

Beat the Summer Heat with HVAC Tips

HVAC tips to help keep your customers and employees cool and comfortable.

It pays to be prepared for the Georgia summer heat by ensuring your HVAC system can handle your cooling needs.

Georgia Power is committed to helping commercial customers like you find ways to keep your buildings cool and comfortable, while reducing energy use.



HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning)



1. **Check for air leaks** – Air leakage through the envelope of commercial buildings in the United States accounts for approximately 6% of their energy use. Walk through your facility to identify drafty areas that would benefit from sealing & caulking.

(Source: Oak Ridge National Laboratory)



2. **Close exterior doors & windows** – Businesses may waste electricity simply by leaving the heating or air conditioning on while windows and doors are propped open. Leave signs on the door to nudge customers & employees to keep all doors and windows closed. If your building is equipped with revolving doors, encourage or require their use as opposed to swinging doors. Also, if you can see daylight under your exterior doors, you're losing cooled or heated air to the outdoors. Door sweeps attach directly to the bottom of the door to prevent air loss.



3. **Inspect HVAC Ducts** – Leaky ducts can cause the conditioned air to escape and hot air to be drawn into the duct causing fan use and conditioning to increase. Leaky ducts can reduce heating and cooling system efficiency by as much as 20%. Sealing and insulating ducts improves efficiency, lowers your energy bills, and can often pay for itself in energy savings.

(Source: ENERGY STAR®)



4. **Clean or change air filters** – Regularly change or clean HVAC filters every month during peak cooling or heating season. Dirty filters overwork the equipment and result in lower indoor air quality.



5. **Establish HVAC maintenance plan** – Establish a regular maintenance program to ensure comfort, efficiency, and indoor air quality. Effective maintenance can reduce HVAC energy costs by 5% to 40% depending on the system or equipment involved. A variety of HVAC components need ongoing maintenance or energy performance degradation can occur.

(Source: Building Efficiency Initiative)



6. **Schedule annual HVAC Tune Up** – Set a reminder to schedule an annual HVAC tune up.



7. **Check Thermostat Performance** – If your thermostats are not operating correctly throughout the season, your HVAC systems could be running more frequently than necessary, increasing your energy consumption. Perform monthly checks and, if not working properly, have them repaired or replaced.



8. **Clean AC Air Conditioner coils** – Commercial HVAC units with dirty coils won't run at peak efficiency. As a result, you're drawing more amps to push the same amount of air through your system, and a higher amp draw means higher energy bills. The U.S. Department of Energy warns that "a dirty condenser coil can increase compressor energy consumption by 30%."

(Source: BFC Solutions)

HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning) *(continued)*



- 9. Clear area in front of vents** – Make sure that areas in front of vents are clear of furniture and paper. As much as 25% more energy is required to distribute air if your vents are blocked.

(Source: ENERGY STAR®)



- 10. Cool and heat only where needed** – Stop heating and cooling unused areas of your building. Set the thermostats higher in the summer and lower in the winter in unused spaces than areas frequently in use.



- 11. Check seasonal thermostat settings** – In the summer, set your thermostat to 78°F when the workplace is occupied, and 85°F or off after business hours. In the winter, set your thermostat to 68°F when the workplace is occupied, and 60°- 65°F or off after business hours. You can save up to 3% for each degree the thermostat is raised in the summer or lowered in the winter. Use a locking device on your programmable thermostat to prevent others from altering the energy-saving settings. (Source: Dept of Energy & Environment)



- 12. Use ceiling fans to cool occupants** – In many circumstances, using a ceiling fan will allow you to adjust building temperatures by 4° to 8°F with no reduction in comfort to building occupants. Be sure to turn fans off in unoccupied spaces.



- 13. Use ceiling fans to reduce heating loads** – In winter, warm air rises to the ceiling where it remains and eventually leaks out of the roof, while colder air stays closer to the thermostat, causing the heating system to work harder. By circulating the indoor air with ceiling fans to create a more uniform temperature, heat loss through the roof is reduced and the temperature remains at a more comfortable level.



- 14. Plan for upcoming holidays** – Use smart thermostats to program shutdown during unoccupied hours, designated weekends, and holidays.



- 15. Use window shades** – Use shades and blinds to control direct sunlight through windows in both summer and winter to prevent or encourage solar heat gain.

