Temperature Policy

Policy/Procedure

Facilities Management's energy management strategy for heating and cooling campus facilities centers on providing comfortable interior space temperatures as efficiently as possible and with environmental sustainability as a top priority.

Our policy provides specific interior space temperature set point targets for both the heating and cooling seasons, for both occupied and non-occupied time periods. The policy is as follows:

The Heating Season Policy

- Occupied Target: **68 degrees**
- Non-Occupied Target: 60 degrees
- Margin of Error: +/- 2 degrees
- Personal space heating devices are not permitted in campus facilities.
- If Facilities Management is unable to maintain the campus heating set point, including the margin of error, then the department will supply a radiant heat mat.
- Radiant heat mats are safe and efficient, and use much less energy than conventional space heaters.
- If provided, radiant heat mats must be turned off when a space is not occupied.
- During extended break periods temperatures are maintained a lower levels.
- Please note that some buildings are difficult to control due to the design of mechanical systems, and therefore some spaces may be more than two degrees warmer than the target.

The Cooling Season Policy

- Occupied Target: **74 degrees**
- Non-Occupied Target: 85 degrees
- Margin of error: +/- 2 degrees
- Please note that some buildings are difficult to control due to the design of mechanical systems, and therefore some spaces may be more than two degrees cooler than the target.

Requests for Service

Since the college consists of more than 120 buildings, some of which are very old and which have very old heating and cooling systems, there are areas on campus which are challenging to maintain. The college is extremely fortunate to have a very committed HVAC staff and they will do their best to operate building systems in a way which complies with the temperature policy In the event that a space seems to cold or too warm, depending on the season, our HVAC personnel will take the following actions:

- They will measure the temperature within the room in question – using digital thermometers that provide immediate air-temperature read-outs.
- If the temperature is within the range proscribed by the policy, they will take no action related to altering the mechanical systems in the space or building. They may still seek ways to provide greater comfort, related to drafts, etc.
- If the temperature does not comply with the policy, they will make every effort to correct the problem.
- If corrections are unable to be made in a satisfactory time period – a radiant heat mat will be provided.

The Importance of Set Points

Providing heating and cooling to the campus requires significant annual funding allocations and generates significant carbon emissions. Since Dickinson is committed to financial and environmental sustainability, it is crucial that we have sound energy management strategy. Part of this strategy involves space temperatures. When heating and cooling spaces, even small shifts in temperature represent significant amounts of energy consumption and carbon pollution. For example, by tweaking space temperature set point targets by only two degrees, the college will reduce its carbon footprint by more than 50 tons – every year! Consequently, it is important to establish comfortable space temperature targets, but to also keep sustainability in mind.

The Importance of Schedule

Schedule plays a very important role in sustainable heating and cooling operations. In the simplest terms, maintaining 'occupied' heating and cooling levels in spaces that are devoid of people does not make good financial or environmental sense. This is akin to turning off the lights when you leave a room. This aspect of the college's overall energy management strategy is extremely important, since the result of successfully managing temperatures when spaces are not in use has tremendously positive effects on our energy consumption profile.

The Importance of Insulation

In both the heating and cooling seasons, energy is wasted and space temperatures are negatively affected by poor insulation. Therefore, it is important to keep windows closed tightly during the heating and cooling season, including storm windows (where they exist). Even the most efficient heating and cooling systems will not perform well if building occupants are not mindful of closing windows and doors.

The Shoulder Season

In the spring and fall, outdoor temperatures can change rapidly from hot to cold – even within the confines of a single day. At Facilities Management, we refer to this as the 'shoulder season', and it represents a very challenging time of year in terms of maintaining comfortable interior space temperatures. The mechanical systems in most of our campus facilities are not able to react to rapid changes from heating to cooling (and vice versa). Therefore, we attempt to use the

outside temperature to our advantage, as much as possible, and to provide limited heating and cooling to buildings during these time periods.

One shoulder season is in October and November, when it is generally to cool outside to air condition spaces, but too warm to heat spaces. As soon as the outdoor temperatures are forecasted to become consistently cold enough to necessitate heating, the buildings are switched from cooling mode to heating mode.

The other shoulder season is in April and May, when it is generally to warm outside to heat spaces, but too cool to air condition spaces. As soon as the outdoor temperatures are forecasted to become consistently warm enough to necessitate air conditioning, the buildings are switched from heating mode to cooling mode.

Since the weather is fickle, and varies from year to year, we ask for the cooperation of the campus community during the shoulder seasons. There is not an exact schedule for making the change from cooling to heating – and vice versa – but we do our best to keep everyone as comfortable as possible.

Tips for dealing with the Shoulder Season

1. Keep a sweater in your office and dress in layers when possible.

2. Close your windows tightly. This includes storm windows in places where they exist. If you open your window during a warm afternoon, please close it again prior to leaving. This will keep you comfortable and will reduce the college's consumption of energy and unnecessary emission of greenhouse gases.

3. Report doors and windows that are not closing tightly.

Community Cooperation

Facilities Management would like to thank the entire community for the cooperation received regarding these matters. Truly, it is the Dickinson College community's cooperation and understanding of these issues which will allow us to be successful in matching our words with our actions as we continue to excel in the arena of sustainability.

Related Information

History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date: October 2007

Last Amended Date: October 2013

Next Review Date: October 2023

Also Found In: Facilities Management Web Site
(www.dickinson.edu/departments/facilities/temp.html)