

Simple Ways to Save Money and Natural Resources at Work

With the current budget reductions, state and local government agencies are looking for cost savings. Here are some ways to save money and reduce the consumption of energy and natural resources:



[Replace older inefficient exit signs with LED exit signs.](#) LED exit signs typically cost between \$20 and \$40 to purchase and install, but can save up to \$37 a year in energy costs and \$26 a year in labor costs; payback for the initial investment usually occurs in the first or second year of installation. Once the initial investment is recovered, the energy savings may grow to \$500 over the life of each LED exit sign. In a building with 10 exit signs, that's an estimated energy cost avoidance of about \$5,000.



Travel less to meetings. Use conference calls or webinars. By meeting on a conference call instead of driving to a meeting 100 miles away, you could save \$50 (at 25 cents per mile) in fuel costs and three hours of travel time equating into \$75 (at \$25 per hour) in staff productivity costs. This results in a cost avoidance of approximately \$125.



[Slow down.](#) Aggressive driving (such as speeding and abrupt starts and stops) wastes gas and is dangerous. Getting 30 mpg instead of 25 mpg saves an average of \$445 per year in fuel costs.



[Don't idle.](#) Idling one car can waste \$60 - \$750 (depending on fuel prices, idling habits and vehicle type) per year in fuel. Generally, it is more efficient to turn off most warmed-up vehicles than to idle for more than 30 seconds.



[Save paper.](#) At the state contract cost, each ream of recycled content copy paper costs about \$3. If your office saves three reams every week, that produces a yearly savings of \$470. Here are simple ways to reduce paper usage:

- ❖ Set the printer to print and copy on both sides of the page (duplex). This could reduce paper costs by close to half.
- ❖ Print memos, drafts and informal hard copies of documents on clean paper that has already been used on one side.
- ❖ Go electronic instead of printing. Use email, phone and overhead projectors and convert paper forms into an electronic format.



[Turn off computers, monitors, printers and other office equipment on weekends and holidays.](#) If 40 people in an office turn off their computers and monitors over the weekend for a year, it will save about \$2,300 in energy costs.

Use this formula to estimate energy use and cost:

- ❖ $(\text{Wattage} \times \text{Hours Used Per Day} \times \text{Days Per Year}) \div 1000 = \text{Annual Kilowatt-hour (kwh) Consumption}$
- ❖ $\text{Kilowatt-hour (kwh) consumption} \times \text{Electric rate} = \text{Energy Cost}$

*Average electric rate in NC is \$.0860/kwh