Thomas More
Energy Policy

Policy

Thomas More College is committed to promote energy efficiency to our faculty, staff, students and community.

We will conserve energy and improve the energy efficiency of our buildings, vehicles, and equipment and the goods and services that we use. We will use environmentally safe and sustainable energy sources while achieving savings. We will increase our use of energy from renewable sources.

We will implement these principles by demonstrating community leadership, collaborative planning and by adopting best energy management practices. We will establish goals objectives and indicators; conduct an annual self-evaluation of our progress; and communicate regularly with the Thomas More community.

Responsibility

Faculty, staff and students must use energy prudently. Everyone must turn off lights when rooms are not in use. The use of personal lamps and other lighting devices, which produce excessive heat, is prohibited. The use of individual electric space heaters is prohibited unless authorized by the Director of Facilities after an inspection of the device. Each person is also responsible for turning off energy using devices such as office equipment and fume hoods when they are not being used. Occupied space temperature set points will normally be 70° F in the heating season and 74° F in the cooling season. Windows and exterior doors must be kept closed to prevent the loss of conditioned air. Faculty, staff and students should report inoperable equipment or wasteful practices to the Director of Facilities so corrective action can be taken.

University Temperature Guidelines — To maintain reasonable comfort and lower energy expenditures, the University has established the following standards for comfort heating and cooling. Summer thermostat settings (air conditioning) are to be 76-78 F. Winter settings (heating) are to be 68-70 F. Exceptions to these guidelines must be approved.

Building Resource Management — Windows and doors should be kept closed during the heating season and during the summer in those areas that have mechanical cooling. Every member of the University community should assume the responsibility of closing windows, turning off personal (desktop) computers and other office equipment when not in use, and shutting off the lights when leaving a room. One should not assume that someone else will do it. Energy management devices and strategies will continue to be added. Schedulers of classes, meetings, and other campus activities should endeavor to minimize energy use. Evening classes should be concentrated in the fewest buildings possible, and where appropriate, the buildings used should be those that already have late night temperature setback. Use of stairs rather than elevators, except for the physically challenged and persons transporting heavy equipment or materials, is encouraged.

Lighting — Interior lighting will be fluorescent, whenever possible. New energy-saving fixtures, lamps and ballasts will be used to replace existing less efficient lighting whenever economically feasible and appropriate. Exterior lighting will be high-pressure sodium or metal halide (metal halide is preferred) whenever possible, and will meet minimum current safety requirements. Decorative lighting will be kept to a minimum. Lighting levels recommended by the most recent edition of the IES (Illuminating Engineering Society) Lighting Handbook shall be used as guidelines. Where it makes economic sense, occupancy/motion sensors (ultrasonic or infrared) wired to area lighting will be installed to reduce and/or turn off lights in unoccupied, vacated areas. Day-lighting controls will be installed to automatically adjust lighting levels as appropriate. Task lighting, such as desk lamps, is recommended to reduce overall ambient lighting levels. Desk lights should be of the fluorescent type, which are now readily available at local stores.

Space Heaters — Whether they are purchased by the University or personal property, two issues affect the use of space heaters in campus buildings — fire safety and energy efficiency. All space heaters used on campus must be approved for fire safety, as classified by the National Fire Protection Association. No liquid fueled space heaters (e.g., kerosene heaters) shall be used in any residential, office, classroom or research buildings. Some electric space heaters also pose an unacceptable fire hazard. All space heaters must meet the following four specifications: Heaters must (1) be UL approved, (2) have elements that are protected from contact, (3) be tilt-proof (when tipped over, heater goes off), and (4) be thermostat-controlled. The issue of energy efficiency is also important — electric space heaters are a very costly means of heating. If a member of the campus community feels that a space heater is necessary for adequate warmth, this may indicate that the central heating system needs repair. University Energy Management should be consulted through the Building Representative if the central heating system is incapable of meeting comfort requirements. Campus Energy Management should also be contacted through the Building Representative if a space heater is to be used to offset excessive air conditioning. State regulations require that the University follow ASHRAE Standard 90.1, which says that heating and cooling are not allowed simultaneously in the same space for the sole purpose of achieving comfort. Excessive cooling of a space on campus below the summertime University Temperature Guidelines should be reported to University Facilities so that air-conditioning levels can be adjusted.

Switchover from Heating to Cooling — Facilities personnel perform required changeover from heating to air-conditioning in the Spring. Because of the varying equipment installed throughout campus, buildings must be changed over individually. Facilities performs the changeover on the basis of priorities established to (1) provide comfort to students living in University Housing, (2) maintain required temperatures to protect equipment and research in progress, and (3) serve the greatest number of individuals and activities. Air conditioning may not begin until outside temperature has reached 75 F for three consecutive days. Temperature projections are also considered. The wide swings in temperature during the Spring of the year and the difficulty in switching between heating and cooling make this policy necessary. Special problems or hardships with this policy should be addressed to the Campus Energy Manager through the Building Representative.

Operation of Campus Steam Plant — Much of campus is heated by a campus steam system using large natural gas fired steam boilers. Steam production will be maintained to provide the most comfort to the greatest number of people. The plant may not start until the mean outside temperature has reached 45 F for three consecutive days, although temperature projections are also considered.

Switchover from Cooling to Heating — Facilities personnel perform required changeover from air-conditioning to heating in the Fall. Because of the varying equipment installed throughout campus, buildings must be changed over individually. Facilities performs the changeover on the basis of priorities established to (1) provide comfort to students living in University Housing, (2) maintain required temperatures to protect equipment and research in progress, and (3) serve the greatest number of individuals and activities. Heating may not begin until the high outside air temperature has dropped below at least 55 F for three consecutive days. Temperature projections are also considered. The wide swings in temperature during the Fall of the year have made this policy necessary. Special problems or hardships with this policy should be addressed to the Campus Energy Manager through the Building Representative.

Holiday Periods — A period of closure for the University offers a great opportunity to save money on utilities that can be spent in other areas. Past history has shown that very few people occupy the buildings for any substantial time during the holidays. With this in mind, buildings will be only minimally heated/cooled during holiday periods. Every effort will be made to shut down the campus steam system during every holiday period. The exception to the policy will be buildings that contain special collections or sensitive equipment, or buildings that are officially open during the holidays. A building will not be officially open just because a few people may want to work during the holidays. Requests for exceptions to this policy with justification should be addressed to the Campus Energy Manager via the Building Representative after curtailment plans for the upcoming holiday period have been issued.

New Construction — The University will seek to reduce future energy costs in new facility construction and renovation whenever feasible. Current standards outlined in ASHRAE Standard No. 90.1 Energy Efficient Design of New Buildings Except Low Rise Residential Buildings will be followed as closely as possible. Additionally, all city and state regulations will be followed. All planning for major construction and equipment purchase/installation must include energy life cycle costing. As resources become available, it is recommended that UA develop and implement design standards for new construction to include energy efficiency.

Suggestions — The Energy Team encourages suggestions for additions or modifications to this Energy Policy as well as other energy conservation suggestions.