



Energy Innovators Initiative

Saving Money Through Energy Efficiency

A Guide to Implementing
an Energy Efficiency
Awareness Program



Natural Resources
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Satellite image on cover: This digital mosaic of Canada, produced by Natural Resources Canada (Canada Centre for Remote Sensing), is a composite of individual satellite images. The colours reflect differences in the density of vegetation cover: bright green for dense vegetation in the humid southern regions; yellow for semi-arid and mountainous regions; brown for the far north where vegetation cover is very sparse; and white for the Arctic regions.

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A Guide to Implementing an Energy Efficiency
Awareness Program
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Throughout this Guide, we list Web sites that offer useful information on energy efficiency. Just look for this symbol: . All Web addresses appear in bold.

Although some of these sites sell goods or services, Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) does not endorse one company over another. We identify these Web sites solely for the informative content they provide.

This publication and others from NRCan's Office of Energy Efficiency (OEE) are available in HTML, PDF or hard copy at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/publications and oee.nrcan.gc.ca/eii/publications.cfm.



PREFACE

This Guide describes a step-by-step approach to designing and implementing an effective energy efficiency awareness program. The information will help you plan and implement an awareness program designed to meet the needs of your organization, be it small or large. Useful tips and practical advice are included throughout to get you started. Following a step-by-step approach, the Guide can be implemented in its entirety, or you may choose to implement only certain concepts or elements.

Climate change has been called the greatest environmental and economic challenge facing the world today – one that calls for action on many fronts. The Government of Canada is playing a lead role in developing initiatives that support Canada's commitment to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

The Office of Energy Efficiency (OEE) of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) has everything you need to save energy and money while helping to protect the environment. Through its many programs for the residential, commercial, industrial and transportation sectors, the Government of Canada has a wide range of programs to help Canadians and our industries, businesses and institutions become more energy efficient.

The OEE's Energy Innovators Initiative (EII) helps commercial businesses and public institutions explore energy efficiency options and strategies. The EII offers access to tools, information, services and financial incentives to stimulate the development and implementation of energy retrofits.



For information on how your commercial business or public institution can become more energy efficient, visit the EII's Web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/eii.

For information on how to save energy – and money – at home, at work and on the road, visit the OEE's Web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca.

For more information on climate change, visit the Government of Canada's climate change Web site at www.climatechange.gc.ca.

INTRODUCTION

As a building manager, you are constantly faced with the dilemma of finding new ways to reduce costs without compromising service. A growing number of organizations like yours are reducing costs by improving their energy efficiency.

Adopting energy efficiency in the workplace can help improve your bottom line by reducing your organization's operating costs, improving workplace comfort and protecting the environment. In addition to saving money, becoming more energy efficient reduces harmful greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

A comprehensive awareness program can support and reinforce the overall objectives of an energy efficiency initiative. An awareness program can

- increase the understanding of the benefits of energy efficiency
- make the link between actions and behaviour by individuals and energy use and potential savings
- motivate users to modify behaviour that affects energy consumption
- reduce energy consumption and save money

TIP Energy-saving tips learned at work can be transferred to the home. Showing staff how to save money on their personal energy bills is an excellent way to gain interest and support for your organization's energy efficiency program.

What they said...

"An action as simple as turning off unnecessary lights is the most effective cost-saving measure available. Every dollar saved on building operation is more money that can be spent on patient care."

– "Engineering and Maintenance,"
KGH Spectrum, Vol. 7, No. 21, November 23, 1998

"Energy conservation is a local issue, and in a retail operation with more than 350 stores, this means creating awareness and buy-in by local managers. These managers tend to be non-technical and are primarily concerned with merchandising. Zellers, through its 'Energy Road Show' and incentive program, has been able to make energy conservation an issue of continuous concern."

– Fred Ware, C.E.T., Senior Manager, Energy, Environment,
Sourcing Initiatives, Store Operations, Zellers Inc.

The overall success of an energy efficiency initiative depends on the cooperation, acceptance and involvement of everyone using the organization – whether it be staff and students in a school, college or university; staff, patients and visitors in a health care facility; customers or patrons of a store or restaurant; or employees that work in an office tower.

An awareness program can provide other benefits:

- increase productivity and boost morale through working together to achieve a common goal
- contribute to a healthier environment through reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- enhance your organization's reputation as a leader in environmental stewardship in the community

An effective awareness program is an easy, low-cost and low-risk opportunity to lower your organization's operating costs. Coupled with a long-term energy management plan (for more information, see the "Dollars to \$ense workshops" sidebar), your organization has the potential to achieve cost savings that will continue over time and free up operating and maintenance resources.



Dollars to \$ense workshops

NRCan's OEE offers a series of energy management workshops to help lower operating and production costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase operational efficiency and create a better work environment. For more information, visit the Web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/workshops.



THE STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH

This Guide is organized into a series of steps that you can follow to build a framework for a comprehensive energy efficiency awareness program. Your awareness program can be as simple or as multi-faceted as your resources allow. Many activities suggested in this Guide can increase awareness and reduce energy consumption with little cost or effort. The ideas and suggestions presented here can be adapted and customized to meet the specific needs of your organization. Figure 1 provides a comprehensive framework for implementing an awareness program. You can choose to follow the framework step-by-step or implement one on a smaller scale.

Working with an energy consultant

Many organizations hire energy consultants or other professionals to help them reduce energy consumption and costs. Typically, energy savings pay for building upgrades. Energy consultants can provide a full range of services, including help in implementing an awareness campaign. Find out if your organization is working with an energy consultant who can help you with your program.

Savings for schools

Destination Conservation (DC) is a practical, activity-based program that brings environmental education alive in schools. It not only combines hands-on learning with resource conservation, it saves school districts money.

DC involves students and staff in conserving energy and resources in their schools. The program runs its educational programs in partnership with utility companies and building performance contractors. These partners provide expert technical advice and the ability to make the physical changes necessary to dramatically reduce a school's use of energy and water and production of waste.

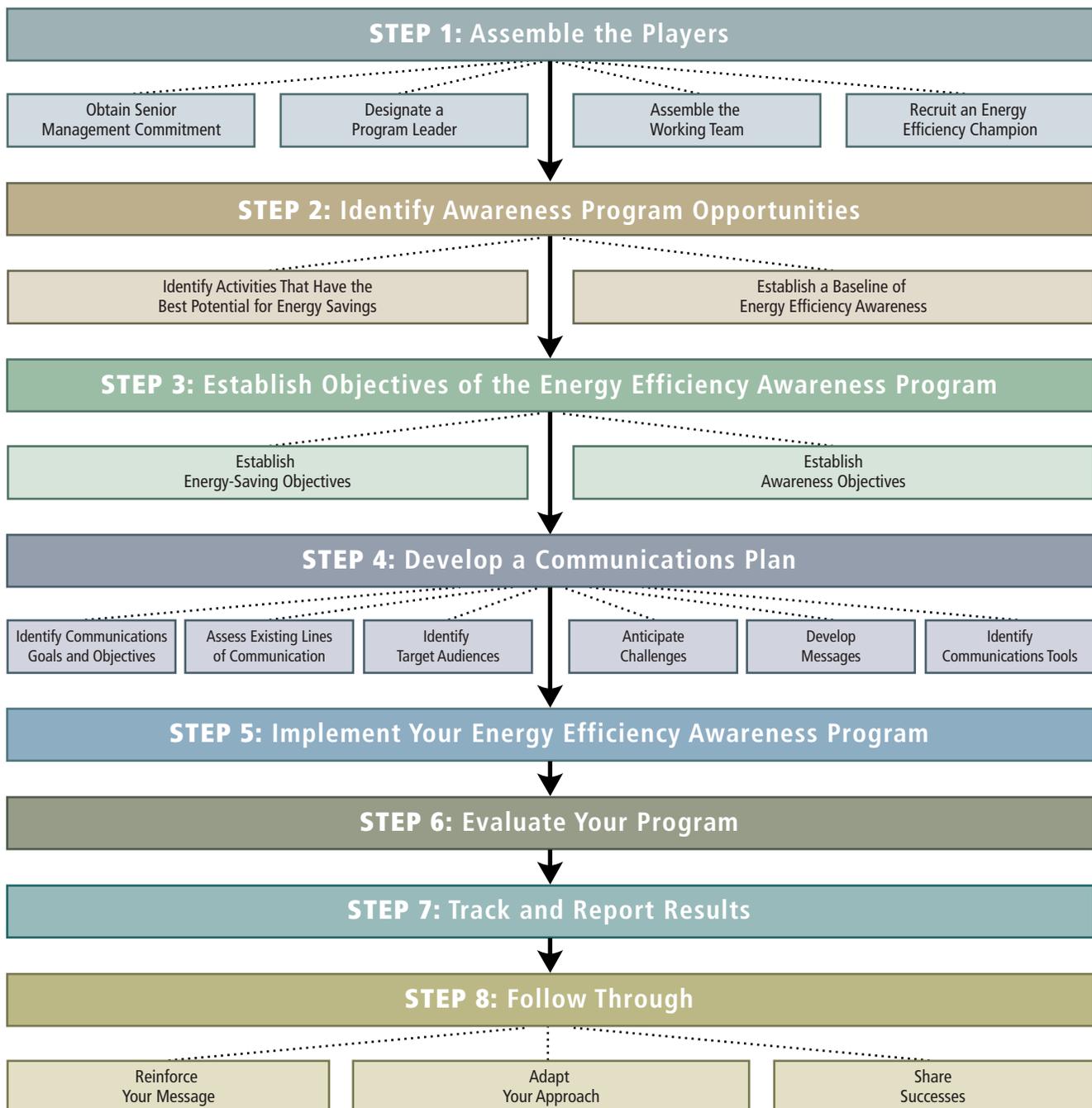
For more information, visit DC's Web site at dcplanet.org.



What they did...

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) in British Columbia is part of the Destination Conservation program. The program helps schools develop energy-savings programs, including an awareness program that involves staff, students and parents. At School District No. 43, an annual awards ceremony is held, and schools receive a cheque equal to 25 percent of their gross annual energy savings. In 2001, 45 schools shared \$115,000 in awards. For more information on Destination Conservation, see the sidebar "Savings for schools."

Figure 1. A framework for an energy efficiency awareness plan



Timing

When you are familiar with the various steps identified in the framework, create a schedule to map out your awareness program. The time required for each step will vary according to

- the size of your organization
- the number of employees and/or building users
- building use and hours of operation
- the scale and complexity of your program

Remember to keep your schedule flexible to accommodate changing circumstances. A sample time line follows.

What they did...

Genuine success comes with a permanent change in the attitudes of those participating. Together with Nova Scotia Power Inc., the Cape Breton–Victoria Regional School Board set up a program called “Power to the Students” to educate students on energy efficiency and how to reduce energy consumption. When the program was completed, students and teachers were more aware than ever of the importance to the environment of small measures such as switching off lights when they aren’t needed.



Sample Time Line for an Energy Efficiency Awareness Program

Month or Week

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
STEP 1 Assemble the Players	→											
STEP 2 Identify Awareness Program Opportunities	→	→										
STEP 3 Establish Objectives of the Awareness Program		→	→									
STEP 4 Develop a Communications Plan		→	→									
STEP 5 Implement Your Awareness Program			→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
STEP 6 Evaluate Your Program				→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
STEP 7 Track and Report Results											→	→
STEP 8 Follow Through												→

STEP 1

Assemble the players

Sub-steps

- 1.1 Obtain senior management commitment
- 1.2 Designate a program leader
- 1.3 Assemble the working team
- 1.4 Recruit an energy efficiency champion

An awareness campaign may be part of your organization's overall energy management plan. Its successful implementation may lead your organization to consider a comprehensive approach that includes technical retrofits. Either way, when launching your awareness program, it is important to establish senior management buy-in, assemble a team composed of the right players and assign responsibility for implementing the program. Remember that the sub-steps and their sequence may vary, depending on your organization and how it operates.



TIP Where appropriate, include your clients as team members to bring an alternative perspective to the discussions.

1.1 Obtain senior management commitment

Early and ongoing support from senior management is critical to the success of your program. Communicating the fact that management is behind the campaign and requests support from employees will enhance the program's credibility. Messages from senior management that promote the program and that provide updates are a way to demonstrate this commitment.

1.2 Designate a program leader

Management should publicly identify and assign an individual to initiate and oversee the planning and implementation of the awareness program. This individual will need to have the resources and authority to carry out the program. Another option is to assign the task to a special projects officer.

UBC's Sustainability Office

In 1998, the University of British Columbia (UBC) opened Canada's first Campus Sustainability Office. The Office is committed to developing an environmentally responsible campus that is economically viable and reflects the values of campus community members. The Office is assisting UBC in assuming a leadership role through practising sustainable development and instilling sustainable development values in its graduates and employees through research, teaching and operations.

The Office is completely funded by savings from its energy reduction programs. For more information, visit the UBC Campus Sustainability Office Web site at www.sustain.ubc.ca.





1.3 Assemble the working team

When assembling your team, be sure to include individuals who have a wide range of skills, knowledge and interests from all areas of the organization. This will ensure a good understanding of the diverse energy-consuming activities throughout the organization and provide spokespeople that represent a range of programs and departments.

Members of your team could include representatives from the following:

- front-line staff such as nurses in a hospital, teachers and students in an academic institution, customer service representatives in a bank or retail organization, or servers in a restaurant
- administration and support staff, including records, finance or information technology personnel
- engineering or plant operations staff
- cleaners, housekeeping and maintenance staff
- management
- personnel from public relations, marketing or special events planning
- volunteers

Encourage buy-in by assigning specific tasks to team members and by ensuring that roles and responsibilities are clear and agreed upon. Tasks could include the following:

- review and assess other initiatives within your organization to look for possible “piggyback” opportunities
- coordinate activities and special events
- design print materials
- develop promotional products
- write articles for newsletters, memos, etc.
- communicate with staff and building occupants regularly about progress achieved
- work with operations and management staff to track energy consumption and savings

What they did...

The University of British Columbia established its UBC Campus Sustainability Office and has recruited over 100 Sustainability Coordinators from departments across the campus. The co-ordinators help to disseminate information to all departments on ways that building occupants can reduce energy use on campus, as well as updating them on upgrade projects taking place and the results of these upgrades. (For more information on UBC’s Sustainability Office, see the sidebar to the left.)

If team members are chosen from various areas and functions within your organization, identifying roles and assigning tasks will come naturally. For example, public relations personnel can work on the development of promotional material.

Many organizations have a variety of committees or boards that deal with a range of topics, including environmental issues. In some cases, these committees might be interested in taking on the energy efficiency awareness challenge. Alternatively, these existing committees could be the starting point for a new committee based on energy efficiency awareness.

1.4 Recruit an energy efficiency champion

Selecting a “champion” to represent your program is critical to successfully achieving the objectives of your campaign. You may wish to recruit a member from senior management as your champion because this person will have the required clout to get things started. Your champion should be someone who is enthusiastic and committed to ensuring that energy efficiency is a high-profile activity. The champion should be prepared to become the program spokesperson as someone who is recognized and publicly associated with the awareness program within the organization and the community.

STEP 2

Identify awareness program opportunities

Sub-steps

- 2.1 Identify activities that have the best potential for energy savings
- 2.2 Establish a baseline of energy efficiency awareness

What they did...

Using funding from the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development's ON-SITE Program, London Health Sciences Centre hired a research assistant for six months to help support the energy managers of its London hospitals. The assistant's duties included evaluating the energy management firm's proposals, communicating information on energy programs to building occupants and researching and developing implementation strategies(see sidebar below).

2.1 Identify activities that have the best potential for energy savings

If you know how, where and by whom energy is being used, it becomes easier to focus on those activities that will generate the best results. Information about how your organization consumes energy helps to determine an energy consumption baseline for setting awareness program objectives and also helps establish some of the indicators against which the program can be evaluated at a later date.

If your organization is in the midst of implementing an energy retrofit, an analysis of energy use may already be available. A sub-team that has a representative from plant operations could be assigned to work with an appropriate representative from operations and maintenance to coordinate information requirements. This sub-team could also discuss how to monitor and track any changes in energy use resulting from awareness activities.

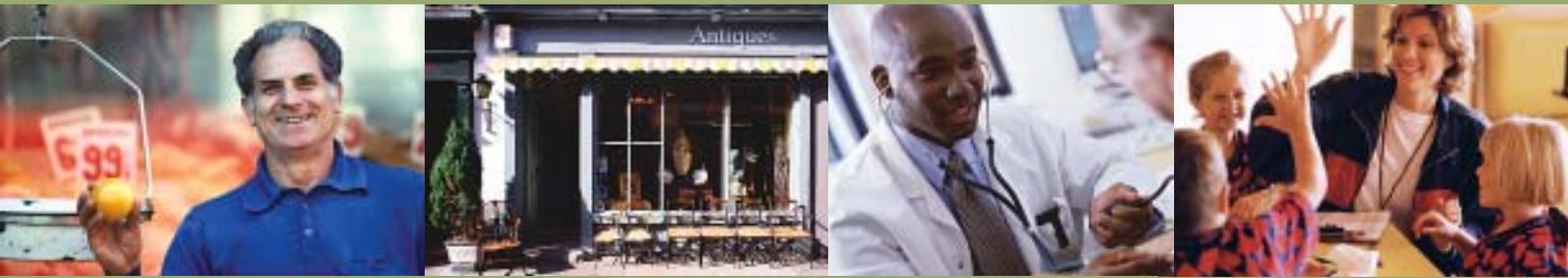
The energy use analysis will highlight which departments present the greatest potential for energy savings through low- or no-cost measures that can easily be implemented by building users.



ON-SITE

ON-SITE is a Department of Human Resources and Skills Development program that provides qualified assistance in a number of areas for up to six months. Under this program, an employer pays \$100 a week toward a hired professional's salary. For more information, visit ON-SITE's Web site at www.epi.ca.





2.2 Establish a baseline of energy efficiency awareness

The success of your program will be measured not only in terms of your organization's reduced energy costs but also in terms of the increased level of energy efficiency awareness of your workplace.

To assess your program's success at a later stage, a baseline of energy efficiency awareness should be determined within your organization. To develop this baseline, you could distribute a brief energy efficiency awareness questionnaire to gain an understanding of the level of knowledge related to energy issues and efficiency measures within your organization before the program begins. Several sample questions are outlined at the right. Use the information collected from this questionnaire as your organization's awareness baseline. You can administer the questionnaire again after the program has been implemented and compare the results to help determine your campaign's overall impact.

Tips on conducting surveys

- Questionnaires should be short – one to two pages at most.
- Most questions should be formatted with multiple-choice, "yes or no" or "true or false" questions, with only a few open-ended questions.
- To encourage survey completion, organizers should provide an incentive for returning the questionnaire, such as a draw for a prize from all questionnaires collected.

Your goal is to have a reasonably accurate portrait of your organization's population. The higher the percentage of people within your organization that you survey, the more accurate the findings are likely to be. It is not necessary to survey everyone; it is more important to ensure that you have a sample that represents different operating areas.

Additional information on conducting surveys and evaluations is presented in Step 6.

Examples of possible questions to include in an awareness questionnaire

- Do you think energy management is an important issue at [organization name]?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most important, how important do you think energy management is at [organization name]?
- Have you heard about [organization name]'s energy management program?
- Are you aware of any energy-saving projects that have been completed or are ongoing at [organization name]? If yes, what are they?
- Do you feel that individual employees affect energy usage at [organization name]? If yes, what actions can you take to save energy?
- Turning off 10 computers every night and weekends for one year would save \$250, \$750 or \$1,500?
- Do you turn off the electronic equipment you use or are responsible for (computer, printer, lights, photocopier, etc.) at the end of the day?
- What actions do you take at work to be energy efficient?
- What actions do you take at home to be energy efficient?
- Can you think of any ways that [organization name] could become more energy efficient?

Low-cost/no-cost measures for savings

Every computer turned off when not in use can save up to \$75 each year in energy costs. Multiplied by the number of computers in your organization, it adds up! For example, 150 computers shut down at night and on weekends could save more than \$11,000 in one year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 170 kilograms.

Each incandescent light bulb turned off when not required could save about \$30 annually. Aside from reducing the number of replacement bulbs needed each year, this could represent significant savings for your organization.

Estimates are based on Canadian averages for energy costs and account for regional differences in energy sources.

STEP 3

Establish objectives of the energy efficiency awareness program

Sub-steps

3.1 Establish energy-saving objectives

3.2 Establish awareness objectives

The underlying goal of your awareness program is to redirect energy dollars to areas where your organization needs it most, be it toward educational resources, improved patient care, upgrades to interior spaces for hotels, restaurants or stores – or even to help reduce prices for your customers. Working as a team, you can establish specific objectives for your awareness program.

3.1 Establish energy-saving objectives

A possible objective for your campaign would be to save specified units of energy or a dollar amount by a specific date as a result of awareness program activities. In many cases, it will be difficult to separate which activity is responsible for the energy savings. An objective such as this can be a valuable indicator of the program's success.

Specific objectives will vary depending on your organization's size, type, location and a range of other variables. Your awareness team, in conjunction with senior management, should determine what constitutes realistic and obtainable goals; establishing objectives that are too high can have a demoralizing effect if targets cannot be reached.

3.2 Establish awareness objectives

A less tangible objective is to change levels of awareness and alter the behaviour of people who use the building. These changes can be measured against the awareness baseline established by the questionnaire (see Step 2.2).



STEP 4

Develop a communications plan

Sub-steps

- 4.1 Identify communications goals and objectives
- 4.2 Assess existing lines of communication
- 4.3 Identify target audiences
- 4.4 Anticipate challenges
- 4.5 Develop messages
- 4.6 Identify communications tools

Once you have a good understanding of how your organization consumes energy and you have defined your objectives, you can begin to develop your awareness program. The primary tool for creating an effective awareness program is a well thought out and executed communications plan.

4.1 Identify communications goals and objectives

Defining the goals and objectives of your communications plan is critical to the success of your awareness program. Once the overall goals and objectives of your plan have been established, communicating with your audience is much easier. Review your overall objectives and consider which of these can be achieved through your communications plan. See the following for some objectives of a typical awareness program.

Communications plan objectives

- Help building occupants better understand the importance of energy efficiency in terms of reduced operating costs and improved working environment.
- Promote the idea that the actions of individuals can make a difference.
- Encourage occupants to develop – and sustain – energy-efficient behaviour.
- Identify the economic and environmental benefits of the awareness program, not only for your organization but also for the community, Canada and beyond.

4.2 Assess existing lines of communication

A communications assessment is an evaluation of how your organization communicates with building occupants. Using existing lines of communication may make it easier to communicate in a format with which they are familiar. You may also wish to identify innovative ways to contact your target audience.

Take inventory of the lines of communication that already exist within your organization. Several examples are provided below. Your organization may also have others. Then identify the best ways to deliver your message. If communication lines are already in place, consider how you could build on them.

The following are typical lines of communication in a commercial business or public institution:

- committees
- regular staff and departmental meetings
- newsletters and communiqués
- bulletin boards
- posters
- e-mail
- on-line networks
- intranet
- energy efficiency “news tickers” on the organization’s homepage
- paycheque notices
- personal contact (word of mouth)

Once you know how information is best communicated in your organization, consider how effective each approach is. Ask around. Do people take notice of the bulletin board? Do people read the newsletters? Are staff meetings well attended? Ask to see your internal communications department’s readership data to determine what tools would be most effective.



For each of the approaches you select for communicating with your target audience(s), determine and record the following:

- **Who is in charge?**
 - Who is your newsletter's editor?
 - Who organizes departmental meetings?
 - Who is responsible for corporate-wide e-mail messages?
- **Will they accept contributions?**
 - Can you include an article in the newsletter?
 - Can the awareness program be included on the agenda at the next departmental meeting?
- **What format should you use to submit information?**
 - Should a newsletter article be submitted on disk?
 - How many words can you use on a paycheque notice?
 - Can you provide handouts at a meeting, or should someone deliver the message in person?
- **Are there specific deadlines?**
 - How often is the newsletter distributed?
 - When do submissions need to be provided to the editor in order to be included in the next issue?



4.3 Identify target audiences

Your messages and delivery will differ according to the intended audiences. It is important to recognize and consider varying circumstances, needs and concerns. Clearly defining your target audiences will allow you to develop specific messages, activities and plans for each group.

Consider your primary and secondary audiences. Your primary audience represents the people you want to target for your awareness campaign. It may be just one group of employees or a larger group of building users.

Dealing with an undefined target audience

Communications and awareness is a difficult task for TD Centre Leaseholds. Its six office towers house over 20 000 tenants. Because tenants have a significant impact on the ability to manage energy, it is a significant challenge for TD Centre Leaseholds to control energy consumption behaviours. To create an impact, the landlord must convince a diverse group of tenants of the merits and methods of energy conservation.

To have an impact on its tenants' behaviour, TD Centre Leaseholds and its energy consultant implemented a wide range of awareness tools, including mock-ups of complete floors to help win the support of tenants, meetings with senior tenant staff, the use of banners in corridors, signs in lobbies and the distribution of notices and schedules of energy retrofits.

When examining your target audience, consider its size, its location and whether it is located in multiple facilities. These factors will help you determine the tools you will use to communicate with them. Audiences to consider include

- employees
- non-company building occupants
- students
- service providers/suppliers
- customers
- potential customers
- public



Your secondary audience is the people that may have an interest in your initiative because they will be able to adjust their behaviours to be consistent and supportive of your vision. Your secondary audience could include

- customers
- suppliers
- visitors
- local community
- general public
- media

In Step 2, you reviewed your organization's energy consumption patterns. With this information, you can prioritize your target audiences. For example, staff that operates the physical plant will have a greater impact on your organization's energy consumption than periodic visitors or users. Remember to consider all programs and departments.

4.4 Anticipate challenges

Communications efforts will often be challenged along the way. Anticipating possible challenges early on allows you to be ready for them as they arise. Following are a few examples.

Communications challenges

- Staff is distracted by pressure to provide demanding services with limited time and financial resources.
- There is a perception that the program provides few immediate, tangible or direct benefits.
- Staff is skeptical about the benefits of energy-efficient practices.
- Not all staff believe that individual actions will make a difference.

The challenges identified above apply to most organizations. Clear messaging is an effective tool to address these challenges. The next section provides information on how to develop simple messages that are directed to your target audience.

4.5 Develop messages

Messages are the most significant ideas you want to convey. Once you understand what your audiences need to know, you can develop messages that specifically address these requirements. When developing messages, consider the following:

- who you are talking to
- what you will say
- how you will say it

Your messages should highlight your overall objectives and inform your target audience about their role in the program.

-
- TIP** Individuals are more willing to buy into energy efficiency when
- the issue is understood on a personal level
 - the impacts associated with individual energy use are known
 - they know what they can do to make a difference
 - they are not inconvenienced (for example, they are not required to do something that is too time consuming)
-



Following is a sample list of the primary messages that can be conveyed to your audience.

Communications messages

- **Save energy at work.**
- **Save energy at home.**
- **Saving energy does not mean reducing occupancy comfort.** Assure employees that they will not “freeze in the dark.” Reducing energy consumption through behavioural change and energy retrofits will not compromise the quality of the work environment.
- **Individuals can make a difference.**
 - Everyone has a role to play.
 - The success of the project depends on everybody’s contribution.
 - Provide examples of easy things that staff can do to save energy.
 - Provide interesting and informative savings trivia: “If each person in the organization turned off their computer at night and on weekends, it would save about \$XX [estimate the number of computers and calculate savings at \$75 per computer] per year.”
 - Individuals should be proud of and be recognized for their energy efficiency efforts.
- **Contribute to improving the environment.** Improving energy efficiency reduces Canada’s greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.
- **Contribute to our bottom line, security and community.** Energy efficiency can contribute to greater productivity and larger profits, which may lead to job security and higher wages.

How to make your messages “real”

Potential cost savings should be translated into concrete benefits that people can relate to that are relevant to your organization’s line of business. For example, if lighting represents 5 to 10 percent of your organization’s energy bill, your messages should communicate that a 10 percent savings from turning off lights that are not in use could save a specific dollar amount every year. These savings could then be related to an equivalent such as teaching supplies, an upgraded lobby in a hotel, office staff positions and/or new equipment.

TIP Messages should be

- simple
- repeated frequently
- brief
- personal
- consistent
- vivid
- relevant

Remember to use plain language in your materials:

- Your target audiences come from diverse cultural and language backgrounds: adapt your messages and materials accordingly, i.e., messages may need to be translated into more than one language.
- Say it simply, and say it often!

Find out if your organization is undergoing or planning to undergo any energy retrofit projects. Talk with your engineering or plant operations department to find out how much energy is being saved. Use communications messages to link the savings achieved by this broader energy management program to the additional savings that could be achieved by staff changing its energy use patterns.

What they did...

At the Peninsulas Health Care Corporation, concrete messages were used to make a point. For example, one of the energy tips in the employee newsletter stated that a leaking faucet loses 796 litres (175 gallons) of water every month at one drop per second – wasting not only water but the energy used to heat it. Another helpful hint suggested that reducing electricity consumption by as little as 50 kWh per day can save as much as \$1,500 to \$2,000 per year.

4.6 Identify communications tools

Communications tools deliver key messages to your target audiences. Tools can be used to inform employees about how they can participate. The selection of effective communications tools depends on various factors, including the complexity of the message, the nature of the target audiences, the size of the organization and existing communications mechanisms. Some communications tools that you may wish to consider are identified in the following. Your organization may have others as well.

Examples of communications tools

PRINT MATERIALS

Newsletters

Newsletters are a low-cost approach that can be used regularly to reinforce your message. They can inform staff and other building occupants about the program, successes and areas that need improvement. A series of newsletter articles would serve as reminders and help maintain momentum. Newsletters can be used at various stages of your awareness program, can be distributed electronically at very low cost and can be produced in hard-copy format.

TIP Newsletters are convenient for providing factual or instructional information. They are most effective when messages are linked to current events in your organization or in the community.





Pamphlets and brochures

Pamphlets and brochures can provide a greater level of detail than newsletters. They can have a specific focus such as “how to” messages. In addition, pamphlets and brochures are often available free of charge from a variety of sources, including NRCan’s OEE. These communications tools can address a wide range of energy efficiency topics.

Bulletins

Shorter than a newsletter or brochure and not as formal as a press release, bulletins are an effective tool to relay information quickly to staff and building occupants. Bulletins can be produced in hard copy format or can be distributed via e-mail. Hard copies can be posted on bulletin boards and placed in other areas of high visibility.

Press releases

Press releases issued to local media can be used to announce your awareness program, publicize special events and promote results. Media coverage will encourage staff members and involve them in your organization’s energy management program.

Taking it one step further

To inspire environmental action within industry, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts created *The Green Partnership Guide* as a comprehensive handbook for employees and all those who wish to make an environmental difference. Now in its second edition, the *Guide*, according to one of the foremost environmentalists in North America, Dr. David Suzuki, is a concrete example of how businesses can involve employees in something everyone can feel good about. It’s good for business, it’s good for morale, and it’s good for the planet.

For more information on *The Green Partnership Guide*, contact Fairmont’s office of environmental affairs by phone at (416) 874-2600 or by e-mail at environment@fairmont.com.

What they are doing...

During an energy-saving blitz, the University of Ottawa included energy-themed articles in its campus newspaper, once a month for two to five months and had a show-and-tell kiosk with posters and graphics with information on energy-related issues.

What they did...

To help maintain and sustain momentum, Air Canada’s Aviation Support Equipment and Facility Maintenance group issued a press release in November 2001 to promote its newly launched Energy Awareness Campaign. To view the news release, visit the Web site at www.achorizons.ca/en/issues/2001/november/energy_awareness.htm.

Posters

Posters attract attention and raise awareness. They can be used to promote workshops or guest speakers, announce progress, encourage participation and build momentum. Placed in high-traffic areas such as cafeterias, lobbies, gift shops, waiting areas and elevators, posters should present an idea or message that is simple and direct.

Signs or stickers

Signs or stickers can be placed on or near equipment, lights and thermostats to help remind users to turn them off when not in use. However, stickers may not be helpful if applied to equipment that automatically shuts down or on equipment that is sensor-activated.

BC Hydro has a number of energy efficiency awareness tips that can be incorporated as part of your organization’s print material. For more information, visit BC Hydro’s Energy Employee Awareness Tips Web site at www.bchydro.bc.ca/business/investigate/investigate1256.html.

For information in French, visit the Association québécoise pour la maîtrise de l’énergie’s (AQME’s) Web site at aqme.org.



Tent cards

Tent cards can be used to provide information and program updates on energy and dollar savings. They also act as reminders and encourage further participation. The cards can be displayed in waiting areas and on cafeteria tabletops, lobby tables, cash registers or computer monitors.

Paycheque notices

Reminders and other useful information can be included in the envelopes of employee paycheques.

Displays and booths

Displays, booths or bulletin boards placed in high-traffic areas such as cafeterias and work areas can promote the program and convey detailed and comprehensive messages. They should be simple, clear and visually appealing. They should be creative and have strong visual content (colour, graphics, etc.).

Booths should be staffed by knowledgeable members of your team who are able to respond to inquiries about your campaign and about energy efficiency in general. Booths and displays also provide an opportunity to include information from other sources such as local utilities and energy management firms. Displays, booths and bulletin boards can also be effective communications tools for special events or can be used regularly to maintain awareness within the organization.

TIP You may wish to invite an outside expert to help staff your display booth and to help respond to inquiries. Staff from the OEE is available and can provide information and advice on a wide variety of energy efficiency topics. For more information, see "Learn more" at the end of this Guide.

TIP Partner with a local high school or college by involving its media arts students in developing posters and other materials for your awareness program. Not only does this help you produce posters at low cost, it also involves your local community.

Information packages for new employees

To engage new employees in your organization's energy efficiency activities, information could be included as part of a new employee's orientation.

Once you have developed your communications plan and determined which tools best meet your organization's needs, you are ready to produce your materials. Some things to consider are presented in the following.

Developing material

- Get it right before the copy leaves your hands. This applies to content and translation into other languages.
- Make use of internal resources – use people who are experienced in communications to help you write, design and prepare your artwork.
- Get written approval on the content before production begins.

Printing material

- Use in-house design and printing facilities, if available.
- Keep environmental production in mind. For example:
 - use paper that has an acceptable level of recycled content
 - choose non-glossy paper
 - make sure you print or copy double-sided
 - avoid ink “bleeds” and non-standard paper sizes

If you use an external printer, keep the following in mind:

- Quality of work, pricing and the ability to meet your deadlines should be your main concerns.
- Build in enough time to meet your deadlines.
- You will need to provide information about the size of the publication, the paper required, the number of folds, the ink colours and the quantities you need.
- Request a copy of “blues” before the material is printed. Blues are essentially a blueprint of how your finished product will look. Printed on special paper, all the words and photos are in shades of blue. Check thoroughly – this is your last chance to correct any errors. Corrections become very expensive after this step.

What they did...

Creating and sustaining awareness of energy conservation is a particular problem at universities due to the large annual turnover of students. The University of Ottawa has annual populations of more than 30 000 every year. To involve as much of the student body as possible, the university maintains a “Wise Use of Utilities” program. The program has two elements:

- dissemination of information through posters and bookmarks
- an Energy Saving Hot Line whereby a student or staff member who discovers an apparent waste of energy can call the Physical Resources Hot Line. The names of the reporters are entered in a monthly draw of a \$100 prize.

TIP Beware! Although promotional items are frequently used, they should be produced and used only after due consideration of their value.

When planning promotional items, be sure to use a bold identity and design to ensure that your material stands out. A strong, easily identifiable brand, reinforced with a logo, tag line, style or colour, as well as a consistent look will help your audience identify with your program and its various components.

Promotional items

Promotional items such as buttons, T-shirts, coffee mugs, stickers and caps can be given away as prizes, raffled or sold. Items such as these will help build enthusiasm among staff and will act as reminders. Promotional items can also be used to help brand your message.

Instead of the typical promotional items, energy-saving devices such as energy-efficient light bulbs, faucet aerators and set-back thermostats can be given away as prizes or as awards for participating in special activities or events. These types of products may be more relevant to your program’s overall objectives and encourage participants to think about energy efficiency.

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Competitions and challenges

Friendly competition among departments, programs and/or employees can encourage and motivate staff to participate in your awareness program.

Ideas for competitions and challenges

- Determine which department, program or employee can reduce energy use most effectively.
- Encourage suggestions for creative energy efficiency improvements.
- Produce an energy efficiency poster, poem, song or jingle, program mascot or energy efficiency awareness character.
- Promote energy-efficient transportation by rewarding departments that have the highest number of people who use car pools or take public transit.
- Reduce peak electricity use by issuing challenges to employees in various buildings within an organization.
- Organize a competition in which an energy efficiency auditor checks various parts of the organization at night to verify if computers, lights and equipment that are not in use have been turned off. Prizes could be awarded to groups that demonstrate the most energy-efficient behaviour.

What they did...

Hbc's Zellers offered a \$1,000 financial incentive to district store associates who achieved the highest year-over-year improvement in energy efficiency. The cash award was directed to the stores' social club. Over the course of the campaign, a total of \$24,000 was distributed to energy-saving stores.

The Cape Breton–Victoria Regional School Board in Nova Scotia implemented a program to challenge students and teachers to find and implement energy conservation measures. Individual classrooms worked to save energy, winning a happy-face sticker for every day they went without turning on their lights. Students from the winning school produced a video on energy efficiency, complete with a poem by the Grade 3 class. Their efforts won the school a fully equipped, Internet-ready computer.

Special events

Hosting special events or “theme” days and weeks provides the opportunity to impart detailed information to employees and other building occupants and engage them in the program. Special events should be colourful and dynamic and use a wide mix of communications tools. Events can feature special activities such as raffles, quizzes and random draws at displays.

A special event is a good opportunity for your energy efficiency champion to be a visible part of your campaign and show leadership by example. It may also be an opportunity to invite a local celebrity to encourage participation. Events should be promoted at least two weeks in advance. Consider issuing a press release. Events can help draw attention to the program and demonstrate that people working together can achieve a common goal.

Awards programs

Awards programs build and maintain momentum. They also generate interest and motivate behavioural change. Have a suggestion box and offer prizes for the best or most innovative solutions. Quizzes about energy efficiency at work and at home can help stimulate interest and participation. Prizes can be awarded for the highest number of correct answers.

TIP When implementing a competition or challenge, post notices of the time frames and prizes in public areas or in newsletters. If possible, display the prizes to build anticipation. Post the rules and other key information well in advance. Rules could explain the maximum number of entries, participation guidelines, contact names and general guidelines.



Awards can range from small items such as fluorescent light bulbs, T-shirts, set-back thermostats and low-flow aerators to larger items such as an energy-efficient appliance (microwave, dishwasher, etc.). Solicit support for awards from local sponsors.

Information sessions, special workshops and presentations

Information sessions such as workshops and other presentations provide opportunities to learn about energy efficiency, show how the organization and individuals can benefit, and illustrate practical ways to save energy. The sessions can be in the form of presentations, workshops and discussion groups or a combination of these approaches. Such sessions can be part of your organization's Energy Efficiency Awareness Week or Earth Day activities.

Departmental and committee meetings also provide an opportunity to educate staff and encourage participation. Most important, they provide an opportunity for two-way communication. Building users can suggest ideas to reduce energy use, and any questions or concerns can be addressed immediately. Presentations at meetings should be short and focus on what individuals can do to reduce energy costs and on the associated benefits.

TIP Involve children and youth in your initiative.

Initiate energy efficiency awareness activities that target young people. Drawing and colouring competitions or cooperative projects can generate material to decorate your facility or other buildings in the community, demonstrate active involvement and keep participants occupied.

What they did...

With a growing list of approximately 200 possible environmental initiatives to choose from, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts' Green Committees at each property compete for environmental superiority and the title of Environmental Hotel of the Year. The hotel that completes the highest number of environmental initiatives in one year receives a one-week, all-expenses-paid eco-exchange for all 10 Green Committee members. It is not unusual for winning hotels to complete over 100 environmental initiatives in one year, with chain-wide total winners climbing to well over 100.

In January 2001, Hbc's Zellers kicked off its energy efficiency awareness program by conducting a series of energy efficiency awareness presentations to management teams from 326 stores across Canada. Presentations were made at one store in each of the 24 districts and were attended by management from the 12 to 15 stores in each district. Attendance from all presentations totalled more than 1000. The presentations introduced Zellers' Engineering Department, energy contractors and consultants, discussed the objectives of the program and provided information on technical retrofits that were to be implemented in the future.

The Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba, believes that although the topic of energy efficiency is serious, the approach used in an awareness program does not have to be. To reach its objectives, the planning committee came up with a mascot to make the campaign fun and effective. The "Energy Elf" was something staff could easily recognize and associate with energy efficiency, and it also kept the message fun and light. The image is used on Post-it® notes and posters, on the Centre's intranet site and in displays, and is part of a regular column in the Centre's newsletter.

The Energy Elf also makes live appearances at energy or environmental displays and special events to increase awareness of the importance of energy efficiency at the facility. Staff can even make special requests to have the Energy Elf attend specific events.

To see the Health Sciences Centre of Winnipeg's Energy Elf in action, visit the Web site at www.hsc.mb.ca/energy.



STEP 5

Implement your energy efficiency awareness program

When you have planned and prepared your awareness program, the next step is to get the message out. Implementing your awareness program takes energy, enthusiasm and imagination.

How you implement your program is up to you. You can choose various tools and activities and incorporate them into your program. Your awareness program doesn't have to be complicated to be successful. You may simply decide to have a few meetings with key energy consumers, provide them with actions and ask for suggestions. Or you might publish a few articles in your organization's newsletter. Even the simplest plan can help get you started and have an impact.

5.1 Getting started

Kick off your awareness program with a special event, presentation or workshop to build excitement. To mark the kickoff, organize a challenge to see how many staff members can get to work using the fewest vehicles. You could also have a contest to see who can come up with the best idea to save energy at the organization.

TIPS

- Promote your program's launch at least two weeks in advance using posters, newsletters and other tools.
- Start by using a few of the communications tools that you think will give you the biggest "bang for your buck."
- Learn from experience and adapt your program as you go. For example, if posters do not generate interest, it may be more effective to make a presentation at a meeting to promote your message.
- Awareness is a "work in progress." Maintain momentum by repeating your message frequently, using different tools over a sustained period.
- Awareness programs are more effective when linked to changes that staff can see. If you are planning energy retrofits in your facility, kick off your awareness programs at the beginning of the retrofits and continue the programs throughout.



STEP 6

Evaluate your program

Evaluating your awareness program against original goals and objectives will help determine if it is effective – what works, what doesn't and which tools and activities best encourage changes in behaviour. Ongoing evaluations throughout your campaign provide the information needed to adapt your program and plan future activities to achieve the desired results.

6.1 Evaluation approaches

Comparing variables documented in Step 2 against new information gathered after your program is underway will provide insight into whether your program is on course. Depending on your approach, you can conduct different types of evaluations. Most approaches can be categorized as either quantitative or qualitative.

TIP Use the approach that you feel will give you the most accurate information, or use a combination of methods to get a more complete assessment of your program.

Quantitative evaluations

Quantitative evaluations deal with objectives, measurable facts and numbers – they ask “what?” and “how much?” rather than “why?”

Options for quantitative evaluations

- Compare your energy bills before, during and after your awareness program. Ask your energy service consultant or your organization's operations department to provide you with this information regularly.
- A decrease in your energy costs could suggest that your program is working. Consider whether other factors could have influenced energy use, including technical retrofits, a shutdown of part of the organization or the installation of new equipment.
- As suggested in Step 2, distribute awareness questionnaires before and after your campaign to determine whether staff experienced a change in their energy efficiency knowledge and awareness. An increase in awareness will demonstrate how effective your program has been. Questionnaires can be distributed as a payroll insert or can be completed by specific individuals or departments.

Qualitative evaluations

Qualitative evaluations are flexible because respondents can give a number of answers to questions that are often open-ended. They also provide in-depth information as they allow the interviewer to probe more deeply by asking questions such as “what do you think?,” “why do you think that?” and “what do you suggest?”

TIP Ask your energy consultant about energy use and how to factor in variables such as changes in weather and building use over time.



Qualitative evaluations sometimes involve personal interaction, such as individual surveys or interviews, or can be conducted on a more impersonal basis. Depending on the size of your organization, you can target a certain group of people or randomly select representative staff.

Options for qualitative evaluations

- Prepare a short questionnaire and distribute copies to participants through senior managers or to specific individuals. Ask respondents to return completed surveys within a specific time period.
- Distribute questionnaires at a booth during an energy efficiency event or at lunchtime. Have sufficient room for respondents to fill out the questionnaire on the spot so that it can be returned immediately.
- Conduct face-to-face surveys with visitors.
- Ask a set of questions at a meeting and encourage comments.

Qualitative analysis can also be undertaken informally by asking building occupants what they think about energy efficiency and the awareness program in general. From the results of these informal surveys, you will be able to assess the overall level of energy efficiency awareness of your group.

TIPS

- Increase your evaluation response rate by offering incentives for participating. These could include low-cost promotional giveaways or coupons from sponsors.
- Enlist the assistance of local high school or college students to administer the questionnaires. This third-party approach may bring a better response rate.

Although it can be difficult to quantify the results of an awareness program, some approaches that you may wish to consider include:

- regular meter readings in a sample of buildings occupied primarily during regular office hours
- telephone surveys with staff at the program launch and one year later
- pre- and post-campaign surveys to measure changes in awareness levels among staff



STEP 7

Track and report results

Your evaluation will provide you with some quantitative data on your organization's energy use patterns over time. Reporting publicly on your awareness program's progress will enhance the program's effectiveness by communicating that participants can and do make a difference.

To reinforce your message, provide regular updates to staff and building users through newsletter articles, displays and management meetings. Updates will help illustrate the importance of individual cooperation and participation.

TIPS

- Show progress with easy-to-read bar graphs, pie charts and concrete examples.
- Include information on how much energy and money your campaign has saved and explain the positive impact on the environment.
- Present the information in a way that your audience can relate to. For example, report on the amount of money saved over a year and compare it with salary costs or the costs of new equipment or additional resources.
- Display the information widely and regularly using bulletin boards, Web sites and newsletters.
- Send regular progress reports to senior management to keep them informed and to maintain their support. Reports should be brief, list awareness activities, highlight any savings achieved and present any other positive outcomes that are related to the campaign.



STEP 8

Follow through

Sub-steps

- 8.1 Reinforce your message
- 8.2 Adapt your approach
- 8.3 Share successes

8.1 Reinforce your message

Once your awareness program is in full swing, you can move toward your goal of reducing energy consumption. Remember that awareness is a work in progress – to maintain interest and momentum, continue to reinforce your message frequently by using a variety of tools such as articles in your organization's newsletter and updates on bulletin board displays and in meetings.

8.2 Adapt your approach

During the course of your campaign, you can adapt elements of your program to better respond to the needs of your organization. Use the information from your evaluations and observations to redirect your campaign, if required. If a second phase will be implemented or if a follow-up campaign is planned, be sure to use information from your evaluations. What tools worked well? What can you improve? Are there any new ways to spread information about the program? How can you keep the message fresh? For example, if you have used articles in the newsletter to promote energy efficiency awareness and your tracking shows that awareness has not increased, you might consider using another tool or redefining your message.

It is important to reinforce the message of energy efficiency as often as possible. This will help sustain the impact of your program, reinforce new behaviour and lead to the continuous improvement of your overall program.

8.3 Share successes

As part of the follow-up, it is essential to provide internal and external audiences with an update of the program's success. Celebrate your achievements and recognize the important role that your employees and other building users have played in reducing energy use. Your organization may decide to use some of the money saved to buy new equipment or fund a pizza party or other event that participants would enjoy.

LEARN MORE

Additional resources to get you started

The following Web sites are in English only. For information in French, consult the Association québécoise pour la maîtrise de l'énergie's Web site at aqme.org.

BC Hydro's Web site features its Power Smart energy efficiency awareness program. The Web site has case studies, tips and tools to use along the way. For more information, see the Web site at www.bchydro.bc.ca/business/investigate/investigate882.html.

Although directed at federal institutions, the U.S. Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program has a variety of useful strategies and materials that can help your organization. For more information, visit its Web site at www.eere.energy.gov/femp/yhttp/strategies.html.

The United Kingdom's Action Energy provides a range of products services for business and public sector organizations to help reduce energy consumption. A wide variety of energy information is available free of charge and can be downloaded from the Internet. For a list of energy efficiency awareness publications, visit Action Energy's Web site at www.actionenergy.org.uk/ActionEnergy/Search/default.asp.

For information on an energy efficiency awareness campaign at a post-secondary educational facility, visit Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's energy efficiency awareness Web page at www.eere.energy.gov/femp/yhttp/strategies.html.

You can also visit the U.S. Department of the Navy Energy Awareness Program's Web site at energy.navy.mil/awareness/guide/guide-6.html.



Additional resources are available from NRCan's OEE to help you develop and implement your organization's awareness program. A wealth of information is available to help you become more energy efficient at home, at work and on the road.

For More Information

Energy Innovators Initiative

Office of Energy Efficiency
Natural Resources Canada
580 Booth Street, 18th Floor
Ottawa ON K1A 0E4

Tel.: (613) 992-3245
Fax: (613) 947-4121

E-mail: info.services@nrcan.gc.ca

Web site: oee.nrcan.gc.ca/eii

Leading Canadians to Energy Efficiency at Home, at Work and on the Road

The Office of Energy Efficiency of Natural Resources Canada strengthens and expands Canada's commitment to energy efficiency in order to help address the challenges of climate change.

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