off because more efficient lights were installed (and so they think it is less important to keep switching them off). Using friendly reminders can help (see example on the next page).

#### **\$** <sup>(1)</sup> Ensure that lights are not left on unnecessarily

**Why**: Often, the main reason why people do not switch a light off is not that they do not care about saving energy, but simply because they forget to do so. Finding ways to make it easier can help your organization save on energy bills and protect the climate.

**How**: Use any meeting to discuss with your colleagues what you can collectively do to ensure that lights are not left on unnecessarily. Focus on the reasons why lights are sometime left on and try to find the most realistic solutions. These can include, for example:

- Using friendly stickers placed by the door handle (i.e. places where we look when leaving a room) that remind people to switch the lights off (see example).
- Using motion sensors that switch a light on when they detect movement and then switch it off after a pre-set time. These are most suitable in places used for a shorter period of time, such as bathrooms or storage rooms. They are also used in entrances and other places where a motion sensor can help improve security. Motion light sensors are inexpensive, and any qualified electrician can install them.
- Asking a dedicated staff member, such as guards or cleaners, to regularly check that lights are not left on unnecessarily, and if so, to switch them off.

#### (9) Make the most of natural lighting

**Why**: It is important that people have enough light in their offices. At the same time, using electric lights when there is enough natural light coming into the office is a waste of money and electricity. It also contributes to higher greenhouse gas emissions.

**How**: Use relevant meetings to discuss with your colleagues the possibility of not having lights on when enough natural light comes in. Agree that lights will not be on when they are not needed. Communicate this agreed rule widely, especially to the colleagues who did not attend the meetings. Since people often forget to switch the lights off, use positive (friendly) visual reminders that help people remember to keep the lights off.

# SWITCH ME OFF!





<u>On this website</u> you can find a practical checklist helping you quickly assess the extent to which your organisation already uses the promoted energy-saving measures. You can also include in the checklist any other measures that you or your colleagues proposed. The results will help you **decide which measures should you focus on**.

Measure	To what extent is it implemented?			
	Fully	Partially	Not implemented	Not possible to implement
Have you discussed with your colleagues what your organization will do to save energy?				
Have you inspected offices for any heat / cool air losses caused by poor insulation?				
If so, have you addressed them?				
Have you agreed on effective ways to reduce the use of heating / air conditioning?				
If you use heating, have you assessed whether more eco-friendly types could be used instead?				
Do you ensure regular maintenance of heating and cooling systems?				
Have you installed any solutions ensuring a greater use of solar energy?				
Have you considered alternatives to a short-term use of generators?				
If so, have you used such alternatives?				
Have you officially agreed on purchasing only efficient types of electronics?				
If so, has such a rule been integrated in a relevant policy?				
Have you implemented sufficient measures to eliminate standby power consumption?				



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