

A Commercial Energy Audit Is The Best Kept Secret To Maximizing Your Commercial Energy Efficiency...And Maximizing Your Profits!

Why Should I Care About Commercial Energy Efficiency?

I know, I know, you already have so many things to worry about. Your competition is gunning for your best customer. The biggest project in your shop is behind schedule. You are concerned about the economy and worried we are heading into another recession. Costs are rising but you can't raise your prices without losing business so profit margins are non-existent. How are you going to deal with rising energy costs?

And that doesn't even take into consideration problems in your personal life (we all have them).

Why should you add something else to your list? Because commercial energy efficiency (or industrial energy efficiency if you are a manufacturer) is a low risk way to solve some of your biggest problems.

Think about it. Energy costs are a major expense. If you could cut your energy spending by 25%, how much would that help your business? What would that do for your profit margins? How much more competitive will you be if your costs are lower?

How Can a Commercial Energy Audit Help Me?

If done right, a commercial energy audit will show you how to cut your expenses. A good consultant will examine your utility bills looking for billing errors, unnecessary fees, and better rates. A good energy auditor will show you ways to reduce your energy consumption (and your energy spending), and many of his recommendations will cost you little to implement. And these recommendations are low risk since the consultant quantifies the savings and cost to implement. You know ahead of time what to expect, and get to reap the reward of the energy savings year after year.

So What Is a Commercial Energy Audit?

A commercial energy audit is simply a review of your company, building, and utility bills by a consultant who is an expert in energy conservation. There are different levels of commercial energy audits. The most common designations are:

- Preliminary Audit: A high level look at your energy use. Your energy consumption is compared to other companies in your industry. This gives you an idea of how much energy you could save, but doesn't make any recommendations.
- Scoping Audit: Scoping audits include an analysis of your utility bills and a quick walk through of your facility to understand your process, maintenance practices, equipment, and energy consumption. There is enough data to find the low hanging fruit, but not enough to find every savings possible or to give you a high level of accuracy.
- Comprehensive Audit: Also known as an ASHRAE Level 2 audit, a comprehensive audit picks up where a scoping audit stops. A more comprehensive walk through and analysis of your facility allows the consultant to fully examine all energy conservation possibilities. More importantly, since there is enough data to accurately analyze your energy consumption, the energy consultant is able to tell you how much energy you will save with a high degree of accuracy. This allows you to prioritize energy conservation measures and greatly reduces risk.
- Engineering or Investment Grade Audit: These are the most complex (i.e....expensive) audits. They are most often used by major corporations with intensive project approval processes, or by companies looking to implement major (and expensive) technologies. These include wind, solar PV (photo-voltaic), hot water heating, solar heating (passive & active), CHP (Combined Heat Power), CHCP (Combined Heat Cool Power), refrigeration (mechanical & absorption), heat pumps, HVAC, high efficiency electric motors, biomass, and small hydro-electric....Most companies don't need an audit at this level. The cost and time just are too expensive to justify the minor improvement in accuracy.

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