How to Apply for ENERGY STAR® Certification

Commercial buildings that earn EPA’s ENERGY STAR certification perform in the top 25 percent of similar buildings nationwide, as verified by a Licensed Professional (a Professional Engineer or a Registered Architect). ENERGY STAR certified buildings use an average of 35 percent less energy and are responsible for 35 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than average buildings.

To qualify for the ENERGY STAR, a property must achieve an ENERGY STAR score of 75 or higher on EPA’s 1 - 100 scale, which compares a property’s energy performance to other properties of that type, and accounts for differences in key physical and operational details. More than a dozen types of commercial buildings are eligible to earn ENERGY STAR certification, ranging from warehouses to K-12 schools to worship facilities.

Certification Eligibility Requirements

The following criteria must be met for a property to be eligible for ENERGY STAR certification:

✓ Meet the definition of one of the eligible property types.
✓ Receive an ENERGY STAR score of 75 or higher, accounting for all energy use on the entire property.
✓ Be located in the United States, U.S. territories, or owned by the U.S. government.

Certification Process Overview

1. Benchmark your property in Portfolio Manager® and achieve an ENERGY STAR score of 75 or higher.
2. Begin the online application in Portfolio Manager.
3. Have a Licensed Professional (LP) conduct a site visit, verifying the information in your application.
4. Complete the online application in Portfolio Manager, upload a scanned copy of the signed application, and submit the application electronically to EPA.
5. Respond to questions from EPA, if necessary.
6. Receive notification of the application’s status.
1. **Start the Application Process**

To start the application process in Portfolio Manager, click on the property name on the MyPortfolio tab, and then click **Apply for ENERGY STAR Certification** near the box displaying the property’s current score.

2. **Enter Property Information**

Provide information about your property in the following fields:

1. **Property Description**: Describe your property, including its purpose, activities that occur in the building, building occupants, size, and any other details that will help the reviewer to understand the property.

2. **Property Name for Listing Display**: Enter the name of your property as you want it to appear in the Registry of ENERGY STAR Certified Buildings and Plants. This may be different from the property name in your account; it is recommended that the name be descriptive to the general public. For example, instead of “Store #123,” consider “Main Street Store.”

3. **Property Profile**: Share your energy efficiency successes! Provide a photo and a short summary of your property, highlighting best practices, examples of steps you have taken to make your property more energy efficient, communications initiatives and advice for others. These profiles are often used by the media when reporting on topics related to energy efficiency in buildings. **NOTE**: This step is not required, but is strongly encouraged.

3. **Choose Contacts for Application**

Choose the appropriate contacts for your application.

1. Answer questions in the **Contact Information for Your Property** section, including who owns and manages the property and whether an ENERGY STAR service and product provider assists with managing property information.

2. Choose contacts in the **Contact Information for Your Application** section, including the application primary contact, the signatory, and the LP who will be verifying the application.
Enter Award Information

Enter award information as requested.

1. Select the type of complimentary decal you would like to receive.
2. Provide contact information for delivering your award.

Review Eligibility Details

EPA will review your application for completeness and eligibility; it is important for you to review eligibility details prior to submission.

1. Select the Period Ending Date you want to use for your application. Although Portfolio Manager automatically selects the most recent 12-month period, you can select a different period. Keep in mind that the application must contain information from within 120 days of the date it is submitted.

2. Review and correct ENERGY STAR eligibility alerts identified by Portfolio Manager. The Alerts section indicates potential eligibility and data quality issues. Use the links to edit your information as needed, or to provide an explanation addressing the alert. Be sure to resolve all issues before submittal in order to avoid having to revise and resubmit your application.

3. Click Save for Signatures after you have entered all required information.

Generate Your Application for Signatures

Generate your application for signatures by clicking Generate & Download Current Application for Professional Signatures. The application will include your property’s basic information, property use details, energy data, and score, as well as a checklist for the LP to verify before adding a signature and stamp.
Enter Site Visit Information

The LP, or a representative working under the direct supervision of the LP, must visit your property during the application process to verify the following items in accordance with the instructions provided in the ENERGY STAR Licensed Professional’s Guide:

- All energy use is accounted for accurately.
- The property use details have been properly reported (including the gross square footage of the building) and the property meets ENERGY STAR eligibility requirements.
- The property meets minimum occupancy requirements.
- The indoor environmental quality meets industry standards for air quality, thermal comfort, and illumination.

NOTE: If you need help finding an LP with experience in the certification process, you can visit the ENERGY STAR LP Directory for a list of LPs that have verified applications for ENERGY STAR certified buildings. You do not, however, need to use an LP listed in this directory.

After your site visit is complete, fill in the Site Visit section of the application.

- Enter the date on which the site visit took place.
- Select from the drop-down menu the individual who performed the site visit.
- Select Yes or No to indicate whether the LP found any issues with your application. If you select Yes, you will be directed to the Revise & Regenerate Application page.

Revise & Regenerate

If the LP identifies issues that require correction on your application, you will need to edit information on the Revise & Regenerate Application page in Portfolio Manager.

- Edit your basic property information, function type, or consumption information as needed.
- Regenerate and print the application for signatures.
Submit Your Application

You are now ready to submit your application to EPA!

1. Enter the tracking number from the signed application in the appropriate space within the online application in Portfolio Manager and check the necessary boxes. **NOTE:** The tracking number is located on the bottom right-hand corner of every page of the application.

2. Attach a scanned PDF of the signed application.

3. Validate your credentials by entering your Portfolio Manager username and password, and then click **E-Sign Application.**

4. Complete your application by clicking **Submit to EPA.**

**Once your application has been submitted …**

- View your application’s status on the **Recognition** tab by clicking the gray arrow next to your property’s name.
  - If EPA has any questions or issues, the primary contact specified during the application process will receive the questions by email.
  - If you have any questions, visit: [www.energystar.gov/BuildingsHelp](http://www.energystar.gov/BuildingsHelp).
- Get ready to promote your accomplishments! Spread the word with ready-to-use communication materials!
- Start preparing for next year! A property that has earned the ENERGY STAR becomes eligible to reapply one year after the period ending date for the previous application.

**Spot Audits**

On a regular, ongoing basis, EPA will randomly select applications to undergo a spot audit. EPA may ask for any of the following information:

- Copies of all the utility bills and invoices for fuel purchases within the period of performance.
- Documentation and/or explanation of how the building attributes were verified.
- Explanation of how the LP assessed the indoor environmental quality.

**Learn More!**

To learn more about Portfolio Manager, visit [www.energystar.gov/benchmark](http://www.energystar.gov/benchmark).


To get answers to your questions, visit [www.energystar.gov/buildingshelp](http://www.energystar.gov/buildingshelp).