

# Savings on Every Aisle

Jonna's Market cuts costs with DTE's grocery program.

The Jonna family is famous for running specialty markets throughout Michigan. Second-generation Vince Jonna co-owns a namesake market in Westland, and the brand-new Picnic Basket in Plymouth, with his brother Al. The Jonna family name also extends to two other markets in Howell. According to Vince, the secret to success is attention to detail.

That means stocking a vast selection of spirits, carrying beloved Michigan brands and offering delicious prepared foods.

It also means constantly striving to become more energy efficient.

Jonna said he has always made energy-saving upgrades on his own, but now he's finding help and savings through DTE Energy's Grocery & Convenience Store Program.

As part of the program, he recently made a host of energy-efficient improvements at his Westland store. DTE identified ways Jonna could save \$8,300 on the work and cut his utility bills by \$13,700 per year.

"It was a no-brainer," Jonna said.

## *About the program*

DTE's Grocery & Convenience Store Program is designed to help business owners save energy and money. The



program focuses on cutting energy usage in areas unique to groceries, markets and convenience stores, including lighting, food service equipment and, especially, refrigeration.

In most stores of this type, refrigeration accounts for 60% of all electrical use.

"Everyone knows improving the efficiency of your lighting is one way to go," said DTE Program Manager Raymond Plummer. "Refrigeration is a lot less obvious and requires specialized knowledge."

DTE's grocery program provides free energy assessments, technical assistance and financial incentives to grocers looking to lower their operating costs through high-efficiency updates.

To participate, stores simply contact DTE. A trained energy auditor will visit for a walk-through, give on-the-spot guidance and issue a personalized report detailing ways to save energy along with

incentives to offset costs.

DTE's energy advisors become personal consultants, offering expert advice and directing customers to rebates offered by DTE, as well as sources of funding, such as Michigan Saves. They even help with the application process to make it easy.

The program launched last year, and DTE is working hard to get the word out.

"Energy efficiency is continuously evolving as new technologies come into play," Plummer said. "We're here to help your business take advantage of these developments."

## *In the field*

When DTE commercial field specialist Sheryl Revere stopped by Jonna's Market to tell Vince about the program, he decided to go for it.

"They had some nice incentives," he explained.





*– Night covers on display cases to keep cold air from leaking*

Under Revere's skilled guidance, Jonna has upgraded to LED lighting in aisles and display cases. He's changed gaskets on refrigerator and freezer doors, ensuring cold air doesn't leak through the seals. He's also installed night covers on his display cases: Now, at closing time, shades are drawn over case openings, keeping the cold air in and warm air out.

"He's doing the improvements in stages, and we're getting him some dollars back to make up the cost," Revere said. "Now he has me as a contact person, so he has someone to reach out to when doing work in the future."

*High priority*

According to Jonna, it's been a challenging year and a half because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sales have been up across

the board, with more people cooking at home, he said, but it's been hard to find staff. Prices have spiked. Supply chain issues have made some items difficult or impossible to get. Still, Jonna didn't hesitate to partner with DTE and invest in energy-efficient retrofits for his store.

"It's important to me," he said.

The savings add up. With DTE's recommendations, Jonna could save an estimated \$41,000 in energy costs over three years.


Just counting the projects he's completed so far, he's saved \$4,200 on the work and trimmed an estimated \$4,600 off his annual utility bills.

While freezer gaskets and motors, night shades and lighting are subtle changes, they add up to a big impact in his market. When customers walk in, they see a store that is clean, bright and well cared for, with lights putting focus on all the wonderful groceries Jonna has to offer.

"There's improved visibility, air quality and temperature. Products are better displayed. It looks like a remodel," Jonna said. "Customers notice."

**TOOLBOX**

**Savings are in store**

 For a free grocery program energy assessment, call 989.395.3844 or email [dtegrocery@cleareresult.com](mailto:dtegrocery@cleareresult.com)



# Five Ways to Save Energy This Fall

Put these tasks on your calendar to save money and prepare for colder months ahead

Fall in Michigan offers a mix of summer-like days and cooler temperatures. Take advantage of the milder weather by performing fall maintenance tasks that ready your heating equipment for the winter. Your business will stay warm and comfortable while you save energy, too. Start with these five simple tasks.

## 1. Schedule your pre-season HVAC tune up

Just like you take your car in for regular service, your heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system needs a tune up, too. The easiest way is to sign up for an annual contract with a licensed HVAC professional who will check your system and ensure it's ready for its busy season ahead. The contractor will inspect your unit, observe the equipment while it's operating, check the components for wear, and analyze the combustion process. Regular maintenance will lower the likeliness of needing an emergency HVAC repair, which could negatively impact your business as well as your budget.

## 2. Change or clean your HVAC filters

A tune up is the start of your HVAC maintenance. Put a note on your calendar to check your filters every month during the peak heating season. Dirty filters can overwork your system, driving energy costs up. They also result in lower indoor air quality. Simply swapping out filters at least every three months, or more, if they look dirty, is a preventative measure that can prolong the life of your HVAC system.

## 3. Optimize air flow

Make sure your heating vents aren't obstructed by furniture, equipment or clutter. Blocked vents require as much as 25 percent more energy to distribute air into rooms. Also, keep exterior doors closed during cold months to avoid heat escaping outdoors. And weather-proof your windows and doors to prevent the passive loss of warm air through cracks and small openings.

1.



2.



3.



5.

4.



#### 4. Install a programmable thermostat

Programmable thermostats will maximize your energy usage by lowering the temperature at your business during off hours and heating it back up before your employees and customers arrive. The recommended winter setting is 68 degrees, or lower if that feels comfortable. You can lower the thermostat another degree or two during off-business times to save even more. Adjusting your thermostat seasonally may result in annual savings of \$180 or more.

5.



#### 5. Swap out lighting

As the days become shorter, the right lighting becomes more important. Lighting accounts for about 20 percent of the electric bill for a typical business. Maximize daylight by opening blinds when you can. Then replace old fluorescent and incandescent lighting with ENERGY STAR certified LED bulbs that use up to 90 percent less energy and last 35 to 50 times longer. Don't overlook lighting in your exit signs and parking lot. Then install motion sensors that will automatically turn off lights during off hours when no one is present. This step can save up to 30 percent on your lighting costs.

#### TOOLBOX

**Want more tips to save money for your business or information on small business programs and rebates?**

📞 866.796.0512 or visiting

🌐 [dteenergy.com/savenow](http://dteenergy.com/savenow)

🌐 **Go to [dtemarketplace.com/business](http://dtemarketplace.com/business) to find discounted energy-efficient products**

# Shedding Light on Savings

Hallmark store makes the switch to LEDs with DTE program



Everybody likes to save money, and when a savings program pays off twice, it's especially sweet. Commercial customers can enjoy these benefits through DTE Energy's Commercial Lighting Instant Discount Program.

Converting a business's lighting to LED is a smart choice for virtually any entrepreneur. The improved LED technology means a superior level of efficiency over conventional halogen, incandescent or fluorescent fixtures. In fact, LEDs use up to 90% less energy than incandescent bulbs, which translates to reduced lighting-related energy costs. LED lights also warm up faster, produce less heat and boast a longer lifetime than their traditional counterparts.

### *The magic of LED*

LED equipment is available for almost any lighting application: exterior flood

lamps, interior linear and panel lighting, interior high bay fixtures, and even exit signs. Occupancy sensors, although not a lighting product per se, are also included.

For these reasons, DTE encourages its commercial customers to embrace LED lighting, and the Commercial Lighting Instant Discount Program makes that easy. The program offers instant savings on the purchase of qualifying DesignLights Consortium® or ENERGY STAR®-certified LED products. There's no

application process or paperwork to fill out. Any DTE commercial customer can purchase LED items at any participating distributor and receive the incentives on the spot.



## How the program works

Steve and Dawn Beskange, owners of Opal's Hallmark in St. Clair Shores, are DTE customers who took advantage of the program. Steve first heard of the program from a friend who used it for an office building he owns.

Just one call to DTE got the process started. A distributor reached out for a consultation, during which Steve indicated his desired wattage. Since different industries prefer lighting with varying levels of lumens (the actual amount of light emitted), the program offers a wide range of rebates. For example, a 2-by-4 LED 3,000 lumen bulb is rebated at \$5, while the same style rated at 6,001 or more lumens is rated at \$8. More costly exterior lighting carries higher rebates. Steve selected 3,500 bulbs as his choice.

"In an industrial environment, a higher strength might be fine, but I wanted to create a more pleasant mood for my store so that the customers are comfortable and the colors pop," he said.

In addition to benefiting from rebates, Steve was quick to notice the savings that resulted from his lower energy use.

"I downloaded the Insight app and was able to track my savings," he said. "Right away, I noticed a 25% reduction in my energy costs."

The DTE Insight app (available for iPhone and Android) is a handy way to monitor your business's total energy use and observe evolving trends.

### *DTE is here to help*

Alex Walton with Conserva Electric, a DTE distribution partner, points out that some business owners may need a more in-depth consultation.

"Many times, customers don't know what they need, and an on-site review is required," she said. "Depending on the facility size, it can range from a 15-minute walk-through to an all-day affair for larger properties. The end goal is always the same: getting the best

possible lighting solutions created for our clients and, in turn, allowing them a great opportunity to significantly reduce energy consumption. In short, our clients save lots of money every month on their DTE electric bill."

DTE's Commercial Lighting Instant Discount Program is just one more way the energy company strives to help small businesses.

"It is our desire to reach out to small-business customers by providing an easy program for them to participate in," said Sarah Tocco, DTE's point person for the program. "By not requiring an application or other paperwork, we make it as easy as possible for them to participate."

## TOOLBOX

To learn more about the lighting program, visit

 [dteenergy.com/midstream-lighting](https://dteenergy.com/midstream-lighting)



"Right away, I noticed a 25% reduction in my energy costs."

—STEVE BESKANGE, OWNER OF OPAL'S HALLMARK