District Energy Benchmarking of Existing Buildings
Frequently Asked Questions (F.A.Q.)

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BENCHMARKING – GENERAL

What is energy benchmarking?

Energy benchmarking means tracking a building's energy and water use and using a standard metric to compare the building's performance against past performance and to its peers nationwide. These comparisons have been shown to drive energy efficiency upgrades and increase occupancy rates and property values. Utility data is interpreted by linking it to building's characteristics that relate: size, number of occupants, common uses, even localized weather patterns. These details provide a context for the energy and water consumption thus making comparisons over time or with other buildings of the same type much easier. The District of Columbia has chosen ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager, a free software developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, for benchmarking both private and public buildings in the city.

What is the District of Columbia's benchmarking law?

Benchmarking of private buildings over 50,000 sq. ft. and public buildings over 10,000 sq. ft. is required by the Green Building Act of 2006, amended by the Clean and Affordable Energy Act of 2008. These acts were created to encourage widespread understanding of energy and water use patterns throughout the District and provide an incentive to pursue reductions in costs and resource use. Building owners will benchmark their buildings annually using ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager. This software has been chosen because it is the industry-standard benchmarking tool nationally, and was developed by the U.S. EPA, thus endorsing no specific commercial product.

Please see below for the schedule of when each building size must first report. The DDOE will begin publishing benchmark results after the second year of reported data for each building size group.

Portfolio Manager can be accessed at www.energystar.gov/benchmark. To read more about the Clean and Affordable Energy Act and the benchmarking regulations, please visit www.ddoe.dc.gov. Implementing regulations are found in section 3513 of the DC Municipal Regulations, Title 20, Chapter 35.

Why is the District requiring building benchmarking?

Buildings represent 75% of the District of Columbia's energy consumption and carbon emissions. Therefore, any plan to reduce the District's energy use or greenhouse gas emissions must address buildings. You can't manage what you don't measure. The District is requiring building benchmarking so that building owners and tenants can become more aware of how much energy and water is being used in the city's buildings, and can make more informed

investment decisions. Moreover, the public disclosure of energy performance data will bring transparency to energy consumption and create market preasure for more efficient buildings. Market actors, including potential tenants or buyers, will be able to compare the performance of buildings, and better-performing buildings will be rewarded with more business, and owners will in turn improve the efficiency of their buildings to improve competitiveness, creating a reinforcing feedback loop of continuous improvement.

How much does it cost to benchmark a building?

ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager is a FREE online service available to building owners through the US EPA. Soft costs to building owners will include the time needed to collect energy and space use data and to set up a building account. The time to set up a building account is dependent on a number of factors such as: the number of spaces, access to building use information (e.g., operating hours, number of tenants) and access to building plans to assign square footage to usage types (e.g. retail, office or parking). Once all the data is collected, existing staff can benchmark a building in a couple of hours.

Do I need to hire a qualified contractor to benchmark the building?

No, the intent of the program is make benchmarking accessible to building owners who choose to do their own benchmarking with existing staff and resources. A Benchmarking Help Center is available by calling (202) 525-7036 to provide additional educational support. Independent, third-party verification is required ONLY if the building owner chooses to register for ENERGY STAR certification, which is NOT being required by the District.

Will the results of my benchmarking be made public?

Yes. District law requires that the DDOE makes the results of your building's benchmarking public following the second year of *reported data*. Results will be reported on the DDOE website, www.ddoe.dc.gov. Building owners of record and building addresses will also be reported, but no personal contact information and no financial information will be available to the public.

PORTFOLIO MANAGER

What is Portfolio Manager?

Portfolio Manager is a free, secure, web-based benchmarking tool developed and maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The program calculates a 1-100 performance rating using a building's energy use, water use, and characteristics (e.g. size, type(s) of use, number of occupants, etc.) This score allows building owners to evaluate their building's performance based on scores of similar buildings nationwide. Nationally, Portfolio Manager has become the industry-standard benchmarking tool; over 250,000 buildings have been benchmarked using Portfolio Manager since its inception in 1999, representing over 27 billion square feet, and 40% of the entire commercial building market. Many of the District's building owners already track utilities of their buildings with Portfolio Manager and employed it to gain ENERGY STAR® certification for their buildings. To find out more about Portfolio Manager go to : www.energystar.gov/benchmark.

How is the performance of my building evaluated in Portfolio Manager?

Once utility information and basic building characteristics are entered into Portfolio Manager software, the tool calculates the building's source Energy Use Intensity (EUI) expressed in kBTU per square foot. The EUI is then normalized for local weather patterns using data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. If your building falls into one or more of the 15 building categories then Portfolio Manager will automatically compare the normalized EUI to the national dataset of that category or mix of categories. Your building then receives a score between 1 – 100. A score of 50 indicates your building is performing at the national average for that building type. A building with a score of 80, however, performs in the top 20th percentile of buildings in its category. A score of 35 would indicate a building within the bottom 35th percentile of energy performance nationwide. As mentioned, building performance scores are not available for all building types.

What is "source energy"?

Source energy is defined as the total amount of raw fuel required to operate the building(s). It incorporates all transmission, delivery, and production losses to create a complete assessment of energy efficiency of the building(s). ENERGY STAR performance ratings evaluate buildings that use all types of energy. To compare this diverse set of energy consumption, the EPA has determined that source energy is the most equitable common unit of evaluation.

How do I access and use Portfolio Manager?

Portfolio Manager is free and easily accessible at EPA's energy benchmarking site
www.energystar.gov/benchmark. The easiest way to get started is to download the Portfolio
Manager Starter Kit. Once you have reviewed the guidelines it is easy to log on and open an
account. If you are new to Portfolio Manager, it is best to take a live or recorded webinar
training for Portfolio Manager before starting actual benchmarking, or, if available, attend a live
training session provided by the DC Sustainable Energy Utility.

If you are new to Portfolio Manager, it is best to attend a live training session by the DC
Sustainable Energy Utility. If that is not possible, then viewing a live or recorded webinar
training before actual benchmarking is beneficial.

How do I create a Portfolio Manager account?

To create a Portfolio Manager account, go to www.energystar.gov/benchmark and click on the
"New User? Register" Link. You will then fill out an Account Information form and complete the
requested information, and your account will be created.

What is a Statement of Energy Performance?

Portfolio Manager can generate a Statement of Energy Performance (SEP) for any building in
your portfolio. This document communicates information about a building's energy
performance in a format that is both understandable and easy-to-use in business transactions.
The Statement of Energy Performance can help you formalize performance expectations to
support leasing, building sales, appraisals, insurance, staff management, and energy/O&M
service contracts. You can use Portfolio Manager to generate a SEP for each building,
summarizing important energy information and building characteristics such as site and source
energy intensity, CO2 emissions, and gross floor area. The SEP can help you to:

- Apply for the ENERGY STAR label
- Satisfy LEED for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) requirements
- Support mortgage, sale, and/or lease transactions
- Document performance in energy service contracts
- Communicate energy performance with tenants, owners, and/or customers

What is the difference between LEED and ENERGY STAR®?

ENERGY STAR® is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program that focuses on
improving energy performance in buildings as a method of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG)

emissions. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) is a green building certification offered by the non-profit U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).

ENERGY STAR® is a technical assistance and recognition program that offers owners and managers of all buildings access to free tools and resources to help them evaluate their energy performance and reduce energy use and GHG emissions. Organizations are encouraged to begin by benchmarking the performance of their buildings using ENERGY STAR®'s Portfolio Manager online energy tracking tool. For certain types of buildings that perform in the top 25% compared to their peers nationwide, the ENERGY STAR® label is available as an indicator of superior energy performance. Buildings carrying the ENERGY STAR® label consume on average about 35 percent less energy than their non-ENERGY STAR® counterparts. The ENERGY STAR label is not automatic; to earn an ENERGY STAR label, building owners must apply to EPA by submitting a Statement of Energy Performance, validated by a Professional Engineer or Registered Architect. The District is NOT requiring any buildings to become ENERGY STAR labeled.

LEED is a building certification process that looks at various aspects of "green building" and awards recognition to buildings that meet certain standards. Users of the LEED process earn credits in several categories associated with green buildings. These differ by the type of LEED certification, but generally include: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy & atmosphere, materials & resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation. While each category may have required prerequisites that must be met, for the bulk of the credits required for certification users can choose in which categories they wish to focus based on their own priorities. Energy efficiency may or may not be one of those priorities, depending on the user.It is possible for a LEED-certified building to use energy very inefficiently; this is particularly true of older LEED-buildings, as USGBC has started to require buildings seeking certification to meet a minimum energy performance standard in addition to having enough credits overall.

I am purchasing green power generated and delivered by my local utility. Will this improve my 1-100 score?

No. The ENERGY STAR® rating is a measure of the thermodynamic performance of your building, which is determined by the amount and type of fuel your building consumes. The rating is designed to reflect the energy efficiency of the building, not the efficiency of the utility (or source) supplying energy to your building. Each fuel in Portfolio Manager is assigned one national source-to-site factor, which does not provide either a credit or a penalty to a building due to efficiency of the local grid. This provides an equitable evaluation of the building's performance relative to the national building stock.

Where can I find Portfolio Manager training?

If you are new to Portfolio Manager, it is best to attend a live training session by the [DC Sustainable Energy Utility](). More information is available at www.dcseu.com. If that is not possible, then viewing a live or recorded webinar training before actual benchmarking is beneficial.

The EPA offers live and pre-recorded ENERGY STAR® webinars. More information is available at [www.energystar.gov/benchmark](); follow the 'Training' link. Information about trainings in DC can be found at [www.ddoe.dc.gov]().

If you need technical assistance with a particular aspect of Portfolio Manager, you can contact the DC SEU Benchmarking Help Center Hotline at 202-525-7036. The hotline is intended as a technical support line for specific questions, and does not provide a substitute for the detailed trainings discussed above.

DETERMINING APPLICABILITY AND COMPLIANCE

Is my building required to benchmark, and what are the deadlines for reporting?

By 2014, all commercial and multifamily buildings over 50,000 gross square feet (g.s.f) will be required to report benchmarking data to the District on a yearly basis. Below is a guideline for the initial reporting, which phases based on a building's gross floor area:

Building Size (g.s.f.)	Utility Year Data	Deadline
200,000+	2010, 2011	Fall 2012*
150,000+	2011	Fall 2012*
100,000+	2012	April 1, 2013
50,000+	2013	April 1, 2014

*The initial deadline for buildings over 200,000 g.s.f. was July 1, 2011, and the initial deadline for buildings 150,000 to 200,000 g.s.f. was April 1, 2012. Due to delays in the finalization of DDOE's implementing regulations, the initial compliance deadline for all buildings over 150,000 gsf has changed from what is indicated in the law. The initial deadline for buildings over 150,000 g.s.f. will be at least 60 days after the regulation is finalized.

The requirement applies to both residential and non-residential private buildings. District-government-owned public buildings over 10,000 gsf have been required to be benchmarked

since 2009. Federally-owned public buildings are not covered, as they are not subject to District laws.

Owners should plan to start collecting information for their buildings for the previous year by February of the year they are to report, to allow sufficient time to receive and enter information. For buildings reporting in 2012, owners should collect information as soon as possible after finalization of the regulation.

How do I know if I must submit a benchmarking report to DDOE?

The Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) maintains a list of the gross square footage and owner-of-record for all buildings in the city. Based on this, DDOE will send out a notice to all building owners listed as having a building above the applicable size threshold for the first year they have to report. Notices will be sent to both the address listed of the owner, and the building address itself. The letters will list the building ID number you should use, as well as the gross square foot numbers as listed by OTR.

If you believe you are covered by the law but not receive a letter , you can still submit data; simply look up your Building ID number on OTR's website, and benchmark and submit just like any other building.

What is a Building Identification Number?

The Building Identification Number is the number that uniquely identifies your building in the District's records. Generally, it is the square-suffix-lot (SSL) number from your DC Tax Records. DDOE will mail each building and building owner a letter confirming their Building ID number; building owners and managers can also look up the SSL number on the website of the Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) at http://otr.cfo.dc.gov/ The Building Identification Number must be entered into Portfolio Manager in the Building ID field in order to ensure your building is registered as being in compliance.

I received a letter from the District indicating I must submit a benchmarking report but I don't think my building is covered. What should I do?

If you have only one building on the lot, and you think that the actual square footage of the building is less than OTR says it is, such that it falls below the size thresholds, please contact DDOE at info.bennchmark@dc.gov and explain your situation. You may be required to submit copies of building plans to support your case. If your lot has multiple buildings on it, none of which meet the size threshold, you may still be covered by the law; see the question below for

more information on multiple building situations. If your concern is that your building cannot receive a 1-100 score, see below for more information on the role of the 1-100 rating.

I got a letter from the District claiming I have to benchmark my buildings, but I have multiple buildings on my lot, all (or some) of which are below the current size threshold. What should I do?

If the buildings share utilities such that they constitute one campus and cannot be independently benchmarked, they should be benchmarked as one building and the threshold for compliance will be the combined floor area of all the primary spaces served by a single meter with no sub-metering. If the buildings are separately metered for all utilities, they should be benchmarked as separate buildings and the threshold will be the size of each individual building.

DDOE will make initial mailings to building lots as listed in the Office of Tax and Revenue records. If a building owner believes that a complex of buildings is not subject to the law (either at a given size threshold or at all), the owner should contact DDOE at info.benchmark@dc.gov and submit signed, supporting documentation demonstrating the gross floor area of the buildings and that are separately metered for all utilities.

I have multiple buildings on my lot. How should I benchmark them?

If the buildings are separately metered for all utilities, they should be benchmarked as separate buildings and the threshold will be the size of each individual building. If the buildings share utilities such that they constitute one campus and cannot be independently benchmarked, they should be benchmarked as one building or campus.

Depending on the types of buildings, different conditions apply. If the buildings on the campus are all of the same type (such as a walk-up apartment complex) they should be aggregated together as a single "building." For hospitals, the buildings should all be aggregated together as one "building," because the score designation for hospitals applies to hospital campuses. For complex campuses with many building types, they should be grouped as a "campus," with any utilities metered at the building (or smaller) level assigned to that building and any shared utilities assigned to the campus. Campuses benchmarked in this way cannot receive a 1-100 score, and also have specialized procedures for submitting data to DDOE, elaborated below.

When the new version of Portfolio Manager is released in summer 2013, the way campuses are handled will be changed dramatically, for the better, and DDOE will revise this FAQ accordingly at that time.

My building is not of a building type that can receive a 1-100 score in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. Am I exempt from the benchmarking law?

No, the law applies to all building types "for which ENERGY STAR tools are available." Even if no score can be calculated, Portfolio Manager can still generate many useful statistics, including weather-normalized source Energy Use Intensity (EUI) and extrapolated greenhouse gas emissions. Portfolio Manager allows you to benchmark your building against its own past performance regardless of whether a score is generated. Therefore, the "tool" is still available.

If a "space type" does not match definitions in Portfolio Manager, you should not try to "force" the building into one of the building types in order to receive an ENERGY STAR rating. To see a list of buildings that can receive a score and eligibility requirements, please visit www.energystar.gov/benchmark. Any building that does not fit into one of these building types should be entered as "Other" space type in Portfolio Manager.

What is the use of benchmarking my building in Portfolio Manager if I can't get a 1-100 score?

Portfolio Manager allows you to benchmark your building against its own past performance regardless of whether a score is generated. You can also compare your building's EUI against national average EUIs for that type of building. For those buildings that are not eligible to receive a rating, EPA has created a list of reference EUI targets. These are based on average energy use calculated across different types of buildings. These energy performance targets are not normalized for climate nor adjusted for activities which may affect energy use. All targets are expressed in energy use intensity (EUI) and are derived from the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS). Moreover, once DDOE publishes the the benchmarking data, you will be able to compare your own EUIs against those of similar buildings in the District.

The EPA is always working to develop rating criteria for additional segments of the commercial building market. It is also working towards ratings for the multifamily market, with the goal of rolling out a score for multifamily housing in 2013.

My building has occupants involved in work affecting national security. Is my building exempt from the benchmarking disclosure requirements?

It is not automatically exempt, but an exemption can be requested. As the Clean and Affordable Energy Act amended the Green Building Act, this exemption can be handled under the exemption process for the Green Building Act as laid out in Section 3511 of DCMR, as a public

interest exemption pursuant to Section 3511.2(b). The exemption request is subject to the approval or rejection of the Green Building Advisory Council.

What if I haven't owned my building for a full year, or my building is newly built?

Building owners should begin benchmarking the first full calendar year after:

- the building receives its Temporary Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Occupancy (whichever comes first)
- the building changes ownership

My building is smaller than 50,000 square feet. Can it be benchmarked and reported?

Yes! All buildings over 5,000 gross square feet can be benchmarked using Portfolio Manager. If you wish your building's data to be included in the public database, you can voluntarily submit it to the District using the same process as is used for mandatory reporting. Building owners with buildings that are very strong energy performers may wish to showcase their results in the District's benchmarking database in order to attract tenants or other business.

How do I calculate the square footage of my building? What spaces should I include?

Calculate the gross square foot area of your building using the space attributes as defined by Portfolio Manager. The square footage entered in Portfolio Manager is the gross floor area, meaning the total floor area, for your building. The total square footage must include all supporting functions such as lobbies, stairways, restrooms, storage areas, elevator shafts, etc. If you are unsure of your building's square footage, you can consult architectural plans or the Office of Tax and Revenue CAMA database at www.data.dc.gov. For residential buildings, the total gross building area (GBA) provided does not include garages; for commercial or mixed use buildings, garages are included as part of the total GBA. Note, however, that secondary spaces such as parking garages do not count towards the thresholds for compliance with District regulations. However, garages do need to included when benchmarking the building in Portfolio Manager because the energy used in garages and other secondary spaces contributes to the energy use of the building. Including the energy consumption but not the square footage of garages will artificially depress the calculated Energy Use Intensity.

Am I required to enter my building's energy use data into my Portfolio Manager account on a monthly basis?

No. To comply with the Benchmarking law, energy use data may be entered at the end of the year or periodically throughout the year.

The Benchmarking law states that I must provide energy use data for the calendar year – January 1 – December 31 – but my utility bills do not correspond exactly with the days of each month. How should I enter this information?

In this case you may need to enter your building's energy use data from thirteen months worth of utility bills you have. I.E. to complete your Benchmarking Report for calendar year 2010, you will need to enter the data from your first bill (the one with information from the previous year, December 2009) as well as the following 12 bills for a total of 13 bills entered. Enter the start and end dates as they appear on the 13 bills. The Portfolio Manager Tool will use the full calendar year (12 months) data and will time-weigh any entries that fall partially into the twelve month period of the calendar year.

SPACE TYPES

Why are residential properties required to benchmark?

Section 4(c) (D.C. Official Code § 6-1451.03) of the Green Building Act (GBA) states that the requirements for energy benchmarking "shall apply to all buildings and projects that are of a building type for which Energy Star(R) tools are available." No distinction is made between residential and non-residential properties. Section 4(c)(2) of the GBA refers to "privately-owned buildings," and makes no distinction between residential and non-residential buildings, whereas other sections of the GBA, such as section (4)(b), specirfically limit their applicability to non-residential buildings only. Therefore, section 4(c) applies to both residential and non-residential buildings.

Do I include the garage when calculating the gross square footage of my building?

As noted above, in the District, garages, whether enclosed or open, do not have to be included when calculating square footage of a building for the District reporting threshold. However, the garage and other parking facilities that contribute to the energy use of the building should be included in the benchmark calculations.

How do I account for vacant space in my building?

If vacant space averages at least 10% of the building floor area over the past 12 months, vacant space must be input in Portfolio Manager as a separate space. For the vacant space, use the following operating characteristics; an office building is provided as an example:

- Weekly Operating Hours = 0
- Workers on Main Shift = 0
- Number of PCs = 0
- Percent Heated and Percent Cooled = Report conditioning as it occurs in the vacant space

If *occupancy changes significantly over time*, square footage can periodically be reallocated between the vacant and occupied spaces. For example, if 20,000 sq. ft. of space is vacated:

1. Edit the floor area of the occupied space, selecting **Update**. Remove 20,000 sq. ft. from the floor area and change the effective date to when the space was vacated. Click SAVE.
2. Using the same **Update** procedure and the same effective date as in Step 1, remove a corresponding number of workers and PCs from the occupied office space.

3. Edit the floor area of the vacant space, selecting **Update**. Add 20,000 sq. ft. to the floor area and change the effective date to when the space was vacated. Click SAVE.

If you have *already benchmarked without inputting vacant space separately*, please edit historical data:

1. Determine the average vacant percentage over the past 12 months. If it is at least 10%, follow Steps 2-4.
2. Create a new "Office" space for vacant space, leaving the effective date as 01/01/year built. Input the average vacant floor area over the last 12 months; 0 operating hours, workers, and PCs; and percentages heated and cooled that are the same as the remainder of the building. Do not change the effective date for any space attribute. Click SAVE.
3. Edit the gross floor area of your previously-existing "Office" space, selecting **Correct**. Reduce the floor area by the same amount as the vacant square footage you just added. Do not change the effective date. Click SAVE.
4. If you had previously updated the existing "Office" space square footage as building functions changed (e.g., if space within the building was reallocated among office space and computer data center as tenancy changed), there may be a Revision History. If this is the case, it is important to also correct the historical floor area shown in the revision history. Click EDIT next to that number and remove the same square footage as in Step 3. Do not change the effective date. Click SAVE.

If you *have already benchmarked your building with vacant space separate from occupied space, but have input vacant space operating hours, workers or PCs as anything other than zero*, please change the attributes to zero. Select **Correct** and do not change the effective date when editing these attributes.

I have a mixed-use building. Can I benchmark it using Portfolio Manager?

Yes. Portfolio Manager provides guidelines for incorporating various use types within a multi-use building. You will need to account for each major building use when you benchmark.

How do I determine the percentage of my building that is heated and/or cooled?

You should determine what percentage of the floor space is supplied with hot and cool air through HVAC systems. Most office buildings are 100% heated and cooled, although some may have unfinished basements or storage areas that are not conditioned.

What is the definition of a "Data Center"?

The term "data center" applies to spaces specifically designed and equipped to meet the needs of high density computing equipment such as server racks used for data storage and processing. Typically, these facilities require dedicated, uninterruptible power supplies and cooling systems. Data Center functions may include traditional enterprise services, on-demand enterprise services, high performance computing, internet facilities, and/or hosting facilities. Data Centers are often free-standing, mission-critical computing centers. When a Data Center is located within a larger building, it usually has its own power and cooling systems. It is also common to have raised floor space to facilitate equipment cooling. The Data Center space is intended for sophisticated computing and server functions; *it should not be used to represent a server closet or computer training area*.

Should my server closets, computer training areas, telecom closets, or print/copy rooms be listed as "Data Center" space?

No, these are not defined as a "Data Center". The Data Center space type is intended for sophisticated computing and server functions which typically include high density computing equipment, dedicated cooling systems, uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), and raised floors.

Server rooms that do not meet the definition of a "data center" but have separate cooling systems and operating hours that differ from the rest of the building should be entered as a separate space in Portfolio Manager using the Office space type. In this space, enter the weekly operating hours (typically 168 hours), zero workers, and a number of PCs that approximates the number of servers in the space.

All other spaces mentioned here (including server rooms without separate cooling systems, computer training areas, telecom closets, print/copy rooms, and other areas that may have formerly been classified as Computer Data Center but do not meet the current definition of "Data Center") should be included in the total gross floor area input for the building's main space type (e.g., Office).

COLLECTING AND ENTERING DATA

If I am already benchmarking am I all set?

Almost. Benchmarking under District guidelines is based on EPA's standard Portfolio Manager requirements. All definitions and processes are based on Portfolio Manager guidance. However, some data that is "optional" in Portfolio Manager benchmarking will be required under District regulations. Namely, these are:

- Water utility data for your building
- Space use attribute information
- Inclusion of metered parking garages and facilities in benchmarking

See the District **2010 Benchmark Data Collection Worksheet** for a full set of District data requirements within Portfolio Manager.

How is benchmarking in Portfolio Manager different under District requirements?

Benchmarking under District guidelines is based on EPA's standard Portfolio Manager requirements. All definitions and processes are based on Portfolio Manager guidance. However, some data that is "optional" in Portfolio Manager benchmarking will be required under District regulations, including water consumption and certain space use information designated on the District Data Collection Worksheet.

My tenants manage their own energy use. Do I still need to get this information from them?

Yes. As a building owner you need to ask any non-residential tenants for energy and water use information, along with certain applicable space use information, DDOE's has provided a template non-residential request form to obtain information from your tenants, but you are not required to use this form. You are required by law to ask your non-residential tenants for necessary information to complete your benchmarking. Non-residential tenants are legally obligated to provide the requested information to the building owner. Failure of a non-residential tenant to provide requested information, or of an owner to report benchmark results, may subject each party to a fine of $100 per day of noncompliance.

Are tenants required to provide energy and water use information to a building owner?

Yes, non-residential tenants are legally obligated to provide the requested information to the owner. Failure of a tenant to provide requested information, or of an owner to report benchmark results, may subject each party to a fine of $100 per day of noncompliance.

Do I have to collect data from residential tenants?

No. You do not have to collect any space use or energy information from residential tenants. For a residential building, you only need to input into Portfolio Manager and submit to the District data from meters you control, plus the data from any *non*-residential tenants. So for a master-metered building, you would still benchmark the whole building, but for a building with separately metered residential units, you would only include the common area usage. Once you are able to acquite aggregate data for the whole building directly from the unitiy company, you will be required to use this aggregate data to benchmark the whole building.

Can my tenant(s) sign a waiver to give me access to their utility data?

Yes! DDOE has prepared a common waiver, available in the set of benchmarking guidance documents at http://ddoe.dc.gov, that your tenants can sign and give to you, for you to provide to Pepco, Washington Gas, and/or DC Water. Please be aware that it may take some time to get any data from the utility company, and the fact that a utility company has not responded to a waiver request does not absolve a building owner of their duty to submit benchmarking data to DDOE by the appointed deadline.

Do I have to request data from federal tenants?

Yes, you must request data from all non-residential tenants, including federal tenants. However, the District does not have the legal authority to *require* the federal government to provide this data, so the General Services Administration (GSA) may deny or ignore your request. However, DDOE is working with the GSA with the goal of having federal tenant data be supplied in as many cases as possible. If you are unable to get data from a federal tenant, you may submit a partial report without the federal tenant(s).

What should I do if one of my tenants leaves the building mid-year?

The building owner should ask the tenant to complete a Non-Residential Tenant Information Form for the period that the tenant occupied the building. The tenant is expected to provide the form to the building owner before leaving the building, or as soon as practicable after the tenant has vacated the building.

I do not have all of the tenant information required for benchmarking. What should I do?

Building owners should make a reasonable effort to obtain the required tenant information, including timely sending a form requesting data to each tenant, such as DDOE's Non-Residential Tenant Information Form. You may be asked to provide proof of this effort during an audit. If you are unable to obtain complete building information, you may submit a partial report with all the data you have—including available whole-building information, common area information, and available non-residential tenant information. You must report any non-compliant tenants and their contact information in the Notes field in Portfolio Manager.

I entered my building's information into the Portfolio Manager Tool and a short while later I went back into my account to check one item, but I couldn't view the information that I entered. What happened?

If you entered your building's information correctly into your Portfolio Manager account, it typically takes 24 hours before you can view the information in your account. If after 24 hours you still cannot view the information you entered, either you entered the information incorrectly or there is a problem with the Portfolio Manager Tool. First, try re-entering the information into your account again. If after re-entering the information the problem persists, call the Benchmarking Help Center at 311 or (212) 442-7901. If there is no one available to answer your question, please leave a message with a call-back number and you will receive a call-back.

Are there other options for benchmarking my portfolio that do not require manual data entry into Portfolio Manager?

Several energy information and bill handling providers have integrated the EPA's energy performance rating system into their products and services. A complete list can be found here.

Why can't my utility company automatically benchmark my building for me?

Benchmarking requires knowing more than just the energy use of the building; it also requires knowledge of how large a building is and how it is used—information that only building owners and tenants have access to. In some cities with mandatory energy benchmarking requirements, utility companies have implemented services that upload aggregate, whole-building energy consumption data to ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager upon request of the building owner. However, only the building owner can confirm that all meters have been included, enter the required space use information, and authorize transmission of the benchmarking data to the District. Automatic upload of utility data does save building owners time, though, and DDOE is working with Pepco, Washington Gas, and DC Water to bring such a service to the District.

Can building management systems be linked to Portfolio Manager to automatically enter data?

It is possible to import building data from other tracking systems into Portfolio Manager using a downloadable Excel template. This template minimizes the need for manual data entry of building information by providing a simple way to move data from commercial utility tracking software or in-house tracking tools to a common spreadsheet format that can then be uploaded into Portfolio Manager. The import procedure is currently available for Office Buildings, K-12 Schools, Hotels, Hospitals, Warehouses, Medical Offices, Residence Halls, Supermarkets/Grocery Stores, and Other. It is intended to facilitate initial one time loading of large sets of building data (10 or more buildings or campuses). At this time it is not capable of updating information already in Portfolio Manager.

Portfolio Manager also allows you to update multiple meter entries at a time through *Multi Facility Meter Update*, available under *My Portfolio* in Portfolio Manager. This functionality enables you to download an Excel template which will list each facility and meter with the specified number of meter entries you select. You can then transfer data from your in-house tracking tool to the spreadsheet and upload the spreadsheet into Portfolio Manager.
 Finally, a number of service providers offer automated benchmarking. For more information on this resource, visit the [Service Providers Offer Automated Benchmarking webpage](#).

REPORTING AND NEXT STEPS

How do I submit my data to the D.C. Government?

- Make sure all required data for your building has been entered into Portfolio Manager following the **District Benchmark Data Collection Worksheet.**
- Access **the District Reporting Template** for the applicable year at www.ddoe.dc.gov and click the link to automatically download it into your Portfolio manager account. After logging into your Portfolio Manager account, select "Access My Portfolio" on the top left of the screen.
- Under "Report and Analysis" on the right side of the screen, select "Generate Reports and Graphs." Click the drop-down menu titled "Select a Report Template" and choose "District Benchmark Template"
- On the left side of the screen, select the building(s) that you are submitting. Once done, click the "Release Data" button in the upper right corner. EPA will then send a confirmation to the account contact.

If you have any buildings that are grouped as a campus using the campus feature in Portfolio Manager, you must report them differently. This is because Portfolio Manager's custom reporting tool, which the District Reporting Template uses, does not "see" any meters that are assigned to the "campus" but not to any individual building. On the main Portfolio Manager screen, click the link to generate a campus report and follow the instructions. Portfolio Manager will provide you with a spreadsheet with all the information on the campus. You must e-mail this spreadsheet to DDOE by emailing it to info.benchmark@dc.gov.

If I submit my Benchmarking Report and then realize I made a mistake, or find out that there was an error in the utility bills, can I correct my report and resubmit it, even after the deadline?

Yes; indeed, you must. If an owner receives updated data, they have 30 days to submit a revised report to DDOE. The most likely circumstance where this subsection applies is when a tenant did not provide the building owner with the required energy and space use data, but then does provide the building owner with this data later. A building owner might also receive corrected data from a utility company in the event the utility company discovered an error in its meter readings, or a building owner might need to correct an inaccurate building square footage figure or fix human error.

Am I required to submit data every year?

Yes, you must submit a benchmarking report to DDOE every year by April 1 of that calendar year. Note that Portfolio Manager takes 24 hours to update data so that it can be accessed by the custom reporting tool, so make sure to allow enough time.

Is there a penalty for noncompliance?

Yes. Building owners who do not report benchmark results to DDOE, and non-residential tenants who do not provide requested information to the owner, may be fined up to $100 per day for each day of noncompliance.

How long should I keep my benchmarking records?

Building owners should keep benchmark results and supporting records for at least three years. Benchmark results and supporting records should be available for inspection and audit by DDOE during normal business hours, following reasonable notice. Examples of supporting records include:

- U.S. EPA and DDOE confirmation emails with a proof-of-submission date

- A copy of the building owner's energy, water, and space use attribute information entered into Portfolio Manager
- Copies of applicable tenant information forms and letters

Once I know how my buildings perform, how do I go about improving the poor ones?

Once you have rated your buildings, the objective is to improve their energy performance. EPA provides many resources to help you in this effort. First, use the proven Guidelines for Energy Management offered by ENERGY STAR® to determine where to start and how to maximize the return on your upgrade investments. Second, refer to the EPA's Building Upgrade Manual to learn more about specific upgrade strategies and technologies. Additional information on energy management, efficient technologies, and financial evaluation can be found on the Tools & Resources page on the ENERGY STAR Website.

As you implement new management strategies and technical upgrades, you can use Portfolio Manager to track changes in your buildings' energy performance and verify improvement.

I still have questions. How do I get more information?

- Visit the DDOE bencmarking webpage at www.ddoe.dc.gov/energybenchmark
- Contact DDOE at (202) 671-3042 or info.benchmark@dc.gov
- Contact the DC SEU Benchmarking Help Center at 202-525-7036.
- Visit the EPA's ENERGY STAR® webpage: www.energystar.gov/benchmark.
  - To view ENERGY STAR® FAQs, click "Portfolio Manager FAQs" from the "Selected Resources" menu on the right side of the page.
  - To view EPA ENERGY STAR® training information, click "Training" from the "Quick Finder" menu on the right side of the page.