



EFFICIENT HEATING AND COOLING

A comfortable working and shopping environment is something every business strives for, but keeping your business warm or cool shouldn't require you to spend big on your energy bills. Efficient heating, ventilation and cooling systems can reduce your costs while also lowering your carbon output.

Timing is everything

Turning off your system when the building is not in use is an easy way to save energy. You can remember to do it yourself, or install a programmable thermostat.

These can cost \$25-\$100, but can cut your business heating and cooling costs by up to 30 per cent. Set up your system to switch on just before people get to work, and to turn off just after they leave.

Using fresh air and working with the weather

When the outside temperature is comfortable, turn off the air conditioning and open doors and windows to take advantage of the fresh air.

Also find out where the sun hits your building the most. You can reduce your cooling bill by protecting these areas through use of shades, awnings, or solar reduction film on windows.

Keep the temperature constant

Draught stoppers or weather seals around doors and windows, and insulation in the roof, will help prevent temperature controlled air escaping – and the weather getting in.

Consider using door closers on all doors, particularly external ones, to stop air getting in and out.

Most Australian homes are now insulated, and the savings are widely reported. Imagine the savings businesses could make if they were well insulated.

Regular maintenance

Make sure your heating and cooling systems are maintained regularly. An inefficient system may add significant costs to your energy bills and make for an uncomfortable work environment.

Location of your thermostat

If your thermostat is near a frequently used door, a draught or a cold room, you could be using more energy than you need. Move it and your heating or cooling system won't need to work so hard.

Choosing your system

Energy efficient equipment will cost less to run in the long term. If you have a choice:

- Select equipment that is the right size for your business, and make sure it has a good energy rating.
- Higher energy star ratings are only better if they're the most efficient model to suit your task.
- Use a zoned system to close off offices or areas that are used less often, like meeting rooms.
- The climate and the efficiency of your building, including its orientation, number of windows and level of insulation, have impact on the size of unit you will need. It is important to get advice on the right size from the supplier or installer before you buy.
- Inverter or variable speed drive models are generally more efficient and have lower running costs.

Choosing the right air conditioner

An air conditioner's cooling or heating output is measured in kilowatts. To see if the unit you're considering is too powerful or too small you first need to work out how big the area is in square metres.

Make sure you allow:

- 125 watts per square metre of floor area to be cooled in work areas
- 80 watts per square metre of floor area in lesser used areas

It will also run more efficiently if it's installed in a cool place out of the direct sun.

Helpful websites

resourcesmart.vic.gov.au
climatecommunities.vic.gov.au
energyrating.gov.au

✓ Quick Fix

Efficient systems work with the seasons. Set your temperature to 18-20 degrees during winter and 24-27 degrees during summer.

When it's warm outside, people wear less items of clothing – and they shouldn't have to rug up to come into work.

✓ Quick Fix

Areas that are unused or used for short periods of time, such as toilets and storerooms, don't need to be kept the same temperature as the rest of your business. Block the vents safely, and save your business some money.

For further information about improving the sustainability of your business please call Council's Economic Development Unit on **9243 8866** or visit **businessinmv.com.au**