# Energy and Business

There are a number of strategies that businesses can adopt to work towards reduced energy emissions. For instance, by preparing an Energy Management Policy, you can make your business more energy aware and thereby save energy. Your business can also save energy by concentrating on:

## Air Conditioning

There are two main types of air conditioning systems: evaporative and refrigerative. By improving the efficiency of an air conditioner, you will need less energy to generate the same amount of cooling. That is, the compressor won’t need as much energy to cool the space.

The design of the building is of major concern with respect to the amount of external heat enters the building and therefore how hard the air conditioner will need to work to maintain the set temperature. In poorly designed buildings, some simple ways of reducing this effect include:

* insulation
* double glazing
* shading
* window tinting or reflective coating
* window coverings (e.g. blinds, shutters etc)

As well gaining heat from outside of the building, objects within the building can also generate heat and you should look to minimise this. Internal heat gain may be induced by:

* lighting
* equipment
* occupants

## High Efficiency Motors

High efficiency motors are those that are efficient energy savers. By replacing standard motors with high efficiency motors, substantial savings can be made. The other benefits that they carry include:

* reduce operating costs
* readily available
* typically quieter and cooler

## Lighting

You can improve the effectiveness of lighting, thereby reducing usage, emissions and costs. Simply remembering to switch lighting off when not required makes adequate savings to start with. Ensuring the proper placement of lighting is also important and installing the correct amount of lighting for the intended task – for instance, lighting over work stations should be more intense than that for a waiting room.

Always try to take advantage of natural lighting where possible to minimise the need for electrical lighting.

## Office Equipment

Office equipment is a major user of energy and includes such things as printers, faxes, computers and photocopiers. In the commercial sector this equipment currently accounts for 7 – 20% of electricity use. Additionally, the heat that these machines create increases the electricity use of the air conditioning systems.

Desktop computers are not very energy efficient and both the CPU and the monitor draws energy – between the two, 90 – 150 watts of energy are drawn, with 600kg of greenhouse gases produced every year from a desktop computer run for 8 hours a day. Laptops are more energy efficient and better designed models are becoming more readily available. Logically, turning off your computer when not in use can go a long way to saving energy.