

Looking for quick wins for saving energy in your warehouse Request a quick scan!

With energy bills now at an all-time high, energy-saving measures make more sense than ever. Groenewout provides an overview of the key 'quick wins' for warehouse operations.

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It is not unusual for newly constructed warehouses to have an energy label of A, or even A+++, because today's warehouses are built with sustainability in mind. However, making older existing warehouses and distribution centers more energy-efficient doesn't always have to involve a lot of time and money – which is a particularly important consideration in view of today's soaring gas and electricity prices. Whereas just a year ago there were few financial incentives to save energy in and around your warehouse, it has now become essential to keep the costs under control. Thankfully, it is easier and less expensive to reduce your energy consumption than you might think. It starts with evaluation and analysis, according to Groenewout, who summarizes the key quick wins:

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Energy consumption

"I think that a lot of companies will be surprised by how much energy they consume in 'standby mode', by which I mean when they are not operating. Half of all businesses don't turn down the heating overnight, for example, or they leave the lights on unnecessarily. It takes approximately 40 to 50m³ of gas a day to keep 500m² of office space at 22 degrees. Many businesses didn't really consider that before, but they can save a lot of money now that energy prices have risen so steeply."

Adjustments

The same holds true for warehouses, where a lot of energy – and therefore money – can also be saved quickly without the need for major investments. "In the warehouse, you can consider installing a divider curtain or a roller shutter to separate the operational area where people are working from the storage area where people spend less time," he says.

Measure

But to optimally tackle the issue, it is necessary to evaluate and analyze the individual situation. "And take a walk around your facility with energy savings in mind. You're sure to find enough areas for improvement." Draughts, door insulation (including at the loading bays) and poorly maintained dock shelters are all examples of potential quick wins.

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"It all starts with creating awareness and gathering data. Ensure that the entire technical set-up is metered in detail so that you can see where all the gas and electricity is going. After all, if you want to make improvements you need to know where to look."

Kilowatt-hours reduction

Simply turning them off every weekend saved us 800,000kWh a year. Besides that, we switched to a cooling system using outside air, plus we made numerous other smaller changes. This ultimately enabled us to reduce our annual gas consumption from 2.8 million cubic meters to 1.7 million, while our electricity consumption fell from 24 million kilowatt-hours to 14 million."

Back to warehouses... heat rises, so a smart approach to filling the racking can help. Because if the space is taken up by goods rather than air, it doesn't need to be heated. "But this is only really suitable for slow movers. I wouldn't advise it for fast movers because it would disrupt the process."

Lighting

Lighting can be another source of energy savings. Quick wins include using motion sensors to avoid lights staying on unnecessarily, or using dimmers in areas where safety considerations mean that the lights cannot be turned off completely. Lastly, Groenewout recommends replacing traditional light bulbs or fluorescent tubes with LEDs. "That seems obvious, but LED is still four times more expensive than fluorescent tubes so it can be tempting to buy new fluorescent tubes when the old ones need replacing."

Competitive element

To get – and keep – the topic of energy saving firmly on the company's agenda, Groenewout suggests adding a competitive element: "Make it fun and reward people for good ideas. You'll be surprised by how many workable ideas an organization can come up with."

If you would like more information on this topic, please contact [Mari van Kuijk](mailto:vankuijk@groenewout.com), vankuijk@groenewout.com or +31 76 533 0440

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Would you like to know how much energy you can save in your logistics operations? If so, contact us straight away for a quick scan.

In just five days, we will scrutinize your energy statistics and make an overall scan of your logistics premises.

We will then send you a clear overview of your energy consumption: where are you using the most energy, and where are the quick wins?

The results will be presented in a report that includes the following points:

- Current energy consumption and accompanying costs; we will review your energy bills over the past few years and analyze your current contracts.
- Quick wins and the required investment. For example, the 'hidden' energy usage (e.g. weekend/night-time use) and any easy ways to cut these costs.
- Analysis of your buildings and systems, taking insulation and lighting into account. This could include the ROI of replacing systems or possible cost-savings related to structural adjustments.
- Savings and overall cost recovery periods, with an overview of possible savings.

To request an energy quick-scan, please contact [Mari van Kuijk](mailto:vankuijk@groenewout.com) vankuijk@groenewout.com or +31 76 533 04 40.