Holiday Shutdown Checklist ☑

ENERGYCAP

The holidays are the perfect chance to give your buildings a break, too. This checklist will help you save energy, lower costs, and start the new year on an efficient note.

1 Build a shutdown team and draft the playbook

Establish leadership, ownership, and accountability.

Team members:

- Executive Sponsor (CEO, CFO, someone who signs the checks)
- Facilities/Ops Lead
- IT Director (for device shutdowns, server uptime, remote monitoring)
- Departmental Reps (especially kitchen, athletics, labs, etc.)

Tasks:

- ☐ Target systems: HVAC, IT, lighting, plug loads, kitchens, etc.
- ☐ Quantify opportunities: What's the kWh/therm/cost upside?
- ☐ Map out building control capabilities (BAS, smart plugs, occupancy sensors)
- ☐ Define limitations: moisture risks, sensitive gear, compliance, food safety, etc.
- ☐ Identify potential failure modes (frozen coils, server room temps, remote access failures)
- ☐ Draft a contingency plan (weather, IT outages, last-minute schedule changes)

Pro Tip: Don't get aggressive on your first run—it's a marathon, not a sprint.

2 Identify and prioritize energy reduction measures (The "3 Ts")

Pick the low-hanging fruit: Turn it off, tune it up, or set it back.

Target systems:

- **HVAC**–Reduce setpoints, trim ventilation, shut down zones where allowed
- **Lighting**–Override schedules, kill exterior lighting not tied to safety
- **Plug Loads**–Computers, monitors, printers, copiers, kitchen equipment
- **Exhaust Systems**–Kitchen and restroom fans running 24/7? Shut 'em down
- **IT**–Work with tech to turn off non-essential equipment or idle servers

Tasks:

- ☐ Consolidate staff to fewer areas to shut down unused zones
- ☐ Consider work-from-home where feasible
- ☐ Use power strips with timers for shared workspaces

3 Preemptive audits and mini pilots

Validate assumptions and test control strategies in advance.

Tasks:

- ☐ Walk key sites and log baseline temps, lighting, and runtimes
- ☐ Validate BAS settings, clock sync, remote access
- ☐ Check for damper failures (especially in cold/humid climates)
- ☐ Pilot a weekend or Thanksgiving-style shutdown—track temp recovery, equipment response, and complaints
- ☐ Flag control gaps and write down every manual step needed

Pro Tip: If you think something's automated, double check. If it's been running fine for 5 years, it's probably overdue for failure.

4 Communicate and execute

Get everyone rowing the same direction and implement the plan.

Internal messaging:

- Explain what's happening and why it matters—share cost and energy estimates
- Ask staff for help: power down workstations, report lights left on, unplug fridges, etc.
- Train facilities techs on what's being changed and what to watch for
- Confirm BAS programming changes go live (time zones, holiday schedules)

Tasks:

- ☐ Modify HVAC schedules/setpoints
- ☐ Override lighting where needed
- ☐ Verify changes across buildings remotely (or boots on the ground if needed)
- ☐ Take pre- and post-shutdown meter screenshots (if you've got AMI or interval data)

5 Restart, monitor, and capture the win

Get buildings running smoothly again and capture results.

Tasks:

- ☐ Allow generous HVAC recovery time (especially if you're using VAVs or older RTUs)
- ☐ Be available. Murphy's Law loves building shutdowns
- ☐ Log issues: Was a freezer offline? Did a control point fail? Learn from it.
- ☐ Calculate actual vs. expected energy/cost savings—share the data.

