

## Benchmarking Defined

Following the old saying “you manage what you measure,” benchmarking is the on-going review of building energy performance compared to itself, as well as other buildings of similar size, to ensure a building is using energy and water as anticipated over time and relative to peers. This review can help identify opportunities for saving energy and water.

## Why Benchmarking Matters

By improving the energy efficiency in buildings, we can create jobs, improve public health, and reduce our carbon footprint, all while making our businesses more financially stable and making Des Moines a more attractive market for business development. Commercial buildings in Des Moines are responsible for 35% of city-wide emissions. This represents a significant opportunity for energy and cost savings within the city, as it is estimated that the average commercial building wastes 30% of its energy consumption due to inefficiencies. Benchmarking is a proven, flexible, and free first step for buildings to understand their energy use and identify opportunities to cut energy waste and save money. In cities that require benchmarking, buildings have realized annual energy savings of 2-3%.

## Benchmarking is Consistent with the City's Climate and Energy Goals

In 2007, the City Council adopted the Energy Efficiency and Environmental Enhancement Policy that set a goal of reducing GHG emissions 25% by 2020, and required all new City facilities to be constructed at a LEED standard or higher. In 2015, Mayor Frank Cownie signed the Compact of Mayors, formalizing the City of Des Moines commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Across the country, leading cities have been embracing building benchmarking as a best practice to help them meet their climate change goals.

Benchmarking provides most buildings with a 1-100 energy performance score, which helps building owners and occupants review their energy use and identify opportunities to save money, strengthen their brand, and stimulate the local economy.

### Energy benchmarking is:

- A relatively fast and easy process, taking, on average, 4-8 hours once per year
- Uses the free, web-based ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager tool to report data, meaning that there are no out-of-pocket expenses to comply with the policy.
- MidAmerican Energy provides forms that facilitate owners and managers of commercial and multifamily buildings with multiple meters to access whole-building aggregate energy data.

The logo for 'ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager' features the 'ENERGY STAR' logo in blue above the text 'PortfolioManager' in a larger, bold, blue font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is present at the end of the text.

[https://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/publications/pubdocs/C+I\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/publications/pubdocs/C+I_brochure.pdf)

<https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/about-us/how-can-we-help-you/benchmark-energy-use/benchmarking>





## Leading by Example

The City of Des Moines is leading by example with the following internal actions:

- Benchmarking energy and water use in the largest and most often occupied buildings (Q3-4 2017)
- Measuring energy and water efficiency and developing a municipal building energy efficiency plan (Q1-2 2018)
- Evaluating City Building Code for compliance to the Energy Code (Q2-3 2018)
- Exploring Energy Efficiency Financing

## ENERGIZE DES MOINES Building Energy and Water Challenge

In November 2017 the City of Des Moines launches Energize Des Moines, an energy and water efficiency challenge contest for buildings above 25,000sf in multiple categories. Building owners and managers benchmark energy use through October, 2017; conduct energy and water assessments, audits, retro-commissioning, and HVAC upgrades; benchmark again through October, 2018; awards and public recognition will be announced in December, 2018.

During the Challenge monthly or bimonthly sector networking and education events will be held with presentations on best practices, success stories, emerging technologies, energy efficiency financing, and policy. With continuing sponsorship Energize Des Moines will continue through 2020, documenting the multiple benefits of energy saved, money saved, GHG emissions reduced/prevented, and jobs stimulated.

## Benefits of a Benchmarking and Transparency Policy

- **Building owners and managers** can use benchmarking data to improve their building's performance, enhance building value, and save operating dollars. High efficiency properties have been demonstrated to achieve higher rental prices, sales prices, and occupancy rates than less-efficient properties.
- **Policymakers and utilities** can better identify and develop valuable policies, programs, and financial tools and direct those to the areas of the market with the greatest opportunities for energy savings.
- **Citywide**, energy efficiency policy can lead to green job creation, reduce strain on the electric grid, keep the Des Moines property market competitive, and initiate progress toward the City's climate and energy goals

