



COVID-19  
RESPONSE

# Modified Operations Recommendations for Restaurants

## About this guide

Your local power company and TVA EnergyRight have partnered to provide the enclosed modified operations recommendations in response to the COVID-19 situation impacting restaurants across the Valley.

We know restaurateurs are facing unique challenges during this difficult time, and may be asking how to handle facilities and equipment in a way that ensures safety, health and efficiency.

In the following pages, you will find answers tailored for restaurants who are currently closed or who are providing take-out only options.

The TVA EnergyRight team empathizes with you during this challenging period and we thank you for doing your part to flatten the curve to keep your staff and customers safe. We hope you find this guide useful and we are here to assist if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
TVA EnergyRight



## About TVA EnergyRight®

EnergyRight for Business & Industry partners with your local power company to provide energy management advice and resources, and to offer incentives to offset some of the costs associated with smart energy technology upgrades.

**Visit [EnergyRight.com](https://www.energyright.com) to find out more.**

## Health and sanitizing procedures

A priority during this time of uncertainty is making sure your restaurant is healthy and safe for staff, vendors or customers that may need to be on-site. Follow these tips to protect visitors:

- Ensure emergency and security systems are operating as intended
- Clean frequently and disinfect all high-touch surfaces, such as tables, chairs, counter tops, drink dispensers, door handles, light switches and sink handles
- Provide disposable wipes to anyone entering your facility so that surfaces can be wiped down before and after use
- Provide personnel with alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol for decontamination
- Install hand sanitizer stands near entrances
- Provide Personal Protective Equipment, such as gloves and masks, to staff

### CLEANING TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Continue routine cleaning and disinfecting
- Make sure you are using products safely
- Dispose of waste properly
- Clean AC vents and units

Find more  
information at  
[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



# Recommendations for closed restaurants

If you have decided to close your restaurant during the COVID-19 outbreak, there are steps you should take to maintain a safe environment, save energy and prevent damage to your systems.

## Spaces

### GENERAL

- Turn off all non-essential interior lighting
- Close all windows, doors and blinds
- Turn off or unplug unnecessary electrical equipment, such as:
  - Cash registers, computers, and payment machines
  - Televisions, cable boxes, and other media players
  - Lamps, signs, and decoration
  - Phones (power only, leave network cable connected)
  - Fountain drink dispensers
- Turn off, unplug or de-energize bathroom exhaust fans
- Shut-off leaky faucets, urinals or commodes and tag for repair

### KITCHEN AND BAR

- Empty, defrost, and unplug nonessential refrigerators and freezers
- Empty and turn off ice machines, coolers, etc.
- Unplug small kitchen appliances (e.g. blenders, coffee machines, toasters)
- Turn off or unplug unnecessary cooking equipment (e.g. ovens, fryers, stovetops)
- Drain oil from fryers
- Turn off exhaust hoods
- Leave dishwashers slightly ajar to prevent growth of mold and mildew

## Equipment

### HVAC AND CONTROLS

- Set building automation system to unoccupied, if applicable
- Set thermostats to unoccupied setpoints (IECC 2015 suggests 55°F heating / 85°F cooling)
- Set HVAC fans to "Auto" mode (ensure fans are not short cycling)
- Set HVAC to maintain relative humidity below 60%
- Close outside air dampers to minimum allowable position
- VAV Systems
  - Set supply dampers to minimum allowable position
  - Set supply fan to minimum speed to reduce static pressure
  - Increase supply air temperature (cooling)
- Disable energy recovery ventilation wheels
- Consider increasing MERV rating of central air filtration, utilizing portable room air cleaners with HEPA filters

### HOT WATER HEATERS

- Turn down to lowest temperature setting
- Inspect insulation around tank and distribution piping to ensure it is intact and undamaged
- Turn off water circulation pumps
- Turn off hot water booster heaters

## Recommendations for take-out only restaurants

If you have decided to convert your restaurant to take-only only during the COVID-19 outbreak, there are steps you should take to maintain a safe environment, save energy and prevent damage to your systems.

### Food service

- Consider reducing menu item availability and limiting operating hours
- If there are typically self-serve options available (e.g., drink dispensers, eating utensils), either close them completely or convert them to full service
- Consider offering only curbside pickup and delivery options to limit traffic inside your facility
- Manage your supply chain to avoid food waste or perishable back-stock requiring extensive storage space (avoid using multiple freezers/refrigerators, if possible)
- Consider compostable or recycled take-out containers and plasticware to reduce landfill waste

### Spaces

#### GENERAL

- Turn off unnecessary interior lighting in unoccupied zones (e.g., dining room, customer restrooms)
- Turn off or unplug unnecessary electrical equipment
  - Televisions, cable boxes and other media players
  - Lamps, signs and decorations
- Provide guidance, such as floor-markings with tape, to encourage customers to maintain six feet of separation
- Consider installing physical barriers (e.g., clear plastic sneeze guards) if employees must take orders face-to-face from customers
- Maintain appropriate thermal conditions and indoor air quality for occupied spaces

#### KITCHEN AND BAR

- Consolidate refrigerators and freezers, defrost and unplug empty units
- Operate only kitchen equipment required to meet food demand (e.g., avoid idling fryers, griddles, vent hoods)
- Unplug nonessential appliances when not in use (e.g., blenders, coffee machines, toasters)



# Equipment

## GENERAL

- Set thermostats in all zones to unoccupied setpoints at closing time
- Consider increasing MERV rating of central air filtration and utilizing portable room air cleaners with HEPA filters

## OCCUPIED ZONES

- Thermostats should be adjusted for thermal comfort and indoor air quality

## UNOCCUPIED ZONES

- Set thermostats to unoccupied setpoints (IECC 2015 suggests 55°F heating / 85°F cooling)
- VAV Systems
  - Set supply dampers to minimum allowable position
  - Set supply fan to minimum speed to reduce static pressure
  - Increase supply air temperature (cooling)

## FIGHTING FUTURE VIRUSES

Consider installing ultraviolet germicidal irradiation (UVGI) in your buildings to better protect staff and customers from airborne diseases. UVGI improves indoor air quality by reducing airborne biological contaminants, including coronaviruses. Incentives available now through TVA EnergyRight.

Visit  
[EnergyRight.com](https://www.energyright.com)  
for more  
information.

