Rising utility costs and stagnant growth in the restaurant industry in the late 2000s led Arby’s Restaurant Group to examine operations at more than 1,000 company-owned restaurants in search of ways to improve efficiency and save money.

The Problem

The QSR chain was spending an average of $32,000 on utilities per restaurant every year, including $4,500 for water, before launching its Efficiency Matters program in 2012.

Efficiency Matters develops procedures and replaces products to reduce water and energy consumption in restaurants in order to minimize cost and environmental and community impacts.

The Solution

Among program leaders’ early priorities were the “low-hanging fruit” of efficiency — low-cost, high-impact changes that would offer a quick return on investment in water and energy reductions.

Arby’s installed T&S Brass low-flow aerators on hand sink faucets and low-flow pre-rinse spray valves to reduce water consumption without sacrificing performance. These changes cut water use by up to 20 percent and saved each restaurant nearly $500 a year in utility expenses, for savings of $500,000 for the company in the first year alone.

The early successes of the program compelled Arby’s to strengthen and expand its efficiency program and eventually to join the Department of Energy’s Better Buildings Challenge to showcase its environmental stewardship.

Sources:
- restaurantinformer.com
- fermag.com
- restaurant.org

