



# CAPEE Fact Sheet: Benchmarking

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Community Action Planning for Energy Efficiency

## WHAT IS BENCHMARKING?

Benchmarking is the practice of comparing the measured performance of a building to itself, its peers, or established norms. A commitment to tracking and evaluating the outcomes of action items to ensure an effective and efficient path forward is critical to the success of state or community goals. Benchmarking is useful for state and local government property owners and facility operators, managers, and designers to inform and motivate improvements in performance. Energy benchmarking in buildings allows owners and occupants to understand their building's relative energy performance, helps identify opportunities to cut energy waste, and allows building owners to remain competitive. Benchmarking is highly correlated with energy efficiency improvements and cost savings. Learn more about building energy use benchmarking on the U.S. DOE website.<sup>1</sup>

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Collecting, reporting, and sharing benchmarking data regularly helps public and private building owners:

- Make smarter investment decisions;
- Reward efficiency;
- Develop continuous energy management strategies;
- Assess effectiveness of operations and maintenance procedures;
- Verify pre- and post-project energy use, GHG emissions, and energy costs;
- Identify under-performing facilities and set investment priorities;
- Detect and respond to ongoing issues;
- Identify billing errors.

Read more about the range of benchmarking benefits in the Institute for Market Transformation's fact sheet.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-1>

<sup>2</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-2>

## MAKING THE BUSINESS CASE

Among surveyed facility managers who used Energy Star's Portfolio Manager for Benchmarking program, 70 percent have used Energy Star to guide efficiency upgrade plans and 67 percent have used Energy Star to help justify an energy efficiency project.

Source: <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-3>

## WHO IS BENCHMARKING?

A growing number of cities across the country are enacting benchmarking ordinances that require building owners, of a certain square footage, to benchmark their buildings and report the data to the city. As of March 2017, these policies affected more than 10 billion square feet of floor space across the United States in major real estate markets – making them powerful catalysts for energy efficiency in the built environment. Not only are the biggest cities New York City, Philadelphia, and Boston - enacting these ordinances, but smaller cities such as South Portland, Maine are recognizing the importance of measuring building performance

## HOW DO YOU BENCHMARK YOUR BUILDINGS?

ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is a free online tool created by the EPA to measure and track energy and water consumption, as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Portfolio Manager is used to benchmark the performance of almost any building or portfolio of buildings, from a K-12 school to an office building to a stadium. In total, Portfolio Manager contains more than 80 property types simplifying the input process for your specific purposes and allowing for greater comparison capabilities. To get started<sup>3</sup>, you will need 12 months of energy bills and some additional basic information about your building. Portfolio Manager is the industry-leading benchmarking tool that provides a secure, online environment. Get started usin Portfolio Manager.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-4>

<sup>4</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-5>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **NEEP Resources**

- Benchmarking Dashboard
- For background and case studies on building energy rating and disclosure policies, check out NEEP’s Building Energy Rating and Disclosure Update and Lessons from the Field<sup>5</sup>
  - One-Pager<sup>6</sup>
- NEEP’s report, Public Sector Building Energy Benchmarking: Utility Data Access and Opportunities<sup>7</sup>, examines tools used to streamline access to utility data and how municipalities across the region are using them to track usage as part of building energy benchmarking mandates.
- Interested in what other municipalities in the region have benchmarking ordinances? Check out NEEP’s Building Energy Benchmarking and Disclosure Policies in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic<sup>8</sup> brief to find out more.

- **EPA Resources**

- Use EPA’s Energy Star Portfolio Manager<sup>9</sup>
- Benchmarking Starter Kit<sup>10</sup>
- Benchmarking Manual<sup>11</sup>
- What data is required to benchmark your property?<sup>12</sup>

- **DOE Resources**

- DOE’s State and Local Solution Center<sup>13</sup> provides detailed information from putting together a plan for benchmarking to analyzing results.

- **Additional Resources**

- Looking for guidance on how to put together a building energy benchmarking ordinance in your municipality? Take a look at State and Local Policy Design Guide and Sample Policy Language.<sup>14</sup>
- Energy Benchmarking and Transparency Benefits<sup>15</sup>
- See “Best Practice #1” in this DVRPC document<sup>16</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-4>

<sup>4</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-5>

<sup>5</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-6>

<sup>6</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-7>

<sup>7</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-8>

<sup>8</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-9>

<sup>9</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-10>

<sup>10</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-11>

<sup>11</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-12>

<sup>12</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-13>

<sup>13</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-1>

<sup>14</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-14>

<sup>15</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-15>

<sup>16</sup> <http://bit.ly/CAPEE-16>