Those manufacturers who are looking to become more energy-efficient but aren’t sure where to begin might want to take a look at a couple of programs: the ENERGY STAR™ Challenge for Industry and the EERE’s Industrial Technologies Program.

**ENERGY STAR Challenge for Industry**

One way to get started cutting energy costs is to take part in the ENERGY STAR Challenge for Industry. This challenge encourages commercial and industrial facilities to improve energy efficiency by at least 10 percent over a five-year period. Any company can take part in the challenge, but to get EPA recognition, the parent company must be an ENERGY STAR partner.

The seven-step process involves identifying an energy intensity metric to track progress; selecting an energy-tracking method (the EPA offers a tracking tool for sites that need one); setting a baseline and 10 percent improvement goal; establishing an energy-tracking plan; signing up for the challenge; tracking energy use and achieving the reduction; and verifying savings and applying for recognition.

Companies that already have achieved reduction in energy usage are recognized in a list.

**Industrial Technologies Program**

Another way to assess and implement energy-reduction strategies throughout an organization is through the U.S. Department of Energy’s Industrial Technologies Program (ITP). Carried out by the DOE’s Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE), it helps U.S. industry to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

The EERE partners with industry, academia, and the National Laboratories as well as states, utilities, and financial companies to research, develop, and implement cutting-edge technologies. It also provides guidance on better energy management. By supporting technological innovation, developing processes that may eliminate manufacturing steps, and encouraging clean-energy technologies such as CHP, the program not only promotes industrial energy efficiency, but also spurs economic growth and job creation.

As industry is such a large energy-consuming part of the economy (accounting for approximately one-third of the country’s energy use), improved efficiency in this sector can have a large impact on the U.S.’s overall energy needs and environmental challenges.

**ISO 50001 Energy Management**

The new ISO standard for energy management is expected to be published this year in the third quarter. ISO 50001 will incorporate elements of both the ISO 9001 quality standard and ISO 14001 environmental standard. The new energy standard will provide a framework for improving energy performance and efficiency and reducing climate change impacts.

According to ISO, the new standard could affect as much as 60 percent of the world’s energy consumption, and it will provide the following benefits:

- A framework for integrating energy efficiency into management practices
- Making better use of existing energy-consuming assets
- Benchmarking, measuring, documenting, and reporting energy intensity improvements and their projected impact on reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions
- Transparency and communication on the management of energy resources
- Energy management best practices and good energy management behaviors
- Evaluation and prioritization of the implementation of new energy-efficient technologies
- A framework for promoting energy efficiency throughout the supply chain
- Energy management improvements in the context of GHG emission-reduction projects