



Sustainable Business in the Yarra Ranges



Safety

Energy saving measures should never compromise the health and safety of business owners and their employees.

Installation and repair of appliances should be done by a licensed professional.

Information provided in this book is a guide only. Seek professional advice if in doubt.

Programs

For up-to-date information on rebate programs available to businesses in Yarra Ranges, visit yarraranges.vic.gov.au/sustainable-business

Yarra Ranges Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri and other Kulin Nation Peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of these lands and waterways.

We pay our respects to all Elders, past, present, and emerging, who have been, and always will be, integral to the story of our region. We proudly share custodianship to care for Country together.



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Becoming a sustainable business

Businesses can work toward being more sustainable in a variety of ways, however, what can be achieved may depend upon the type of business, property ownership and available budget. Some changes will cost more than others, however, some will result in higher savings for your business.

Throughout the booklet we have listed applicable options for renters and property owners to ensure that everyone can find ways to operate their business as sustainably as possible.

Getting started

Before making changes to your business processes or equipment, instantly lower your costs by finding a cheaper electricity plan.

Visit compare.energy.vic.gov.au

Measuring your consumption

No matter your business, monitoring your water, energy, and waste can provide insights into resource and cost efficiencies that can help your business save money and increase staff comfort.

Understanding your energy and water consumption can help your business understand what sustainability interventions will be the most effective changes to implement.

If you have a small business, and feel equipped to test your resource usage independently, you can borrow Yarra Ranges Council's Business Energy and Water Saver Kit at yarraranges.vic.gov.au/bewsk

Alternatively, if you want a qualified professional to assess your energy and water usage register at businessenergysavers.org



Barriers to change

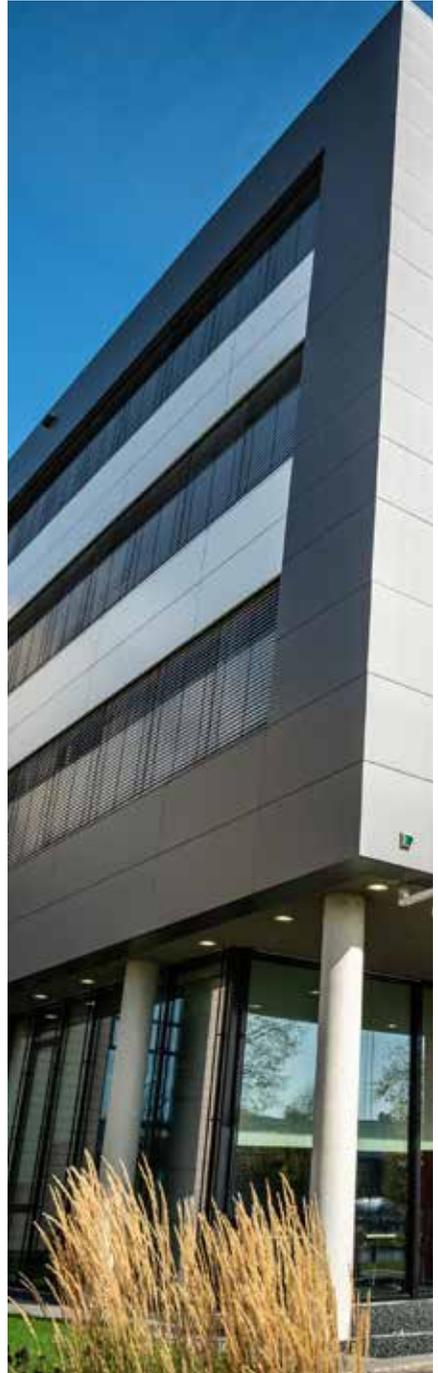
As a business owner you may face barriers that impact your ability to implement energy, water and waste efficiency solutions. It may be worth assessing your barriers and discussing them with the relevant parties to see if you can come to an agreement.

Barriers to saving energy and water may include:

- mechanical services owned/ operated by someone other than the business owner
- building is owned by someone other than business owner
- electricity is sub-metered or apportioned
- uncertainty over lease time frame.

Business types and solutions

The following pages contain information regarding the ways different businesses might tackle their energy and water use and waste output and practice all-round sustainable habits within their business.





Retail

Retail businesses are likely to consume the most energy during the day and high usage can be attributed to heating, cooling, and lighting.

Potential ways retail business can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Install motion detectors and timers to control lighting in rarely used areas.
- Close shop door or install automatic opening doors.
- Adjust heating/cooling temperature (25-27°C in summer, 18-20°C in winter).
- Limit heat loss through draught proofing.
- Limit heat loss through insulation.
- Limit heat loss through shading.
- Check the temperature of your fridges (recommended is 3°C).
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Use kettles instead of urns that continuously heat water.
- Install solar panels.



Water

- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.



Waste

- Offer imperfect products at a discounted rate instead of disposing of them.
- Recycle old or damaged textiles with a textile recycler.
- Don't offer bags with purchases, or opt for paper bags or Boomerang Bags.
- Incentivise customers to bring reusable bags.
- Source sustainable products and brands.
- Use recycled, reusable, and biodegradable packaging.
- Improve inventory and forecasting to avoid over-ordering and surplus expiring or going unsold.
- Provide clear sorting stations i.e. clearly marked recycling, organics, landfill and specialist disposal options.
- Partner with food rescue organisations to rehome unsold products.
- Donate excess products to op shops or charity.
- Partner with specialised recyclers, such as those that handle e-waste, batteries, coffee pods, blister packs and soft plastics.
- Use lean manufacturing principles to reduce materials, errors and defects.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your staff on sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.



Agriculture and Farming

Agriculture and farming businesses use specialised equipment designed for function. They are high users of water, energy, and cooling.

Potential ways agriculture and farming can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Check settings on refrigerated equipment.
- Add timers and operational controls to equipment that can be switched off overnight or when it's not in use.
- Maintain equipment by having it serviced regularly.
- Install solar to offset on-site energy use.
- Use best practice passive design for storage or processing facilities to reduce energy needs from the outset.



Water

- Use regenerative farming practices and alternative treatments such as biochar to increase water holding potential of soil.
- Capture and reuse rainwater.
- Install efficient watering systems.



Waste

- Drop your excess chipped woody waste at our biochar facility in Lysterfield to contribute to the circular economy.*
- Work with businesses who will distribute and sell imperfect produce.
- Work with beverage/food manufacturers to incorporate imperfect produce into products as flavours or ingredients.

*Email sustainability@yarraranges.vic.gov.au to find out if you're eligible.



Biodiversity

- Plant native habitat on your property with the Ribbons of Green* program.

* Visit yarraranges.vic.gov.au/ribbonsogreen to find out more.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your staff on sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.





Accommodation

Accommodation businesses use a lot of energy to keep guests comfortable and will typically use more energy during the evening. They are high users of heating and cooling, lighting, and water.

Potential ways accommodation businesses can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Install motion detectors and timers to control lighting.
- Adjust heating/cooling temperature (25-27°C summer, 18-20°C winter).
- Limit heat loss through draught proofing.
- Retrofit double glazing on windows.
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Upgrade appliances to energy efficient models.
- Upgrade to high efficiency laundry systems.
- Install solar panels.
- Don't replace towels and bedding every day.
- Check settings on fridges (recommended is 3°C).



Water

- Encourage re-use by providing guests with options to opt-out of daily changes of linen and towels.
- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.
- Install rainwater tanks for toilet flushing.
- Display water conservation signs in bathrooms.
- Install efficient watering systems for gardens.



Waste

- Have accessible recycling and compost bins on your property or in accommodation.
- Avoid single-use items (e.g. plastic water bottles, bulk-dispensed toiletries) by providing reusable alternatives (e.g. filtered water system, refillable dispensers).
- Partner with sustainable suppliers, such as those who use less packaging, compostable materials or refill systems.
- Minimise paper waste by providing documents digitally e.g. invoices, receipts and events promo.



Biodiversity

- Plant native habitat on your property with the Ribbons of Green* or Gardens for Wildlife programs.

* Check eligibility at yarraranges.vic.gov.au/ribbonsofgreen



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your staff about sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.



Hospitality

Hospitality businesses use specialised equipment designed for function, not energy or water efficiency. Their main energy users are equipment, heating and cooling, refrigeration and lighting.

Potential ways hospitality businesses can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Only turn on equipment as needed.
- Set timers to switch off appliances and fridges that contain non-perishables.
- Install induction cook tops instead of gas.
- Maintain equipment by having it serviced regularly.
- Upgrade equipment to more energy efficient models.
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Check temperature settings on fridges/freezers/hot water service and set to recommended temperature.
- Install solar panels.



Water

- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.
- Display water conservation signs in bathrooms.



Waste

- Install rainwater tanks for toilet flushing.
- Display water conservation signs in bathrooms.
- Install efficient watering systems.
- Give a discount to customers who bring re-usable containers or promote their use within your store.
- Find a company who takes coffee grounds and converts them into soil-nourishing products for community gardens etc.
- Don't offer single use plastics to your customers.
- Offer less-than-perfect items at a discounted rate instead of disposing of them.
- Set up a composting system to recycle food and garden waste – use on an edible garden to reduce energy and transport needs.
- Partner with suppliers who offer wasteless delivery i.e. refill systems.
- Conduct a waste audit to understand your waste output.

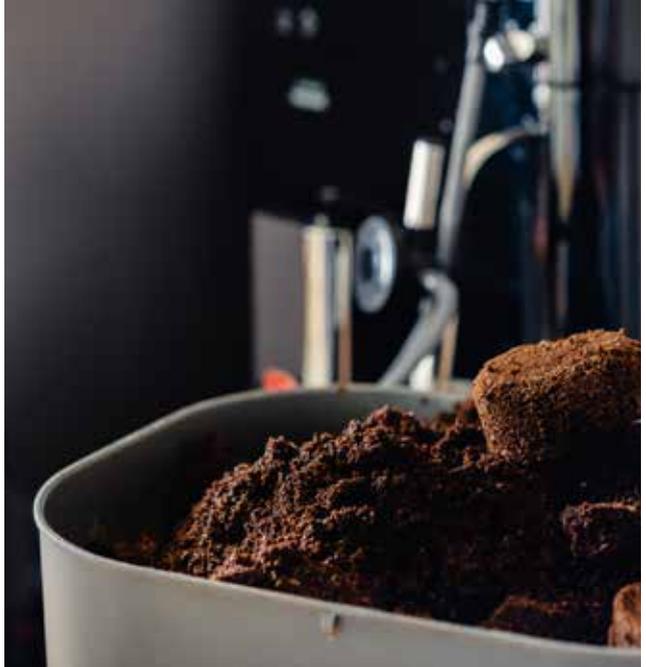


- Improve food inventory systems to prevent food expiry.
- Offer flexible portion sizes to customers.
- Promote sustainable practices in marketing.
- Be resourceful with food by using ingredients for multiple dishes i.e. 'nose-to-tail and 'root-to stalk' cooking methods, and use leftovers to create meals like soup or sauces.
- Implement dynamic pricing systems so items near their expiration are automatically discounted.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your team on sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.





Offices

Offices typically use more energy during the day and can contribute the bulk of their energy costs to heating and cooling, lighting and equipment such as computers, printers and servers.

Potential ways office-based businesses can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Install motion detectors and timers to control lighting.
- Adjust heating/cooling temperature (25-27°C in summer, 18-20°C in winter).
- Turn off computers and printers when not in use.
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Check settings on fridges (recommended is 3°C).
- Limit heat loss through draught proofing.
- Limit heat loss through insulation.
- Limit heat loss through shading.



Water

- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.



Waste

- Have clearly signed bins to reduce contamination.
- Distribute keep cups to staff to reduce coffee cup waste.
- Collect kitchen compost and dispose of in a FOGO bin or donate to a community garden.
- Set printers to black and white and double-sided to save energy, paper, ink and toner.



Biodiversity

- Grow habitat plants, herbs, fruits, or vegetables in office gardens, roof tops, or planter boxes.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers for stationary and office equipment.
- Educate your staff on sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.





Wholesale/Warehouse

Wholesale/warehouse energy use may vary depending on the type of business, however, the majority of energy costs are mostly attributed to lighting and equipment.

Potential ways wholesale/warehouse businesses can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Add timers and operational controls to equipment that can be switched off overnight or when not in use.
- Insulate steam or chilled water piping.
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- Install skylights to make use of natural light.
- Consider installing solar as most factory rooftops are well suited for this purpose.
- Adjust the layout of your warehouse to increase efficiencies and localise temperature and lighting requirements.
- Reduce transport emissions wherever possible i.e. use electric forklift



Water

- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.
- Capture and reuse water where appropriate.



Waste

- Use a textile recycling provider for any offcuts, or unusable textiles.
- Use recyclable materials.
- Have clearly signed bins to reduce contamination.
- Distribute keep cups to staff to reduce coffee cup waste.
- Collect kitchen compost and dispose in a FOGO bin.
- Set printers to black and white and double-sided.
- Procure items without single use plastic packaging.
- Ensure cardboard and polystyrene packaging is properly recycled.



Biodiversity

- Use small garden spaces to plant habitat plants
- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your staff about sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your team on sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.



Manufacturing

Energy use for manufacturing will vary from business to business, however, the majority of manufacturing energy costs can be contributed to equipment, hot water, and refrigeration.

Potential ways manufacturing businesses can reduce energy, waste, and water are:



Energy

- Install a gas or electricity meter on high-energy equipment to measure efficiency.
- Add timers and operational controls to equipment that can be switched off overnight or when it's not in use.
- Insulate steam or chilled water piping.
- Check refrigeration settings.
- Consider installing solar as most factory rooftops are well suited for this purpose.
- Reduce transport emissions where possible i.e. use electric forklift.



Water

- Upgrade taps and toilets to water-efficient models.
- Capture and reuse water where appropriate.



Waste

- Use a textile recycler for any offcuts, or unusable textiles.
- Use recyclable materials.
- Have clearly signed bins to reduce contamination.
- Procure items without single use plastic packaging.
- Ensure cardboard and polystyrene packaging is properly recycled.



Operational

- Partner with sustainable suppliers.
- Educate your staff about sustainable practices.
- Engage in knowledge and skill sharing with similar businesses.



Business Energy and Water Saver Kit

The Business Energy and Water Saving Kit contains the tools to measure the energy, water use, and waste output of your business.

The kit is free to borrow from Yarra Ranges Council and contains:

- thermal imaging camera
- Power-Mate
- thermometer
- stop watch
- instruction guide
- safety guide
- Greener Living Information booklet.



Book the Kit

Visit bit.ly/ycr-bewsk or scan the QR code to book the kit. If you want to know more before booking phone 1300 368 333 and ask for the Business Team or email business@yarraranges.vic.gov.au

Energy Savers Program

Businesses located in the Yarra Ranges area can access free advice on how to become more energy efficient and take advantage of the Victorian Government's Energy Upgrade initiative.

What's on offer?

- upgrade to reverse cycle air-conditioners
- retrofit to LED lighting
- replace inefficient hot water systems
- install energy efficient fridges, freezers, ventilation fans and motors and more.

Business owners are connected with a selected panel of accredited and trustworthy suppliers who can take care of the upgrades and required paperwork to access any subsidies.

For more information visit businessenergysavers.org

Solar Savers Program

Businesses located in the Yarra Ranges Council area can access the Solar Savers program for free advice and installation of:

- solar panels and inverters
- battery storage
- heat pump hot water systems
- split system heating & cooling
- electric vehicle chargers
- induction cooktops
- insulation
- draught-proofing.

The Solar Savers program is Council-supported ensuring you have access to free advice, quality products and trustworthy installers.

For more information visit solarsavers.org.au

For more information about sustainable
businesses in Yarra Ranges visit
yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Sustainable-business

To share your sustainability practices and
journey with the community, email
sustainability@yarraranges.vic.gov.au



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