

PE8 Action: Benchmarking - Large Private Buildings

12 Points

A. Why is this action important?

Creating demand for green jobs is an important way to support a green economy. One way to increase that demand is to require energy benchmarking for private buildings, which requires owners of buildings over a certain size to benchmark their energy use and publicly disclose the data using the [US EPA Energy Star Portfolio Manager tool](#). Building energy benchmarking involves tracking building energy use (entering it into Portfolio Manager), measuring performance over time, and then comparing building performance against similar buildings and against expected performance under the same climatic conditions. Such tracking helps building owners and managers identify opportunities to cut energy waste, make smarter decisions, drive continuous improvement, and quantify energy savings.

B. How to implement this action

This action awards Climate Smart Communities (CSC) certification points for the successful completion of the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities high-impact action called Benchmarking – Large Private Buildings. This action is applicable only to large cities, towns, and villages that are over 40,000 in population.

This action involves the formal adoption and implementation of benchmarking legislation that requires monitoring and reporting of energy use in private buildings larger than 25,000 square feet. To develop the details of this legislation, municipalities should consider forming a task force of government staff and external experts, especially those representing local real estate developers and building owners.

In addition, the legislation must establish the system for tracking and annually disclosing the benchmarking information using Portfolio Manager. The benchmarking legislation may have been adopted at any time prior to the application date, but must be currently in effect at the time of submittal to receive points for this action. The model legislation available via the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Benchmarking Toolkit accomplishes the above recommendations. This toolkit of resources is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec. Municipalities interested in this action can receive free technical assistance from the Clean Energy Communities Coordinators; contact cec@nyserda.ny.gov for more information.

C. Time frame, project costs, and resource needs

Implementing an energy benchmarking requirement can take approximately a year to develop and adopt the legislation, train building owners, and establish any enforcement policies and procedures. Local governments will likely incur some costs in managing and implementing the program, and building owners may incur additional costs in implementing new processes to track energy data.

D. Which local governments implement this action? Which departments within the local government are most likely to have responsibility for this?

Only large cities, towns, and villages (over 40,000 in population) are eligible for points under this action. The planning or buildings department will most likely be responsible for implementing this action.

E. How to obtain points for this action

Twelve CSC points are available for local governments that submit documentation from NYSERDA showing completion of this action.

F. What to submit

Submit a copy of the approval from NYSERDA that indicates completion of the Clean Energy Communities high-impact action called Benchmarking – Large Private Buildings.

All CSC action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submittals should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

G. Links to additional resources or best practices

- The NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Benchmarking Toolkit is available at www.nyserda.ny.gov/cec.
- [US EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager](#)
- [US EPA ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, Videos and Training Resources](#)
- [Seattle, WA, Energy Benchmarking and Reporting Program](#)
- [District of Columbia, Energy Benchmarking](#)
- [New York, NY, Benchmarking](#)
- [Minneapolis, MN, Building Rating and Disclosure Policy](#)

H. Recertification requirements

The recertification requirements are the same as the initial certification requirements.