

ENERGY STAR Update

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
June 20, 2013

Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR: Race to Denver

On June 20, 2013, the EPA recognized architects, building owners and organizations who participated in this year's ENERGY STAR Challenge: Race to Denver at the American Institute of Architects National Convention in Denver, CO. This event featured designs from architecture/engineering (A/E) firms who submitted projects that achieved Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR recognition. AIA had officials on hand to thank the many A/E firms for their outstanding work in designing buildings to meet the AIA 2030 Commitment goal to reduce the carbon footprint of the built environment.

The ENERGY STAR Challenge 2013 Race to Denver was a friendly competition among three U.S. regions designated as the Wild West, Big Easy Central, and East Coast. Big Easy Central region took gold for the 3rd year with nearly 50 design projects achieving Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR recognition. In total, over 45 different A/E firms participated and nearly 100 projects received Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR recognition. The participants in the Race to Denver designed more than 10 million ft² of commercial building space. This translates to an estimated reduction of 78 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually, and \$11 million in annual energy costs.

Since its inception, 206 different A/E firms have submitted design projects that meet EPA's criteria, and 526 projects have achieved Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR recognition. These projects are estimated to reduce 530,000 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent annually with 112 projects achieving an estimated 50% or greater annual CO₂ equivalent reductions.

COOL FACTS: Commercial buildings in the United States are responsible for approximately 20% of both the nation's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions at a cost of more than \$100 billion annually, so there is a lot of opportunity to improve efficiency. By 2035, it is projected that seventy-five percent of all buildings will either be new or renovated, so architecture firms are uniquely positioned to design buildings that can improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and help the fight against climate change. The Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR certification encourages architects to design projects that can be built and then operated by owners so that the buildings are among the nation's top 25 percent in energy performance and eligible to actually earn the ENERGY STAR label.

Products, homes and buildings that earn the ENERGY STAR label prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency requirements set by the U.S. EPA. In 2012 alone, Americans, with the help of ENERGY STAR, saved \$24 billion on their utility bills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equal to those of 50 million vehicles. From the first ENERGY STAR qualified computer in 1992, the ENERGY STAR label can now be found on products in more than 65 different categories, with more than 4.5 billion sold over the past 20 years. Over 1.4 million new homes and 20,000 office buildings, schools and hospitals have earned the ENERGY STAR label.

To learn more about [ENERGY STAR Commercial Building Design](#)
To see the results of the [ENERGY STAR Challenge for Architects: 2013 Race to Denver](#)

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