



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 Nonprofit organization

**Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at
www.cccclimateleaders.org**

WHAT? Benchmarking is the process of evaluating a building's energy use, where energy performance is monitored over time and compared to that of similar buildings. The energy that city buildings use generates a certain amount of greenhouse gas emissions and costs cities substantial amounts of money. Energy benchmarking is usually followed by an increased effort to create a more energy efficient building to reduce its energy use and operating costs. In order to meet emission reduction and energy efficiency standards, you must have a documented energy baseline as a starting point to show your success.

WHY? Assessing building energy performance baselines is necessary to set goals for future emissions reductions and efficiency improvements. It is also necessary to illustrate achieved reduction goals when required goals and standards are mandated. Benefits of the benchmarking process can include the following:

- Track and report on energy performance and environmental impact over time
- Save money by reducing your energy expenditures
- Understand which efficiency projects return the most money per investment.
- Demonstrate energy leadership to the commercial sector: California Assembly Bill 1103 requires disclosure of energy performance at the point of whole building commercial real estate transactions occurring on or after January 1, 2012
- Receive an ENERGY STAR label with scores above 75 and earn points toward LEED certification

WHO? Benchmarking is performed for individual buildings. Local governments can benchmark city-owned buildings, pass requirements for local businesses or encourage residents to monitor their own usage and take steps to increase building efficiency.

WHERE? Many cities are starting to benchmark their buildings:

- Benchmarking completed for every major city-owned building in New York:
<http://www.c40cities.org/news/news-20100502.jsp>
- Seattle requires industrial energy disclosure:
<http://www.cityofseattle.net/dpd/GreenBuilding/OurProgram/PublicPolicyInitiatives/DPDP018682.asp>

"Energy Benchmarking for Better Building Performance" presentation from Bellvue, Washington – very information rich presentation!

http://www.electricleague.net/files/powerfulbusiness/2009powerfulbusiness/putnam_energybenchmarking.pdf

Locally in Contra Costa County, several cities have started benchmarking, after attending our free workshops!

<http://www.cccclimateleaders.org/text/benchmarking.html>. Our next workshop is September 15th if you attend, our free consultant, Tim Bankroff will be able to help you get started.

HOW? There are different programs designed to help you benchmark your buildings.

- The Pacific Gas and Electric Company offers an Automated Benchmarking Service (ABS) which will automatically upload building energy usage data to EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager online. Learn more about this service here: <http://www.pge.com/mybusiness/energysavingsrebates/analyzer/benchmarking/>

Other Resources to Learn More:

- ENERGY STAR Benchmarking Starter Kit:
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=evaluate_performance.bus_portfoliomanager_benchmarking
- An account of the benefits of benchmarking: <http://www.greenbiz.com/blog/1969/12/31/benchmarking-building-performance>
- A simplified benchmarking tool: <http://eber.ed.ornl.gov/benchmark/bench.htm>

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