

Turn It Off Toolkit

This toolkit will help you to foster a workplace culture where everyone saves electricity by turning off lights, computers and other electronic equipment when not in use.

Background Information

The Lower Mainland Health Authorities use approximately 290,000,000 kWh of electricity annually. This is enough electricity to power about **26,364 homes for a year**. While BC currently benefits from clean hydro power to meet electricity needs, demand is expected to outstrip our current capacity by 40% in the next two decades. How can BC close this gap? Significant energy savings can be achieved by being smart with how we use energy.

Steps

Step 1 – Get your Manager/Supervisor Involved

Speak with your manager/director regarding the Turn It Off program that you will be initiating. Get them on board first.

Step 2 – Assess your Work Area

Locate all your workplace light switches and computer monitors. Ensure that the light switches have Lights Off! stickers on them and monitors have Monitor Off! stickers. Perform an initial baseline assessment using the [Energy Assessment Tool](#).

Step 3 - Advertise

Place the energy saving posters around your work area in prominent locations to act as prompts.

The Big Picture

This toolkit is part of a broader initiative to reduce the Lower Mainland Health Authorities' energy use, and to foster a workplace culture where everyone works together to help reduce the energy demand of electronic equipment.



Step 4 – Send an Email

Have your manager send out an email asking people to take responsibility for the electricity use in our workplace – or send the email yourself. See [Additional Resources](#) for a sample email template. You can also bring up the points in the email at a staff meeting.

Step 5 - Implementation

At the next staff meeting raise the issue of energy reduction and help to generate awareness of this toolkit. Identify the people who are most likely to leave your unit at the end of the day and work with those people to ensure lights and equipment are tuned off. Designate them as responsible to ensuring things are turned off. If they will not be around on a particular day get them to ask someone else to have the responsibility on that day. If necessary walk them around to show them the location of all the switches and equipment.

Find volunteers or nominate people to adopt the various common spaces or other ‘orphan’ areas (such as a kitchen, break room, copy room, meeting rooms, storage room, bathrooms etc.) and designate them to turn off the lights or other equipment in those areas when other people ‘forget’.

Step 6 – Evaluate your Success

Compare your findings of the number of lights and equipment left on from the initial baseline from the [Energy Assessment Tool](#) and from after the campaign has been running for a few weeks. Determine any improvement in “Turning It Off” behavior. Send your findings to the Green + Leaders Program Coordinator.

Step 7 – Share your Success

Sharing your success with other Green + Leaders can be motivating and can help support others as they try new tactics and approaches. We also love telling success stories on the [GreenCare Community](#) site, so share your story with us.

Fast Facts: Smart Energy

Health Authority

- ✓ Energy conservation can enhance human health by reducing GHG emissions, improving outdoor air quality and decreasing acid rain.
- ✓ Over 97% of our reported greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions come from health care buildings within the LMHOs, making health care one of the most energy intensive sectors.
- ✓ Our target is aligned with the Provincial mandate of reducing the public sector's carbon footprint 33% by 2020.
- ✓ While the LMHOs' overall energy consumption has increased since 2007 – due to facility expansions and increased health care services – our energy conservation measures have resulted in a **decrease in energy intensity** (*i.e.* amount of energy used per square foot): -9.3% Fraser Health, -0.7% PHC, -2.5% PHSA and -10.2% VCH.

Lighting and Energy Use

- There is no better source of light than natural daylight - make the most of it. Opening your blinds is a free way to brighten up a room.
- You can lower overall energy demand by concentrating bright light where you need it rather than evenly lighting the entire room – this is called 'task lighting'. For example, use a table lamp instead of an overhead light when reading at a desk.
- Keep light fixtures clean – a cleaner bulb is a brighter bulb.

Monitors and Energy Use

- Your monitor's screen saver uses as much energy as when the monitor is working (on average 40 watts).
- If your monitor was switched off for an additional hour each day, over the course of a year you would save enough energy to power an entire household for 9 hours.

Additional Resources

Reference Material

Energy Saving Tips for Everyone

<https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/about-us/how-can-we-help-you/communicate/energy-star-communications-toolkit/bring-your-green-work-1>

Sample Email Template

Subject: Being LOW ENERGY is a good thing!

The Lower Mainland Health Authorities' are working towards being leaders in environmental sustainability and have committed to significantly reducing energy use.

Please turn off all lights, shared and personal equipment when they are not in use for longer than 15 minutes. This includes computer monitors, printers, speakers, space heaters, fans and A/V equipment. Also unplug any battery, phone chargers, kitchen appliances (where appropriate), fans and space heaters.

Also, we have a number of "orphan" spaces in our unit that don't belong to any one person. Please adopt these spaces and make an effort to ensure lights and equipment is turned off in them when not in use. So don't be surprised to find the lights off in the kitchen, coffee area, meeting room, copy room, washroom, etc.

Let's work together to meet our workplace energy reduction targets!

Contacts

For help using this toolkit, please contact the Green + Leaders Program Coordinator.

Visit <https://bcgreencare.ca/framework/energy-conservation> for more information on GreenCare's energy-related initiatives.