# Operator Checklist: Low-Occupancy Spaces

Use this Strategic Energy Management (SEM) resource to quickly identify and implement energy-saving opportunities in low-occupancy spaces in your buildings.

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| **Category** | **Action** | **Notes** |
| General | Enable typical holiday schedule and/or implement winter shutdown protocol. |  |
| Consider consolidating occupancy where possible and practical in order to shut down buildings and/or equipment. |  |
| Document existing schedules and changes to schedules and set points to ensure a smooth organization-wide start-up for when buildings resume normal occupancy. |  |
| Do periodic “Day walks” or “Night walks” through your building(s) to identify unneeded loads (i.e. lighting and/or other running equipment). |  |
| Communicate a clear plan and expectations for remaining occupants. |  |
| HVAC | Trim HVAC schedules to match new low occupancy levels. |  |
| For air handling units serving unoccupied areas, instead of shutting them off completely, consider putting them into an extended “holiday” mode (or the equivalent of this) so that night setbacks/low limits will still function. |  |
|  | Ensure equipment serving critical processes remains operational (i.e. server rooms, electrical closets, etc.). |  |
|  | If air stagnation is a concern, consider operating units 1-2 hours every few days. Otherwise leave units off. |  |
|  | Ensure the chiller and associated pumps won’t be cycling on when not needed. |  |
|  | Adjust the unoccupied setpoints (heating to 55° F or lower and cooling to 85° F or higher) and consider how much time is needed to prepare the building for occupancy. |  |
| BMS | Verify remote access to BMS is still operational. |  |

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| Misc. Loads | Consider turning off shop compressed air systems to meet reduced or temporary loads. |  | |
| Lighting | Use lighting controls or a manual system to turn off lighting, reduce non-essential lighting, trim schedules, and dim or turn off specific zones. |  | |
|  | Consider reducing exterior lighting hours if staff won’t be working after hours. |  |
| Plug Load | Turn off kitchen equipment such as cooking hood and dishwasher exhaust fans, and dishwasher booster heaters. |  | |
| Consolidate contents of refrigerators and freezers and turn off empty units, where possible. |  | |
| Work with tenants and occupants to  unplug/turn off miscellaneous kitchen equipment and specialty equipment in common spaces such as coffee makers, copiers, etc. |  | |
| Work with tenants, occupants and IT specialists to turn off or unplug office equipment such as monitors, task lights, space heaters, mini-fridges and other cubicle plug loads. |  | |
| Envelope | Close blinds or shades to minimize heat loss. |  | |
| Lock or seal secondary entries/exits to minimize conditioned air losses. |  | |