



2016 ENERGY STAR® National Building Competition Frequently Asked Questions

Your questions about the 2016 National Building Competition... answered!

Can't find the answer to your question here? Check out www.energystar.gov/buildingshelp.

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A. About the competition

1. **What recognition will be given?**

EPA will recognize top performing properties by category. Properties in each building category that reduce whole building weather normalized source energy or water use the most, per square foot, will be recognized. Recognition is only available for categories of buildings with 10 or more competitors. An “Other” category will be created for those property types with fewer than 10 competitors.

2. **What kind of publicity will EPA provide?**

EPA will promote the highlights of the competition through emails, social media, and the ENERGY STAR website. Competitors are encouraged to help spread the word among their local publications and affiliated media, and EPA will provide press release templates and creative materials for competitors to use.

3. **What are the periods that will be compared to assess improvement?**

The three-month competition will compare energy use intensity (kBtu/ft²) or water use intensity (kGal/ft²) on August 31, 2016 with the same metrics on November 30, 2016. These metrics require 12 months of data to calculate in Portfolio Manager. Therefore, data for a competing building must be available from August 31, 2015 to November 30, 2016 in order for EPA to calculate savings at the end of the competition.

4. **How many buildings can I enter?**

Each participant may enter up to 5 buildings. The purpose of limiting the number of buildings per participant is to encourage organizations to focus their energy and water management efforts on a select set of buildings. However, if you are a service and product provider with clients, or a large organization, you may submit multiple sets of 5 buildings as long as each set is submitted on behalf of a unique Portfolio Manager contact, as specified in the registration instructions.

5. **Will my consumption data be shared publicly?**

Yes, but only energy or water use intensity and greenhouse gas emissions will be posted to EPA’s ENERGY STAR National Building Competition website (www.energystar.gov/battleofthebuildings). EPA will *not* publish competitor square footage or total energy or water use.

6. How often will I need to submit data?

You will be required to submit Portfolio Manager data twice: once when you register, and again at the end of the competition.

7. When is the best time to register for the competition? We're just starting to make energy efficiency improvements. Should we register now or wait until next year?

We can't guarantee that there will be a competition next year. We encourage you to register this year and enjoy the learning opportunity the competition offers. We have found that we cannot predict how buildings will perform; some of our biggest winners were surprised to find out just how much they could save! The greatest determinant of performance is a strategic, well-executed energy management program.

8. I responded to the data request according to the step-by-step instructions. Is that all I have to do to register my buildings to compete?

Yes. As long as you register prior to the July 17, 2016 deadline, the individual buildings you've submitted will be entered to the competition. You will receive a confirmation email indicating that EPA has received your registration in July, as well as any follow up questions to ensure the data you submit is accurate.

9. I work for an energy services company or ENERGY STAR Service and Product Provider (SPP) partner – how can I make sure my organization's name appears in the list of competitors at www.energystar.gov/battleofthebuildings?

We'd be happy to list you as a coach for the competition. However, you must first ensure you have affiliated yourselves with the buildings you're registering to compete. To do this, either register buildings directly, or make sure you are listed as the building SPP in Portfolio Manager. To do this, go to the property's Details tab; in the Basic Info box choose to View/Edit All Details; and scroll to the bottom of the page to edit the Additional Information section.

B. Eligibility

1. Are all types of buildings eligible to compete?

Yes, any type of commercial building is eligible to compete as long as you can submit energy data for all fuel sources for the entire building. Industrial buildings are eligible to compete only if 60% or more of the site's energy load is due to non-production process utility systems, such as lighting, heating, and ventilation. All energy data must be submitted through Portfolio Manager, and buildings have the option of also competing in a water-saving category.

2. Can buildings drop out of the competition?

While buildings cannot be withdrawn from the competition, you can choose to not submit final data for any of your competing properties. Every building that enters the competition will be included in the complete list of participants that is posted throughout the duration of the competition, even if the building does not submit final data. This list includes change in energy and water use per square foot, and will show "N/A" if data is missing for any time period.

3. Our building competed in last year's Battle of the Buildings. Can we compete again this year?

Yes, absolutely!

4. **Can facilities with "campuses" compete? We have just one meter for all our buildings.**
Yes. Schools, hospitals, hotels, senior care facilities, multifamily housing, college campuses, and military bases can be benchmarked as campuses. For these building types, enter all meters from all structures on the campus (master meters and any sub-meters, if applicable) into your Portfolio Manager account.
5. **Is building eligibility based on the 1 – 100 ENERGY STAR score?**
No. Any building can participate in the competition. The competition will be judged based on total reductions in weather-normalized source energy use per square foot, so buildings with or without an ENERGY STAR score are able to fully compete.
6. **Can we compete if the building we manage is not owned/operated by an ENERGY STAR partner?**
Yes. Any building that can report whole building energy or water consumption for the competition period, and for which registration is submitted by July 17, 2016 is eligible to compete. To join ENERGY STAR as a partner, visit www.energystar.gov/join.
7. **As a service provider, can we enter client buildings?**
Yes. This is a great opportunity to work with the building and its owner and/or tenants to improve energy efficiency.
8. **Is there a minimum square footage/occupant/energy load to register?**
No. There are no minimum square footage/occupant/energy load requirements. However, if your building has a very low or high square footage or energy/water use intensity, EPA might request to confirm these figures with you.
9. **Does the building need to be ENERGY STAR certified to be eligible?**
No. This competition is open to all buildings.
10. **How much does it cost to register?**
There is no cost to register or participate in the competition. If you qualify for energy or water recognition at the end of the competition, you'll be required to have your building energy or water data and square footage verified by a Professional Engineer or Registered Architect to receive official EPA recognition.

C. Portfolio Manager

1. **I haven't created a Portfolio Manager account yet. How long does it take to benchmark a building and register for the competition?**
This is dependent on the availability of your building energy and water data, and the complexity of your building. However, if you have this information at your fingertips, it can take as little as an hour.
2. **How do I benchmark my energy and water use in Portfolio Manager?**
You can get started by following the simple Quick Start guide to benchmarking, at <http://www.energystar.gov/buildings/tools-and-resources/portfolio-manager-quick-start-guide>. You can also view short videos to get a jump start via <https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/training>
3. **What if the building doesn't have consistent occupancy over the competition period, or is under construction?**
Given the spirit of the competition, buildings should be fully operational and have consistent or business as usual occupancy for the duration of the competition.

4. Will there be any verification of the data in Portfolio Manager?

Yes, but only for competitors who are eligible to receive recognition at the end of the competition. If eligible and upon EPA request, you will need to have your building data verified by a licensed Professional Engineer or Registered Architect, and this can be someone from within your organization.

D. Data Release Report

1. Is there a way to submit data for all of my competing properties at once, rather than building by building?

Yes. For information on how to submit multiple buildings at once, download and follow the step-by-step instructions for responding to a data request, available at <http://www.energystar.gov/tools-and-resources/how-respond-data-requests-portfolio-manager>. You may submit up to five individual buildings on behalf of yourself or your organization. However, if you are a service and product provider with clients, or a large organization, you may also submit up to five individual buildings on behalf of any of your Portfolio Manager contacts, as well. However, each group of five buildings must have a different contact. We do this to ensure that participants are truly focused on the energy management of competing buildings.

2. I realized I made a mistake after I submitted my data report. Can I resubmit my data?

Yes, as long as you do so by the registration or final data deadline. The resubmitted data report will overwrite the previously submitted information. If you correct data for one building in your portfolio and then resubmit all buildings, only data for the corrected building will be replaced; the other buildings will remain in the system unchanged.

3. My utility bills do not correspond exactly with the days of the month, but the competition is based on a 3-month cycle. For example, my bill for September includes my building's energy use for roughly the second half of August, and the first half of September. How should I enter this information?

In this case, you will need to enter your building's utility data for an additional month. In order to finish the competition, and because Portfolio Manager efficiency metrics are based on 12 months of data, a building must submit complete energy data (and water data, if competing) spanning August 1, 2015 through November 30, 2016. This may mean you will need to submit 16 months of energy bills rather than 15 months.

4. I entered my building's information into Portfolio Manager, but it doesn't appear in the data request report.

In order for data to be included in the data request report, all competing buildings must have complete data through the specific time period required in the data request. If your data is not current, your building(s) will not be included in the report.

E. Benchmarking and improving water efficiency

1. We don't track our outdoor water use in Portfolio Manager. Can we still participate in the water category of the competition?

Yes. You can still participate in the water category of the competition. Competitors can choose to report indoor water use data, outdoor water use data, or both, through Portfolio Manager. Performance is based on a building's total reduction of water use per square foot.

2. What measures can I take to reduce my building's water use?

U.S. EPA's WaterSense® Program has a set of 36 best management practices you can implement to start reducing water use immediately:

<http://www.epa.gov/watersense/commercial/index.html>. Their website also provides links to other non-EPA water efficiency resources including the following:

- Arizona Municipal Water Users Association and Black and Veatch, 2008. *Facility Manger's Guide to Water Management*.
www.amwua.org/pdfs/facility_managers_guide.pdf
- East Bay Municipal Utility District, 2008. *WaterSmart Guidebook: A Water-Use Efficiency Plan Review Guide for New Businesses*: www.ebmud.com/for-customers/conservation-rebates-and-services/commercial/watersmart-guidebook
- North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, 2009. *Water Efficiency Manual for Commercial, Industrial and Institutional Facilities*:
www.p2pays.org/ref/01/00692.pdf
- U.S. Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program. Federal Water Efficiency Best Management Practices:
http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/program/waterefficiency_bmp.html