

# SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL TOOLKIT



The Energy Upgrade California® team is incredibly grateful for your continued hard work during this challenging time. Without groups like yours, our communities and businesses would be lacking key resources and support as they face the COVID-19 pandemic.



Energy Upgrade California has put together this toolkit to help you communicate and aid the small businesses within your membership.

## The toolkit includes:

- A small business energy audit that individuals can perform at their place of business
- A fact sheet and food service tip sheet businesses can reference
- Social media posts for you to use to encourage your membership to save energy
- A list of energy heroes in the California community that we all can look to for inspiration
- A resource sheet with helpful tips and links that business leaders can share with their employees to help save energy

As a community-based organization that works closely with the small businesses in and around your community, we hope you can distribute the tools within this packet to help support small businesses during COVID-19. These resources can be used to help businesses better manage their energy use and save on utility bills. Additionally, we recommend all small businesses reach out to their energy provider for information about energy use during the pandemic.

Thank you again for all your hard work during this challenging time. California is lucky to have you! You can download any of these materials at [www.energyupgradecacommunity.org](http://www.energyupgradecacommunity.org). Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Sincerely,  
The Energy Upgrade California Team



*Keep it  
Golden*

For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org)

# BUSINESS ENERGY AUDIT



For small businesses like yours, the COVID-19 pandemic is posing unique challenges. Small businesses across California and the country are facing financial hardships like never before.

One way to trim down costs as much as possible during this challenging time is to perform an energy audit at your place of business. Even saving small amounts of energy can help reduce utility bills at a time when every penny counts. The audit below details areas of your business where you might consider making easy adjustments. You can also use the links below to find more resources from energy providers on how to save energy and money.

## EASY BUSINESS ENERGY AUDIT



Take the temperature of your workplace! Set your thermostat to 68 degrees (or lower) in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer.



Check on unused equipment and small appliances and unplug them when not in use.



Be aware of any lights on in unoccupied areas.



Look for ways and rebates to upgrade to dimmers, timers, and sensors for lights and appliances.



Check all your light bulbs. Are you using LEDs or older less efficient bulbs?



Locate air leaks and drafts – check windows, doors, skylights, and other areas.



Change air filters regularly – check your filters and replace them if they look dirty.



Be sure to turn off computers and other office supplies at the end of the day.



Become a certified green business! Check with your local energy provider to help you reduce your business's carbon footprint.

## SMALL BUSINESS USEFUL LINKS



SCE  
Business Energy Guide



PG&E  
Business Resource Center



SDGE  
Business Saving Center



SoCalGas  
For Your Business page



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org)

# FACT SHEET



The transition to working from home has been incredibly difficult for small businesses and their staff across the state. While offices may not be in use, they might be consuming more energy than needed. With small businesses often operating on small margins, here are some easy ways for you to save energy and money.

## REDUCING ENERGY USAGE AT THE OFFICE

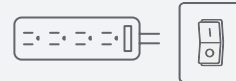
While businesses are closed, computers, lights, and appliances can still consume wasteful amounts of energy even when inactive. Here are some ways to help cut back on unnecessary office energy consumption:



Unplug all computers and other office electronics to reduce vampire energy consumption.



Turn off all lights, except in rooms/offices where work is continuing.



Switch off all surge protectors unless they are being used to power a server or refrigerator.



Reduce air leaks to save on heating and air conditioning expenses.



Utilize natural heating/cooling and lighting instead of turning on air conditioning or light fixtures when possible.



Switch out incandescent light bulbs for longer-lasting energy-efficient LED bulbs.

## SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITIES IN THIS TIME OF NEED

- [Access financial aid for COVID19-related economic damages](#)
- Check your local Chamber of Commerce website for a list of small businesses still open and active in your community
- Order takeout from local restaurants to show your solidarity with small businesses in these challenging times
- Donate any unused food, clothing, or other resources to local food banks and shelters to aid other Californians during this time
- Update your suppliers and long-term clients to alert them about any changes in business operation or scheduling
- [Learn more](#) about supporting our medical professionals and the fight against COVID-19
- Visit [energyupgradeca.org](https://energyupgradeca.org) to learn more

Energy Upgrade California is committed to helping you save on energy bills and reduce wasteful energy consumption as we navigate through this pandemic.



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](https://energyupgradeca.org)

# 8 TIPS FOR FOOD SERVICE BUSINESSES TO STAY ENERGY EFFICIENT



Tip  
1



**Properly dispose of your incandescent bulbs and pick up some LEDs**

LED bulbs use 25%-30% of the energy and last 8 to 25 times longer than halogen incandescent bulbs. Less time climbing ladders and more time keeping your customers happy.

Tip  
2



**Install motion sensor lights**

You'll never again have to remember to flip the switches off before you leave a room if you install motion-activated lights. Using less artificial light is one of the easiest ways to cut down on energy costs.

Tip  
3



**Install low-flow faucets**

In bathroom and kitchen sinks, low-flow faucets reduce excessive use of water. Heating water can be extremely costly so using less is better for your energy bill and California's reservoirs.

Tip  
4



**If you have an old water heater tank, wrap it with an insulating jacket**

Be careful not to cover the air intake valve, giving your water heater a coat can save up to 10% on water heating costs.

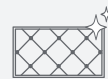
Tip  
5



**Use a programmable thermostat**

You can save an extra 10% on annual heating and cooling costs by installing programmable thermostats that will regulate the temperature of your building. For more savings, setting that thermostat just one degree warmer than you normally would in the summertime will typically save you 2-3% on cooling costs.

Tip  
6



**Change air filters regularly**

While the lifespan of an air filter can vary from product to product, it's important to regularly check your HVAC equipment's filters. A good rule of thumb is to change your air filter any time it looks dirty, no matter how long ago you replaced it. A dirty air filter makes the HVAC system work harder and reduces air flow anyways, costing you money and potentially turning into a bigger issue that requires mechanical maintenance.

Tip  
7



**Insulate and seal ducts**

Sealing and insulating ducts properly can help reduce up to 20% of a cooling system's energy consumption.

Tip  
8



**Become a Certified Green Business**

Don't know where to start? Check with your local energy provider to assist your business in reducing its carbon footprint.

**GREEN**

CALIFORNIA  
GREEN BUSINESS  
NETWORK

The [California Green Business Network](https://greenbusinessca.org) encourages all businesses to use (or find) an organization or group that can assist in reducing your energy use.

For more information, visit <https://greenbusinessca.org/how-to-get-certified/>.

*Keep it Golden*

For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](https://energyupgradeca.org)

# ONLINE CONFERENCES



## Are you hosting any webinars or conference calls?

Allow Energy Upgrade California to act as a resource for you during this challenging time. Include an Energy Upgrade California representative who could speak about tips that can help organizations and employees reduce their energy usage. We also can provide materials for distribution upon request.



If interested, please reach out to [info@energyupgradecacommunity.org](mailto:info@energyupgradecacommunity.org)



Visit [www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org/COVID-19-tips/#tips](http://www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org/COVID-19-tips/#tips)  
for tips on how to reduce your energy usage.

Energy Upgrade California® is a statewide initiative committed to helping Californians be more energy efficient, utilize more sustainable natural resources, reduce demand on the energy grid and make informed choices about their energy use at home and at work—all of which goes a long way for California.

## SMALL BUSINESS USEFUL LINKS



SCE  
Business Energy Guide



PG&E  
Business Resource Center



SDGE  
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SoCalGas  
For Your Business page



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# SOCIAL POSTS

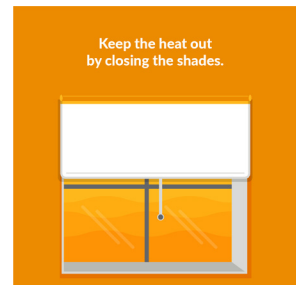
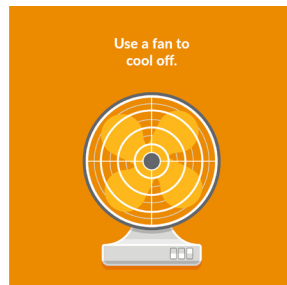
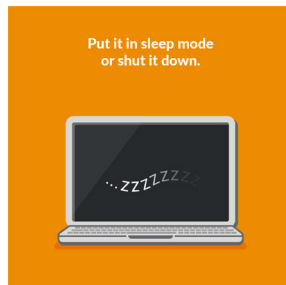
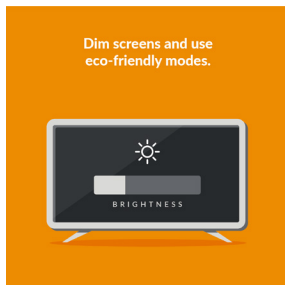
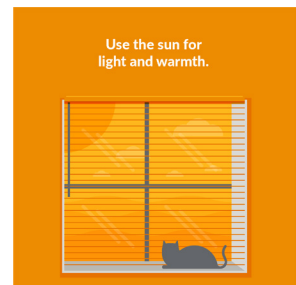
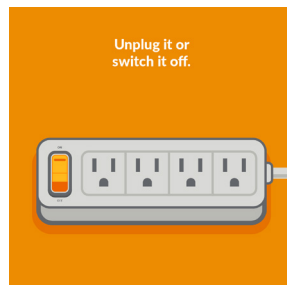
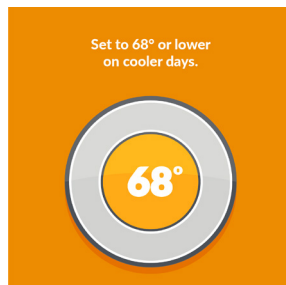
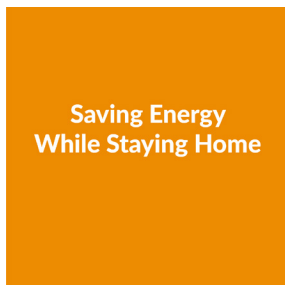


Share the following posts on your social media accounts to remind your communities how they can save energy too! Simply click on each image to download a copy that you can use. These social posts are meant to be used by your organization and not distributed to community members for their personal use, unlike the rest of the resources included.

Please find a suggested caption below for the collective group of social posts. If you choose to post each tip separately, be sure to adjust the caption to fit the image:

We Californians are doing our part by staying at home. But it could come with an increase in energy bills. Here are some helpful tips to save energy and money during these uncertain times.

[#COVID19Tips](#) [#KeepItGolden](#)



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org)

# SOCIAL POSTS



Cómo Ahorrar Energía  
Cuando Estamos En Casa.

Ajusta el termostato a 68° o menos  
en los días más frescos.



Desenchúfala  
o apágala.



Aprovecha la luz  
y el calor del sol.



Atenúa el brillo de las pantallas  
y usa el modo ecológico.



Ponlo en modo  
de dormir o apágalo.



Usa un ventilador  
para refrescarte.



Ciérralas durante  
el día.



*Keep it Golden*

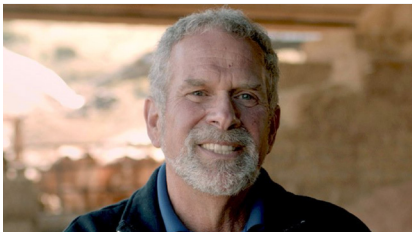
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# ENERGY HEROES



## Who Are California's Energy Heroes?

Get to know these extraordinary residents and small business owners. Each one is doing their part to save energy and reduce their carbon footprint for California and the planet. Click on any hero's name below to learn more.



### **STRAUS FAMILY CREAMERY**

Straus Family Creamery is using cow power to run their farms and produce 100% organic milk. Literally.



### **SIERRA NEVADA BREWING COMPANY**

Sierra Nevada Brewing has become nearly independent from the grid, operating with clean and renewable energy sources.



### **SACRAMENTO ECO FITNESS**

Sacramento Eco Fitness is harnessing human power. Learn how energy you spend at the gym could be used to power the gym itself—or other things.



### **EQUATOR COFFEES & TEAS**

From sourcing beans to roasting them, Equator Coffees & Teas is reducing energy consumption and making an excellent product.



### **CHRIS PAINE: FILMMAKER**

The man behind *Who Killed The Electric Car?* shares his thoughts and practices on living energy efficient.



### **STEFANIE PRUEGEL: HOMEOWNER**

Simple energy assessment turned Stephanie's home into an energy-efficient, money-saving abode.



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org)





**AHMAD FARUQI: HOMEOWNER**

Because every action counts, everything Ahmad does to save energy also means saving a lot of money.



**JACQUELINE TAYLOR:  
AMERICAN ADORN**

Green Certification can do more for your business than you think. Learn why it's a great business model.



**GRACE YANG: HOMEOWNER**

Grace Yang and her family save energy and hope to inspire others in Berkeley, California.



**GRID ALTERNATIVES:  
COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**

GRID Alternatives, a nonprofit, helps underserved communities save money by saving energy.



**PILAR ZUNIGA:  
GORGEOUS AND GREEN**

Pilar's floral design studio in Oakland, California, proves that business can be eco-friendly, energy efficient and exceptionally elegant.



**TERRY NORRIS:  
PRECISION LABS CALIBRATION**

How do you save energy while running the AC to maintain a lab at exactly 68°F?



**SADIE WADDINGTON:  
ONE BIG FISH EVENT PLANNING**

Sadie, a small business owner, shows us how personalized events can also be kind to the environment.



**GUILLERMO ULYSSES:  
HOMEOWNER**

Guillermo is a film editor, full-time dad and Energy Hero living in Whittier, California.



**FABIAN RODRIGUEZ:  
BELLA PASTA**

Fabian is the owner of Bella Pasta, a real estate agent and an Energy Hero, living and running his small business in Fresno, California.



**BRANDON SHAMIM:  
HOMEOWNER**

Brandon is an award-winning business strategist, leadership coach and college instructor, living with his wife in Pasadena, California.



**LANCASTER, CALIFORNIA:  
COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT**

The city of Lancaster, California, and Mayor R. Rex Parris, combating climate change and providing residents with clean energy.



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org)

# RESOURCE SHEET



Energy Upgrade California® is a statewide initiative with the purpose of ensuring every Californian has the tools needed to keep making strides toward a cleaner, healthier, more prosperous state. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we're helping Californians in their energy efficiency efforts to lessen their financial burdens in these unprecedented times while also continuing our quest to double energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40% before 2030.

## SAVING ENERGY WHILE SAFER AT HOME.

Many Californians are working from home, conducting school at home, and caring for children from home. As they use more electricity than normal, they may face higher energy bills as a result. At Energy Upgrade California, we know that small, energy-efficient actions can have a big impact on both our utility bills and our state—and its ability to help Keep it Golden.

## HOW IS COVID-19 IMPACTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY?

- As Californians are practicing safe procedures and following public health guidelines by sheltering at home, it is likely that residential electric and natural gas usage will increase, which could lead to higher utility bills.
- Residential electric usage has increased 15 to 20% in recent weeks compared to the same period last year.

## SMALL ACTIONS ADD UP.

Small energy inefficiencies in our homes can add up to big losses—both for our pocketbooks and for California. Here are a few things you can do from home:

### DURING COLDER WEATHER

- USE NATURAL LIGHTING - Open blinds on sunny days to light and warm your home naturally.
- ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT - On cooler days, set thermostats to 68° or lower when awake and 62° or lower when asleep.



For more info, visit [energyupgradeca.org](https://energyupgradeca.org)

# RESOURCE SHEET



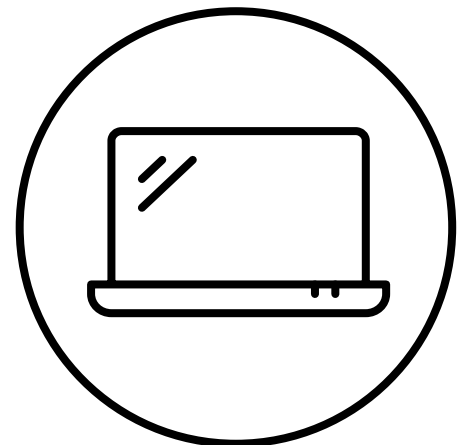
## DURING WARMER WEATHER

- COOL DOWN WITH A FAN – Fans keep air circulating, allowing you to raise the thermostat a few degrees and stay just as comfortable while reducing air conditioning costs.
- ADJUST YOUR AC – Adjust your AC to 78 degrees or higher during the summer months.
- REPLACE AC FILTERS AS NEEDED – Dirty air filters make your air conditioner work harder to circulate air. By cleaning or replacing your filters monthly, you can improve energy efficiency and reduce costs.

## ALL YEAR LONG

- UNPLUG UNUSED DEVICES - Make sure to unplug unused devices or turn off power strips when not in use.
- RUN THE DISHWASHER LESS OFTEN - If you have a dishwasher, be sure to wait until it's full to run it.
- ADJUST TECHNOLOGY SETTINGS - Turn down the brightness on your screens and use eco-friendly modes when possible. Put your computer in sleep mode or shut it down when not in use.
- IMPROVE YOUR HOME'S INSULATION – Improvements to insulation can help you stay warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer while reducing energy costs.

If you have questions about how to maximize energy savings, or protections and benefits available to you during the pandemic, contact your local energy provider or visit [energyupgradeca.org](http://energyupgradeca.org) for more information.



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