



## *Working to Save Our Rural Grocery Stores One Challenge at a Time*

### *Challenge Two: Energy Costs*

A major challenge for grocery store owners is operating costs. Coping with the high cost of utilities, worker compensation, shipping and distribution, as well as many other expenses, is a major issue. Developing creative ways to lower operating costs in rural grocery stores is an important step in addressing this challenge. With an average of 63% of electricity usage going

to cooling freezers and refrigerators, thinking of ways to lower energy costs is

an effective strategy for lowering operating costs.

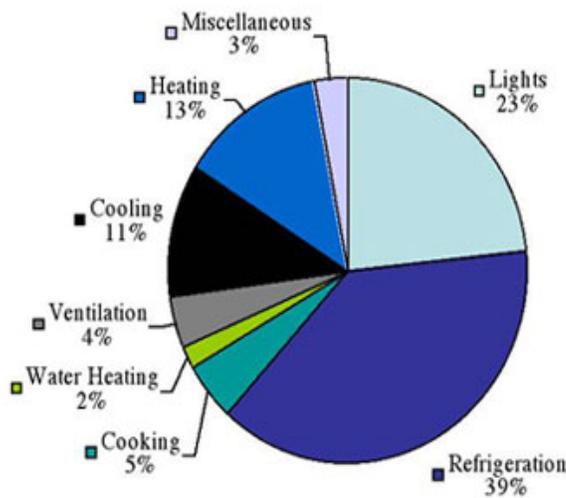


Chart courtesy of the “Flex Your Power” campaign

### *Solutions*

Not all of these issues have simple solutions, however, there are some quick changes you can make to help lower your operating costs. Look into splitting orders with nearby

stores to make minimum buying requirements and avoid surcharges. You can also utilize energy efficient materials such as compact fluorescent light bulbs. Unplug

appliances while they aren't in use and try adjusting your thermostat by a few degrees to help cut costs. For more information, please visit [ruralgrocery.org](http://ruralgrocery.org).

*K-State's Center for Engagement and Community Development*

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#### **Fast Facts**

- Grocery stores in the U.S. spend an average of \$3.95 on electricity and 24 cents on natural gas per square foot annually.
- Every 1,000 kWh you save by turning things off equals \$100 off your utility bill.
- Compact fluorescent bulbs last about ten times longer than other bulbs, and consume only 11-20 watts to provide the same illumination of an incandescent bulb.

#### **Kansas Best Practices:**

Jim Puff of the Alma Foodmart has created an HVAC system that recycles the heat from his refrigerators and freezers to heat the grocery store in the winter, effectively lowering his utility bills.