

Energy Efficiency for Grocery & Convenience Stores



Energy costs are significant expenses for grocery and convenience stores, **averaging more than \$4 per square foot per year**. When you combine those high costs with thin profit margins, it's estimated that **\$1 in energy savings is equivalent to increasing your sales by \$59**.

Industry trends are pushing energy consumption higher too. Customers want more fresh and prepared foods, frozen-food sections are growing, and food-safety temperature requirements are increasing, all of which increase your energy use.

VGS is here to help. We can make efficiency improvements more affordable and offer guidance on the best way to approach things.



THE BENEFITS OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY:

INCREASING YOUR PROFITS

A grocery store's annual energy costs are usually equal to net profit (both are between 1-2% of sales). Therefore, a 10% reduction in energy costs can increase net profit by as much as 16%.

ENHANCING THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

Improving your store's energy efficiency often involves upgrades to lighting and HVAC systems, creating a better shopping and working environment for customers and staff alike.

BOOSTING YOUR BRAND

Improving energy efficiency helps lower your carbon footprint to help address climate change, something your customers will appreciate.

HEATING

Space heating represents nearly 75% of a grocery or convenience store's natural gas consumption, which makes it the best place to prioritize your efficiency efforts.

CONTAINING THE COLD: Heating, cooling, and refrigeration systems often compete inside grocery stores. Adding doors, night covers, and air curtains to refrigerated cases help prevent cold air from leaking into the store and reduce the energy needed to heat your space as well as the load on your refrigeration system.



SAVINGS
SPOTLIGHT.

Since 2020, VGS has helped save **\$150,000** for local grocery and convenience stores on natural gas costs while eliminating nearly 1,400 metric ton of carbon emissions.

RECOVER THE HEAT: Heat recovery systems can be added to refrigeration equipment to capture heat in the form of hot water. The heat from a 7.5-horsepower compressor can provide a significant portion of a mid-sized store's hot water needs for kitchen clean up and sinks. Grocery and convenience stores can also use a heat exchanger to recover and reuse this heat for your store instead of using gas-fired equipment.

SET IT AND FORGET IT: Smart thermostats are a great way to save energy, especially in areas that are unoccupied during certain parts of your day or night.

GET YOUR DUCTS IN A ROW. Ducts for a forced-air furnace, central air conditioner, or heat pump are big energy wasters. Sealing and insulating them improves your heating by as much as 20%.

FOOD PREP

The next place to save energy and reduce your carbon footprint is your cooking equipment, which accounts for about 13% of natural gas consumption for grocery stores.

ENERGY STAR EQUIPMENT UPGRADES: As you add or expand your food service, buy ENERGY STAR-qualified cooking equipment, which uses 10% to 50% less energy than conventional models.



SAVINGS
SPOTLIGHT.

City Market is saving about **\$7,400** per year after adding doors to their coolers, recovering heat off their refrigeration compressors, and installing energy-efficient cooking equipment.

REDUCE OPERATING TIMES: Reducing the operating time of an idle appliance can cut your cooking-related energy consumption by up to 60%. If that's not convenient, choose equipment that uses less energy when idle. For example, rapid-cook ovens have a low power draw when idle.

REDUCE HOT WATER: Pre-rinse spray valves are easy to install and reduce your water consumption, water heating energy, and sewer charges. Look for models with a flow rate of 1.6 gallons per minute or less.

HOODS & VENTILATION: In hot-food preparation areas, intelligent variable-speed hood controller systems can also significantly reduce energy costs, saving both heat and electricity.

REBATES

VGS offers equipment rebates and incentives to lower your upfront costs, and we can help arrange financing options to help spread out your payments.

START SAVING TODAY

Learn more about all our efficiency recommendations, rebates, and tools at vgsvt.com/grocery. For help, contact VGS's Commercial Energy Efficiency Team at **802-951-0321** or email efficiency@vermontgas.com.