

# switch it Off...

*don't just 'stand by' and waste energy*

## How to run a switch it off campaign in your company

This is a campaign to change the energy use habits of your company's workforce. The "Switch It Off" campaign is all about getting a message to the whole workforce to switch off all equipment when its not in use and cut your bills by up to 10%. Here's how to do it.

### Step 1 - Kick-start the project

You will need support from senior management. Arrange a meeting with decision makers and explain why you feel that improving energy efficiency is a worthwhile exercise. The main reason that will influence them is saving money by reducing waste, but they may also be influenced by the fact that the company will reduce it's impact on climate change and the idea that the workforce are interested in doing their bit for the environment.

You will be more persuasive if you can take some data to this meeting. Using past meter readings and energy bills, calculate how many kWh (kilowatt hours) you are using and pounds you are spending every month on electricity and gas. You could predict that an effective switch it off campaign would reduce this use by 5–10%. That saving will go straight to the bottom line. If your managers have a more long-term view, these savings that have been realised through no investment could then be spent on low cost energy efficiency measures that will yield even higher savings in the medium term, up to 20% savings.

As the campaign is about changing employees' habits, there is hardly any financial cost for the project. The investment to get these savings is employee time. The most effective campaign will be driven by an energy efficiency champion and a small project team.

### Step 2 – Energy efficiency champion and project team

The energy efficiency champion will need to have both influence in the company and enthusiasm for saving money through reducing waste. They will drive the campaign and be the figurehead, but will need a small team alongside them to make the project happen.

Team members could include representation from senior management, finance, purchasing, maintenance, operations, and environmental management, as appropriate.

The team's main priorities will be to list all the potential switch it off opportunities, prioritise these, develop promotional messages and materials, encourage the workforce, and monitor and measure the effects.

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## Step 3 – Listing the opportunities

Take a look at the two tips documents: Industry Energy Savings and Saving Energy at Work. Saving Energy at work is about the types of good habits that you can encourage your staff to get into. The Industry Energy Savings sheet is more technical and explains how to make savings through informed purchasing, heating controls, compressed air systems etc. Along with your own ideas, these should help you develop a list of potential improvements that could be made through the project.

## Step 4 – Prioritising

Your hit list of priorities should be based on quick wins and best return for effort. Anything that is easy to do and requires little time or financial resource should be on the list. More difficult projects will get the most support from management if you can show the potential savings to be made. Refer to the Switch It Off savings sheet for an idea of energy use of general office and kitchen type equipment. This kind of list for industrial equipment is not possible because there is such variety out there. So instead, there are instructions at the end of this document for how to calculate energy usage and cost, provided you know the wattage of the equipment.

## Step 5 – Monitoring and measuring

If energy use isn't measured it can't be managed. It is often hard for businesses to take regular meter readings but now is the time to make a concerted effort so you can be sure that all your Switch It Off efforts have been worthwhile. Ideally you will take a meter reading every working day, at the same time of day for about 5 weeks. Allocate responsibility for this to one person. An example meter reading record sheet is attached. After that, weekly readings would be enough. A graph of this data will be a useful tool to display any improvement you make as a result of the campaign. It should be borne in mind that energy use can fluctuate due to production volume or man-hours worked. It is best if the graph displays normalised data, e.g. kWh of electricity used divided by man-hours for that measurement period. Display on notice boards with information about real money saved.

Work out your base-load by taking a meter reading just after the working day has ended and then just before the next working day starts. This will establish if lots of energy is being wasted when you think everything is turned off.

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If you are lucky enough to have half hourly metering, establish a method of putting the raw data into graphical form so you can easily see what your usage is.

## Step 6 – Communication and Promotion

Your messages will need to be tailored to what you want to achieve and the people you are addressing it to. Posters and stickers are provided in the pack and to download on the website to get you started. The posters can be adapted to use your own company's logo. Think of other communication routes such as internal memos, intranet, toolbox talks and team meetings. You can also book an energy awareness training session or an energy savings exhibition through WEEAC (see Contacts).

Those working on the shop floor are likely to have lots of ideas about how the company could save money. Set up a suggestions scheme that could have prizes as incentives for the best ideas. There could also be prizes for the staff member who is best at switching off. Don't forget to let your suppliers, customers, investors and neighbours know about your campaign.

What next?

Please do let us know how your campaign goes. Contact us for more information and advice on resource efficiency. We can visit your company to talk about making savings in raw materials, consumable and utilities.

The Carbon Trust can provide much more information about saving energy in your business.

If you would like to educate you staff about running their home more efficiency, contact WEEAC to arrange a free on-site seminar.

Calculating wasted money when equipment is left on –

[a] Time in hours throughout the year that the equipment is on but not used. (Consider weekends, holidays, evenings, lunchtimes and break-times.)

[b] kWh wasted per year = ([a] x wattage)/1000

[c] Money wasted in a year in pounds  
= ([b] x electricity unit charge in pence) / 100