



An Ounce of Prevention Is Worth A Pound of Cure

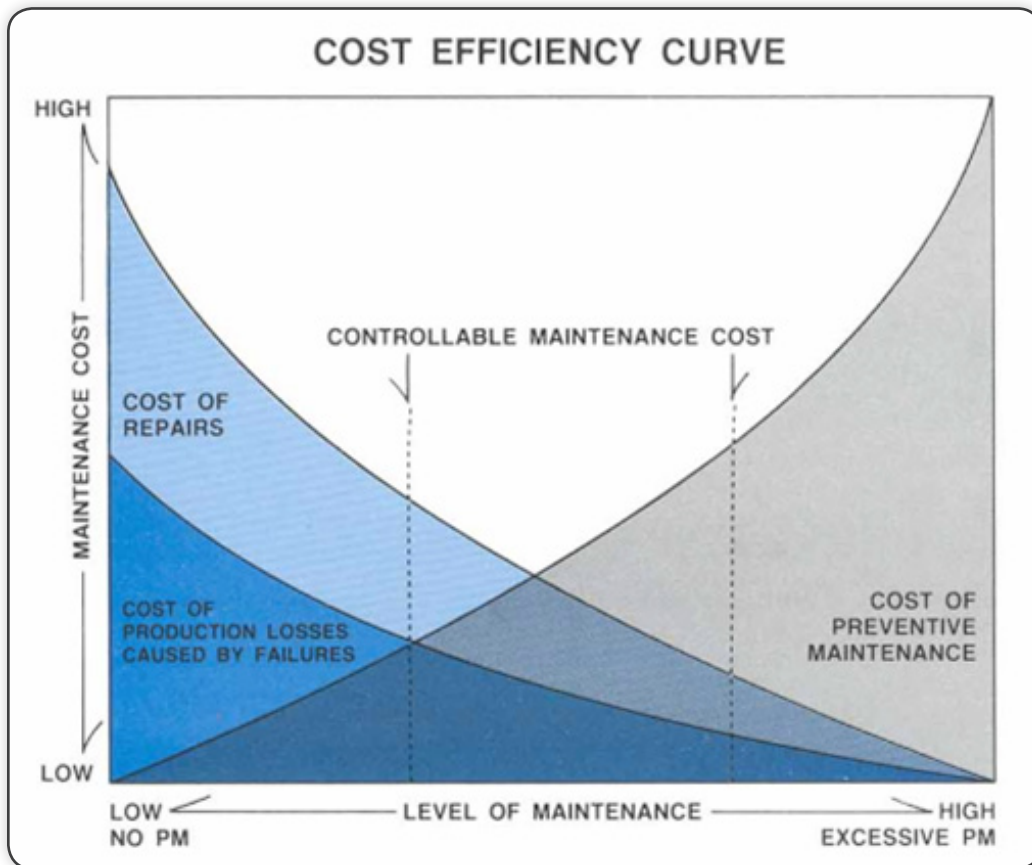
Nationwide, government institutions have been facing fiscal crises year after year. With scant budgets comes the troubling and exacerbating problem of justifying needed staff versus performing proper facility maintenance. In this light, preventive maintenance (PM) has become a “nice to have” not a “must have”. And as a result, many buildings are in threat of failing, new buildings are not well maintained, and your capital investment is compromised.

Studies indicate that 70% to 85% of equipment failures are self-induced, meaning the cause can be linked to improper maintenance procedures. Preventive maintenance is the practice of pre-scheduling work on equipment to inspect, lubricate, re-calibrate and replace parts in order to ensure minor problems don't become major (and expensive) ones. Best practices say that overall 30% of work performed should be preventive maintenance and 90% of your work orders should be generated from PM inspections. How does your government stack up? Below are a few of the reasons to make sure your facilities team is making an effort to keep up on planned maintenance:

- 1. Extend asset life:** This is one of the key benefits to increasing your preventive maintenance. It's the equivalent of changing the oil in your car to save you from replacing the engine. Having to make room in your budget to replace a major piece of equipment is especially tough in these days of tight budgets. Your public facilities represent a major investment of tax-payer money and it's important to practice responsible stewardship of them through proper upkeep.
- 2. Reduce costs:** Reactive maintenance costs at least twice the amount of preventive maintenance, plus takes longer to complete because the problem may be more extensive. PM also saves money because it helps equipment run at peak operating efficiency and studies show this can save you 12% to 18% on your energy bills.
- 3. Improve customer service:** The maintenance team can catch problems before they are catastrophic failures and fix them before they affect building occupants. This minimizes complaints to your facilities team and allows employees to perform their jobs to ensure public services are offered without interruption or trouble. You'll contribute to a positive impression of your facilities to the community.
- 4. Reduce liability exposure:** Your staff and citizens are using your facilities every day; by having a PM program in place you are not only helping ensure their comfort but more importantly their health and safety. If any liability issues were to arise within your facility, it's important to have documentation that proper PM work has been performed.
- 5. Maximize staff:** Your people are one of the organization's greatest assets and through preventive maintenance you can more efficiently use your maintenance team. A proper PM program equals a more structured day for the team and less time spent responding to crises. They know where to go and can plan the most effective route to get work done. Managers anticipate upcoming work and can ensure needed parts and employees will be on-hand to complete jobs.

It's easy to prioritize other needs over facility needs, but here's a question to ask yourself: "If you have no roof on your home, or your air conditioning system went down in the middle of a hot day, how much focus would you put on cooking dinner that night? Likewise, if this building fails, how can we expect our staff to focus on their jobs improving the community and helping citizens?" Not performing PM compromises the overall mission of any organization, especially government. Instead, consider the investment that was made toward that environment. PM is an incremental investment to protect the assets critically needed for running your government. Proper PM ensures optimal life of equipment with minimal costs, therefore maximizing the core mission of your institution.

Are you ready to make preventive maintenance a priority in your government? Increasing the percentage of PM is an incredibly achievable target for the maintenance team and management must communicate the importance of it to ensure organizational support. It's important to make the most efficient use of your operational resources and budgets and a thorough PM program is an effective way to do just that.



There is an optimal level of PM to minimize repair costs and downtime while maximizing preventive maintenance.

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