

Grow Per-Diner Profits Through PECO Smart Ideas

Any business serving food can boost profits by lowering energy costs. From schools to hospital cafeterias, restaurants, hotels and food courts, any location with refrigeration and food service equipment can take advantage of financial incentives for the installation of more energy-efficient equipment.

Through a combination of incentives and energy savings, owners and managers are growing per-diner profits, all while enhancing dining area atmosphere and improving guest comfort. Energy efficiency can even help produce higher-quality food and shorten cooking times.

After labor and food supplies, energy is the largest controllable cost¹ for most food service operations. With incentives from PECO Smart Ideas, upgrading to more efficient equipment can result in operational and maintenance savings that, for many equipment upgrades, offer a fast return on investment.

Energy efficiency solutions offered by PECO Smart Ideas include incentives for refrigeration controls, more efficient display cases and motors, LED lighting, ENERGY STAR[®] certified cooking and refrigeration equipment, and a variety of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system upgrades.



Keep the Walk-In Temperature— and Costs—Low

Restaurants require as much as 10 times more energy per square foot than other commercial buildings. Refrigeration is generally the culprit.²

To help lower electricity costs, new and efficient technologies can continuously monitor air, evaporator coil and refrigerant temperatures and turn off unnecessary components while maintaining the desired refrigeration conditions.

Smart defrost controllers are simple to install in walk-in freezers and offer immediate savings potential. Evaporator coils are traditionally defrosted using a mechanical defrost timer. Rather than melt frost at set intervals, adaptive defrost controls operate based on the number of times the refrigerator door opens or by how much warm food is placed inside.

Another savings tip is to replace the small fans within the evaporator units of walk-in refrigerators and freezers. Unlike the shaded-pole or permanent split capacitor fan motors that run continuously, electronically commutated motors (ECMs) in evaporator fans manage fan speed based on refrigeration need. Many ECMs are set to turn off whenever a door is open.

Replacing shaded-pole motors with ECMs typically reduces the fan's energy use by 67%. That's equivalent to the profit margin³ from selling about 350 additional servings of scrambled eggs every year. PECO Smart Ideas incentivizes the early replacement of a standard-efficiency fan motor with ECMs.

Additional incentives are offered for simple fixes to reduce the air infiltration into refrigerated spaces such as automatic door closers and strip curtains, otherwise known as plastic swinging doors.

Energy-Efficient Food Service

While refrigeration equipment is the largest consumer of electricity in most restaurants, cooking equipment accounts for the largest overall use of energy. Installing new, ENERGY STAR certified electric-powered equipment qualifies for significant incentives and often results in both energy and food production efficiencies.

For instance, food service providers that use more efficient fryers can shorten cooking and oil recovery times. According to manufacturers,⁴ high-efficiency fryers produce nearly twice the amount of food within a given time frame as conventional equipment.

ENERGY STAR certified electric convection ovens are, on average, 20% more efficient than standard models, while ENERGY STAR electric combination ovens are about 30% more efficient. Additional benefits⁵ include high-production capacity, improved air circulation, longer product lifetimes, and both faster and more uniform cooking results.

In addition to faster cooking times, several models of ENERGY STAR rated equipment can perform multiple functions with a single piece of equipment.

Kitchen exhaust ventilation systems are essential for removing smoke, fumes and odors. They typically run at full speed throughout the day. Yet very little needs to be exhausted during hours when staff only perform prep work. Ventilation fans with variable speed controls use a sensor to match fan speed with exhaust needs.

PECO Smart Ideas offers incentives for high-efficiency exhaust fans as well as ENERGY STAR certified refrigerators, freezers, beverage vending machines, electric steam cookers, electric ovens, fryers and hot holding cabinets.

Keep Customers Coming Back

Improvements in lighting, heating and cooling systems can make seating and service areas more inviting and comfortable.

To help improve facility environments, PECO Smart Ideas offers incentives for a variety of lighting and HVAC projects.

Examples of qualifying measures include:

- Installing interior or exterior LEDs or reduced-wattage T8 or T5 linear fixtures. LEDs typically use 25% to 80% less energy than traditional incandescent bulbs and can last up to 25 times longer. LEDs save on maintenance and operating costs, while often improving ambiance and room appearance. Customers can save instantly at checkout if purchasing through a participating distributor.⁶
- Incentives for permanent fixture removal are available in situations where LEDs provide brighter illumination through fewer total fixtures.
- Eligible comfort systems include high-efficiency air conditioners, heat pumps, packaged terminal air conditioners (PTACs), unitary HVAC chillers and demand-controlled ventilation units. Each are incentivized on a per-ton basis.
- Either installing heat pump water heaters or switching from an electric water heater to an ENERGY STAR commercial gas water heater.

PECO offers an express application process to make applying for incentives quick and easy. Retrofit lighting and many HVAC projects qualify for an express application process. Plus, PECO representatives are available to help identify energy-saving measures and to assist throughout the process.

▶ Business owners or facility managers interested in maximizing the energy efficiency potential of their facilities should contact PECO at **1-844-4BIZ-SAVE** (1-844-424-9728) or visit peco.com/biz.

¹ <http://greenrestaurants.org/documents/UseLessEnergy.pdf?elqTrackId=7853771349714932bd3508dc29ac0c9f&elqaid=71&elqat=2>

² <https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/facility-owners-and-managers/small-biz/restaurants?elqTrackId=b863a41b2bce458d8015bca80f5b6374&elqaid=71&elqat=2>

³ https://fishnick.com/publications/appliancereports/refrigeration/GE_ECM_revised.pdf?elqTrackId=cf35c6b595b049abb03ac845408ed836&elqaid=71&elqat=2

⁴ https://fishnick.com/equipment/techassessment/Appliance_Tech_Assessment.pdf?elqTrackId=c46e5e677b5042d184e82997e82b007d&elqaid=71&elqat=2

⁵ https://www.energystar.gov/ia/products/downloads/Ovens_Product_Factsheet_Final.pdf?elqTrackId=029317a11fa7436cbfd5c6e6f8d3609&elqaid=71&elqat=2

⁶ peco.com/InstantDiscounts