

ENERGY BENCHMARKING QUESTIONS

1. What is energy benchmarking?

Energy benchmarking is the process of documenting a property's energy use over time. Benchmarking includes capturing basic building data along with energy and, in some cases, water consumption. Benchmarking enables owners to understand energy consumption trends, compare their different properties to set investment priorities and see how their buildings compare to the market.

The Burlington 2030 District uses Energy Star Portfolio Manager as a benchmarking tool; the benchmarking metric used is energy use intensity (EUI) which is measured in units of kBtu/square foot/year. Many Vermont businesses are already benchmarking their energy use using this tool.

Like stepping on the scale, an owner cannot control what they do not measure, and benchmarking is the first step in the energy management process.

1. If I become a 2030 member, is benchmarking voluntary?

Yes; benchmarking is voluntary. The BTV 2030 team provides complimentary benchmarking reports called "Property Energy Plans" or PEPs to qualified members so that owners understand the next steps that can help them reduce energy use.

2. If I become a member will I be required to meet the 2030 energy reduction targets?

The energy reduction targets are goals for the City, not requirements for members. Each member will contribute the reductions that make sense for them.

3. What are the 2030 energy reduction targets?

Existing buildings energy use reduction targets are:

- *20% energy consumption reduction below baseline by 2020*
- *35% energy consumption reduction below baseline by 2025*
- *50% energy consumption reduction below baseline by 2030*

New construction projects targets are:

- *80% energy consumption reduction below baseline by 2020*
- *90% energy consumption reduction below baseline by 2025*
- *100% energy consumption reduction below baseline (carbon neutral) by 2030*

4. What baseline does BTV 2030 use to measure progress towards 2030 energy reduction targets?

BTV 2030 used 2003 regional energy use¹ data to establish the Burlington baselines for a variety of building types, based on space use.

Members compare their building's EUI to the Burlington baseline EUI of similar buildings in 2003 to understand where they are relative to the targets. The BTV 2030 team helps members understand how their buildings are performing relative to the appropriate Burlington baseline and track progress towards 2030 energy reduction targets.

¹ Baselines were developed using the 2003 version of the Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey and were modified to reflect Burlington's colder climate.

5. I have been improving my buildings for years, if I join now, will I get credit for the work that I have already done?

Yes! The work completed to date will lower your building's energy use intensity (EUI). Your building's current EUI will reflect the upgrades made to date and will result in your building performing better than it would have had you not undertaken those improvements.

6. I am concerned that a poor benchmarking result might be due to something beyond my control. I do not want bad press if I have a building that isn't as efficient as desirable.

Not to worry, all benchmarking results are confidential unless members choose to share them.

That means you can take the time to understand your results, make an action plan and determine what – if any – information you want to share.