

## Easy Being Green

Going green not only helps the environment, but it can also boost your bottom line. According to the NRA, improving energy efficiency and saving 20 percent on energy operating costs can increase profit as much as 33 percent.

There are lots of resources available online to give you tips and techniques for going green, but the first step in greening, is getting your staff on board.

Your waitstaff, cooks, bussers and bartenders are the front line for cutting waste at your restaurant. Let them know how much electricity and water you use on a monthly basis and how that impacts the business and the environment. A good resource for facts and statistics on restaurant energy consumption is [www.conserve.restaurant.org](http://www.conserve.restaurant.org).

Once you know your current state, get your staff involved in setting a goal. People who are involved in decision making and goal setting participate much more enthusiastically than those who just carry out the boss's orders. Help them contribute and let them know you value their input. Listen to them and incorporate their ideas when it makes sense to do so. For example, a popular quick service restaurant had a goal of reducing electricity costs by \$250 a month. Working with their employees, they came up with a procedure to turn off cooking hoods at night and fryers when they were not in use.

With your goals and processes established, make sure you track your progress in a highly visible area. Everyone likes to keep score and by posting your progress you give your team a way to know how their efforts are making an impact. Also, by tracking your results, you and your team will quickly know if you aren't going to meet your goals. Don't lose heart, work with your team to come up with more energy-saving ideas and refine your strategy.

Finally, reward those team members who come up with solutions and celebrate milestones. In last month's article we talked about different ways to recognize and reward your employees. Often times a simple pat on the back and a thank you are sufficient, but make sure you match the reward to the contribution.

With your staff on board, your greening efforts will be much more sustainable, helping the environment and boosting your bottom line.

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