



15. Signage and changing behaviour

Changing our design features and technology are only a part of being energy efficient. The other part is changing behaviour of all the people who use our facilities. We may improve efficiency by installing a new air conditioning unit but if the windows and doors are left open we will not achieve the savings we set out to.

Getting started

Our centres can become not only more energy efficient, but also sites for inspiring and teaching others about energy efficiency. For this to happen, make good use of signage and orientation efforts. This can make a difference.

Promoting your values

Announce your commitment to energy efficiency by placing signs or notices in

busy areas of your centre. You can raise awareness by using signs like this:

- 'We are committed to saving energy at Helenvale Community Centre.'

Integrate your value statements about energy efficiency into policies, procedures and orientation materials. They are more powerful if you also provide some feedback on your progress towards goals.

Behaviour based requests

Signs reminding people about power saving are best if they are clear, friendly and placed next to the appliance or switch.

For instance:

- 'Please switch off the urn.'
- 'Please use air conditioning temperature range of 24–26°C in summer and 19–21°C in winter.'
- 'Please close doors and windows while the air conditioner is in use.'
- 'Please switch the microwave off at the wall to save standby power.'

'Switch the lights off' signs are particularly useful in rooms that may not get frequent use like tearooms or bathrooms/toilets.

Energy messages in languages other than English

If there are non-English speaking groups who use your centre, translate power saving messages into commonly used languages.

Look online for pre-made signs with graphics that you can buy or download for free.



Educational signs

This form of communication is about explaining the 'why' or 'how' of energy efficiency measures. For instance, you might explain particular features of the building or its fittings:

- 'We chose LED lighting because it is an energy efficient form of lighting and the bulbs last a long time.'
- 'We installed a solar hot water system which saves us energy.'

If you have a larger facility, signs about who to contact if they notice a problem can save time on getting things fixed.

Using your facility as a demo site

If you have a number of energy efficiency features, encourage your tutors or group leaders to integrate this information into classes. You could also run special workshops or tours of your centre and tell people the story of your progress.

There is nothing like a show-and-tell to get the message across. Keep information about prices, technology and supplier

sources, handy so you can answer questions. You don't have to be a technical expert to be able to share something useful.

Sharing your progress

If you have solar power, you can read the inverter and tell people how much renewable power has been generated on that day or since the device was installed.

People are often more interested in what you did and why, than the actual figures.

Or you can ask an expert to translate your energy savings into practical examples such as the number of hours of TV or computer hours it could power.

You can share this news through:

- a social media post
- a sign
- your yearly reporting
- a poster in the foyer
- an announcement at the end of year celebration.

These all help to motivate your team, the people who use your building and your community.

Further resources

Check out A Greenhouse Around the Corner website:

www.agreenhouse.net.au/helpful-resources

Related fact sheets

Fact sheet 2: Being an energy efficient leader in your community

Fact sheet 14: Engagement strategies

For more fact sheets, go to A Greenhouse Around the Corner website:

www.agreenhouse.net.au/fact-sheets



CHECK POINTS

- Communicate your commitment to energy efficiency.
- Tell building users exactly what behaviours will help save energy.
- Explain the features or technologies you have adopted and why with interpretive signs.
- Communicate your progress in energy efficiency.