



ALLIANCE TO
SAVE ENERGY
Creating an Energy-Efficient World

TIPS TO SAVE ENERGY AT SCHOOL THIS HOLIDAY BREAK

A long holiday break for the school district offers a great opportunity to easily save money on utilities that can be spent in other areas. With this in mind, consider getting your whole school involved in an energy efficient "Holiday Energy Shut Down" before leaving for break.

1. Turn off all lights that are not needed for security.

In a typical school, lighting accounts for 30% of all electricity used. **Turning off lights is one of the simplest ways to save energy over a holiday break**, summer break, or long weekend and everyone can get involved with helping flip the switches. Winter break can also be a good time to ensure all outside and security lights are correctly timed, so that they only illuminate at night.

2. Set the thermostat back in cold climates.

As with homes, the single largest energy use, and thus utility cost, in schools goes towards heating and cooling the building. With no one around to feel that warm air, **cut the thermostat way back - setting it at our around 55 degrees**. For a long break such as the winter holidays, 55 is a good temperature to shoot for. Setting between 60 and 63 may be more appropriate for a shorter break. The energy or facilities manager should be consulted, though, and ultimately determine the set-back temperature.

3. Turn off computers.

The typical desktop computer has added a significant load to school energy budgets as new computer labs add many machines. Turned off over a 7 day break rather than being left in "active" on mode all day, **one computer would save \$2.20 on average in one week**. While this may seem inconsequential, **multiply that by 100 computers in a school, or 1,000 schools in a district** and the savings add up quickly. Institute a policy to shut down computers every night to extend savings throughout the year.

4. Remove or unplug superfluous refrigerators and other personal appliances.

A long break may be a good time to take stock of the appliances that currently inhabit the school. In most cases, employees are allowed to bring personal items, such as mini-fridges, microwaves, coffee makers, fans, and space heaters, into their rooms. However, these unchecked items can cost a lot. Staff can be encouraged to take these personal items home over the holidays, and be incentivized by the purchase of a new Energy Star appliance, placed in a common area to share. **If a school removed just 5 mini-fridges over a break, savings would amount to about \$210 in savings during full year.**

5. Turn off and unplug *all* unused equipment.

Even if all of the appliances at your school are turned off, chances are that they are still drawing a small amount of energy. This "phantom load," while small (usually around 1-5 watts) for each individual appliance, can mount quickly when each classroom is populated with plug loads from computers and printers, TVs and accessories, and a range of other devices. Almost any product with an external power supply, remote control, continuous display (including an LED), or that charges batteries will draw power continuously. The best way to zap these loads? **Plug your appliances into a power strip, and cut the power with one flick of the strip to "OFF."**

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For more ideas about how to save energy this holiday and many other resources for schools, including lesson plans, tip sheets, and activities, visit the Alliance to Save Energy's **Green Schools** website at www.greenschools.com.

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