Columbia Gas of Ohio
A NiSource Company

Automated Benchmarking Portal User Guide

For Columbia Gas of Ohio Commercial Customers

Automated Benchmarking Portal Process Overview:

(A high-level overview of the steps in the process covered in depth in this User Guide)

Step 1:
In ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager® (ESPM)

Prepare your ESPM property
- Create your ESPM property

Step 2:
In Automated Benchmarking Portal (ABP)

Register your user and link all accounts
- Register for the Automated Benchmarking Portal
- Add all Columbia Gas of Ohio accounts that YOU pay for with your building

Step 3:
In Automated Benchmarking Portal (ABP)

Send data from portal to ESPM
- Complete Contact connection with Columbia Gas of Ohio Web Services
- Enable property sharing for Data Exchange
- Link your portal buildings with ESPM Building IDs
- Confirm usage data transfer

WHO CAN USE THE AUTOMATED BENCHMARKING PORTAL?

- Commercial customers of Columbia Gas of Ohio are eligible to use the portal

- At this time, residential customers, including those with multi-family buildings such as condos and apartments are **not** eligible.

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Step 1: Prepare your property in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®

Step 1.1 Log in to ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager

• Login or create a new account at https://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/pm

Step 1.2 Create your property in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®

• If you have not previously benchmarked, set up your property in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®, instructions can be found at:

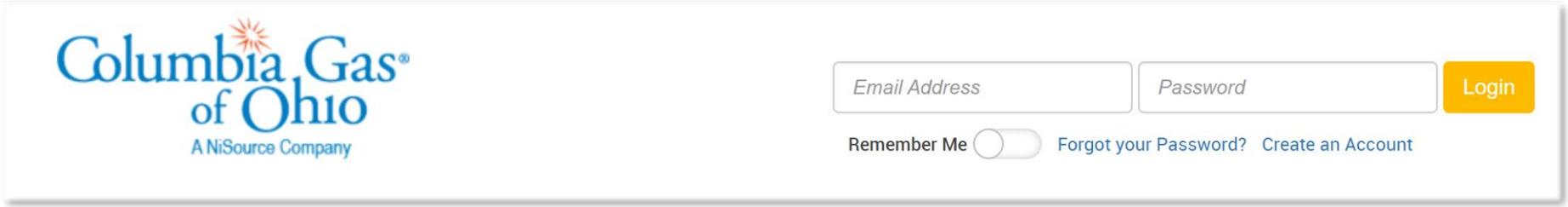
https://www.energystar.gov/buildings/tools-and-resources/how_set_your_property_portfolio_manager

Helpful Hint - You do NOT need to set up gas meters in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. These meters will be automatically created when you send your gas data from the Automated Benchmarking Portal to ESPM by following the instructions in this user guide.

Step 2: Register your Automated Benchmarking Portal user and link all accounts

Step 2.1 Access the portal here: https://benchmarking.columbiagasohio.com/

Helpful Hint: Click 'Create an Account' to register with your Columbia Gas of Ohio account:

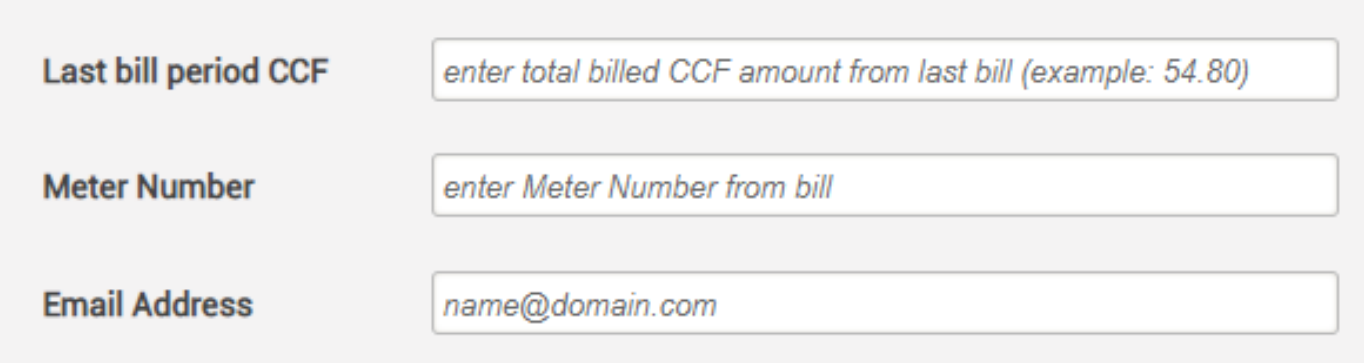


Step 2.2 Register to use the Automated Benchmarking Portal

- Use your Columbia Gas of Ohio bill and an email address to register for the Automated Benchmarking Portal.
- Gather the Columbia Gas of Ohio bills for the properties you'd like to benchmark.

- Use the following from your bill to register:
  - **Last Bill Period CCF**
  - **Meter Number**

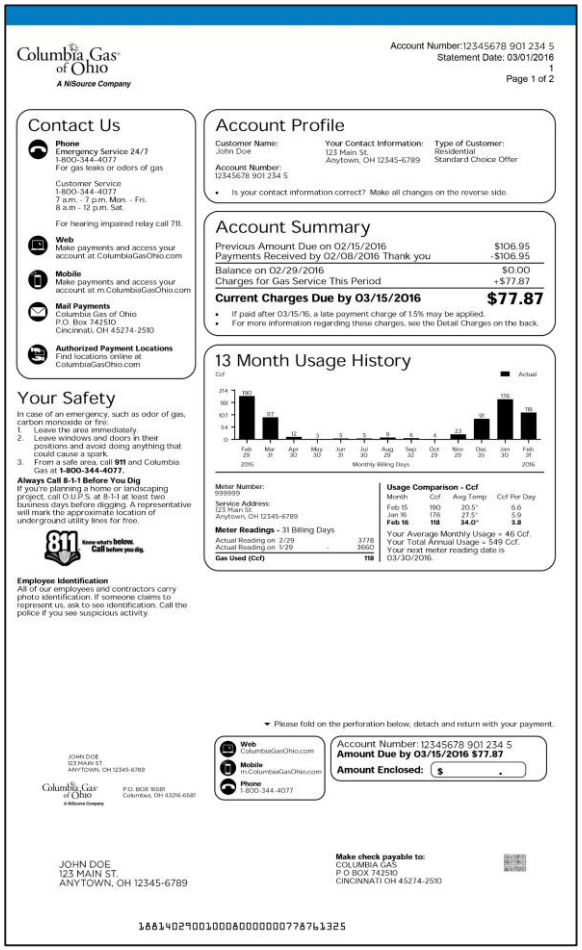
Helpful Hint - For example, if the current month is March, use the usage amount from your February bill as the Last Bill Period CCF value.



See the following page for guidance and visual instructions on locating required information for the registration form fields.

Step 2

- Register your portal user and link all accounts



Columbia Gas of Ohio
A NiSource Company

Account Number:12345678 901 234 5
Statement Date: 03/01/2016
Page 1 of 2

Contact Us

Phone
Emergency Service 24/7
1-800-344-4077
For gas leaks or odors of gas

Customer Service
1-800-344-4077
7 a.m. - 7 p.m. Mon. - Fri.
8 a.m - 12 p.m. Sat.

For hearing impaired relay call 711.

Web
Make payments and access your account at ColumbiaGasOhio.com

Mobile
Make payments and access your account at m.ColumbiaGasOhio.com

Mail Payments
Columbia Gas of Ohio
P.O. Box 742510
Cincinnati, OH 45274-2510

Authorized Payment Locations
Find locations online at ColumbiaGasOhio.com

Your Safety

In case of an emergency, such as odor of gas, carbon monoxide or fire:
1. Leave the area immediately.
2. Leave windows and doors in their positions and avoid doing anything that could cause a spark.
3. From a safe area, call **911** and Columbia Gas at **1-800-344-4077.**

Always Call 8-1-1 Before You Dig
If you're planning a home or landscaping project, call O.U.P.S. at 8-1-1 at least two business days before digging. A representative will mark the approximate location of underground utility lines for free.

811 Know what's below. Call before you dig.

Employee Identification
All of our employees and contractors carry photo identification. If someone claims to represent us, ask to see identification. Call the police if you see suspicious activity.

Account Profile

Customer Name: John Doe
Account Number: 12345678 901 234 5
Your Contact Information: 123 Main St. Anytown, OH 12345-6789
Type of Customer: Residential Standard Choice Offer

- Is your contact information correct? Make all changes on the reverse side.

Account Summary

Previous Amount Due on 02/15/2016	$106.95
Payments Received by 02/08/2016 Thank you	-$106.95
Balance on 02/29/2016	$0.00
Charges for Gas Service This Period	+$77.87
Current Charges Due by 03/15/2016	**$77.87**

- If paid after 03/15/16, a late payment charge of 1.5% may be applied.
- For more information regarding these charges, see the Detail Charges on the back.

13 Month Usage History

Ccf — Actual

214 / 161 / 107 / 54 / 0

190 | 97 | 12 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 23 | 91 | 176 | 118

Feb 29 | Mar 31 | Apr 30 | May 30 | Jun 31 | Jul 30 | Aug 29 | Sep 32 | Oct 29 | Nov 29 | Dec 35 | Jan 30 | Feb 31

2015 — Monthly Billing Days — 2016

Meter Number: 999999
Service Address: 123 Main St. Anytown, OH 12345-6789

Meter Readings - 31 Billing Days

Actual Reading on 2/29		3778
Actual Reading on 1/29	-	3660
Gas Used (Ccf)		**118**

Usage Comparison - Ccf

Month	Ccf	Avg Temp	Ccf Per Day
Feb 15	190	20.5°	6.6
Jan 16	176	27.5°	5.9
Feb 16	**118**	**34.0°**	**3.8**

Your Average Monthly Usage = 46 Ccf.
Your Total Annual Usage = 549 Ccf.
Your next meter reading date is 03/30/2016.

▼ Please fold on the perforation below, detach and return with your payment.

Web ColumbiaGasOhio.com
Mobile m.ColumbiaGasOhio.com
Phone 1-800-344-4077

Account Number: 12345678 901 234 5
Amount Due by 03/15/2016 $77.87
Amount Enclosed: $.

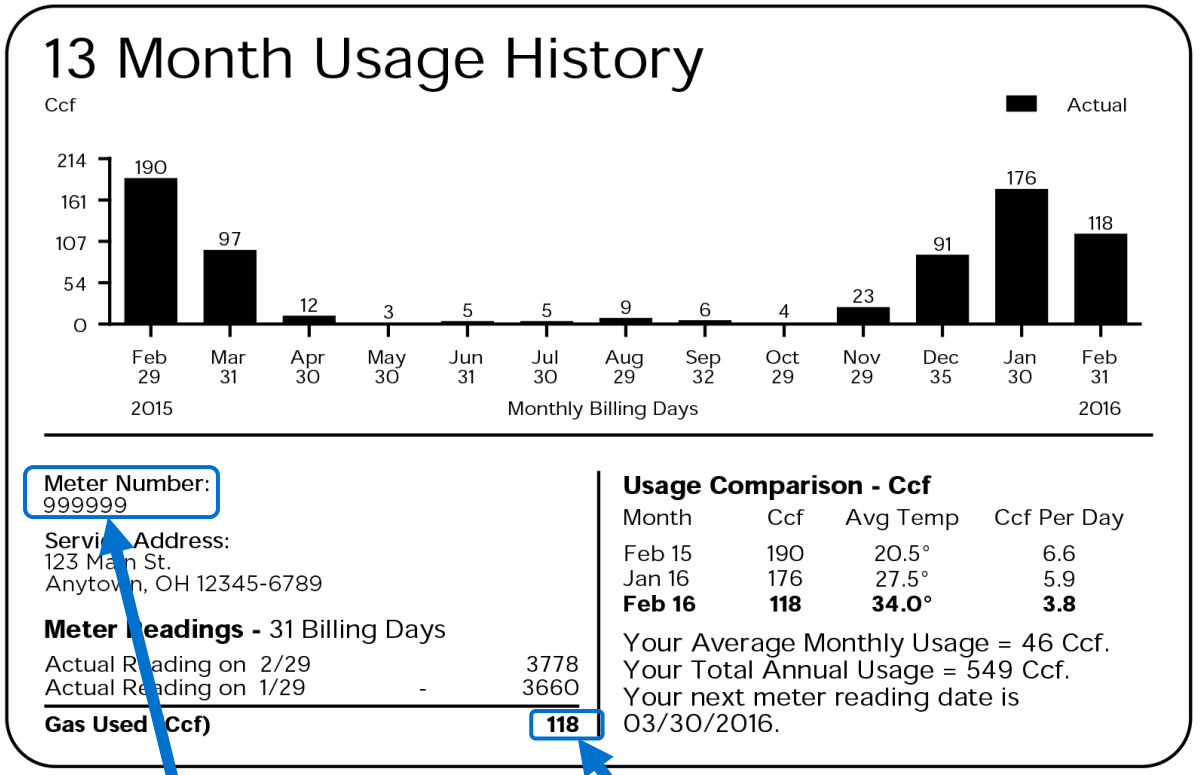
JOHN DOE
123 MAIN ST.
ANYTOWN, OH 12345-6789

Columbia Gas of Ohio
P.O. BOX 16681
Columbus, OH 43216-6581

JOHN DOE
123 MAIN ST.
ANYTOWN, OH 12345-6789

Make check payable to:
COLUMBIA GAS
P O BOX 742510
CINCINNATI OH 45274-2510

1881402900100068000000778761325



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Your Average Monthly Usage = 46 Ccf.
Your Total Annual Usage = 549 Ccf.
Your next meter reading date is 03/30/2016.

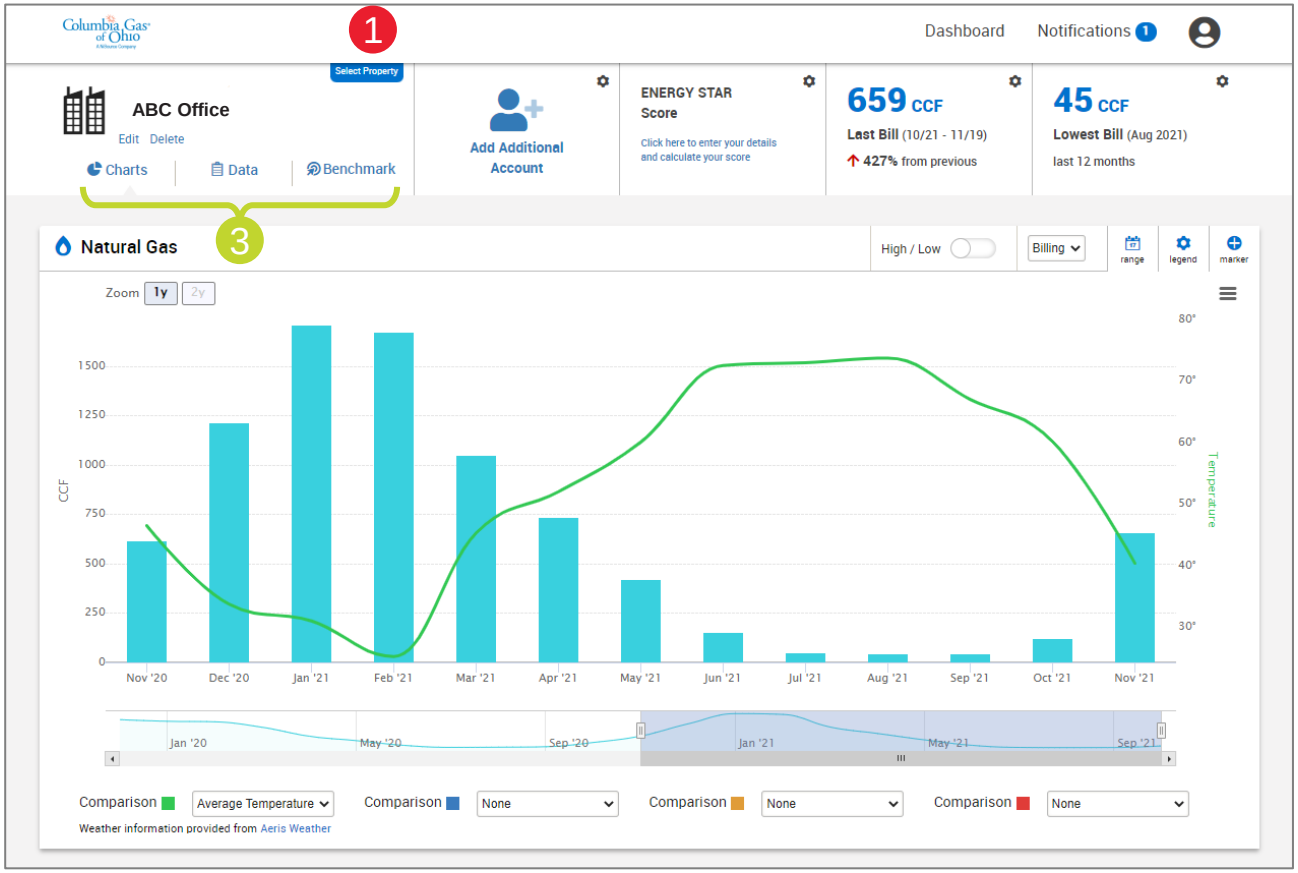
METER NUMBER

Use the listed Meter Number for the account and service location(s) you would like to register. Number of characters may vary.

LAST BILL PERIOD CCF

Use the listed Gas Used (CCF) to populate the 'Last bill period CCF' field on the Registration form..

Step 2.3 Get oriented with the Automated Benchmarking Portal Dashboard



1. Use ‘Select Property’ dropdown control to select and view properties and accounts

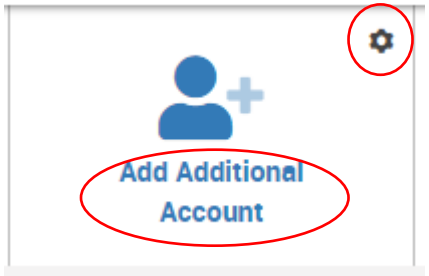
2. Use Widget panels to add accounts, connect to ESPM, and get information about your billed usage

3. Navigate between Charts, Data, and Benchmark pages from the Dashboard

4. Use Charts and Data Dashboard pages to visualize/explore billed usage trends and make comparisons to weather variables and historical usage

Step 2.4 Add additional accounts (if applicable)

- If you want to add another account (i.e., different meter number for a separate address), please follow the directions to **add additional accounts**.

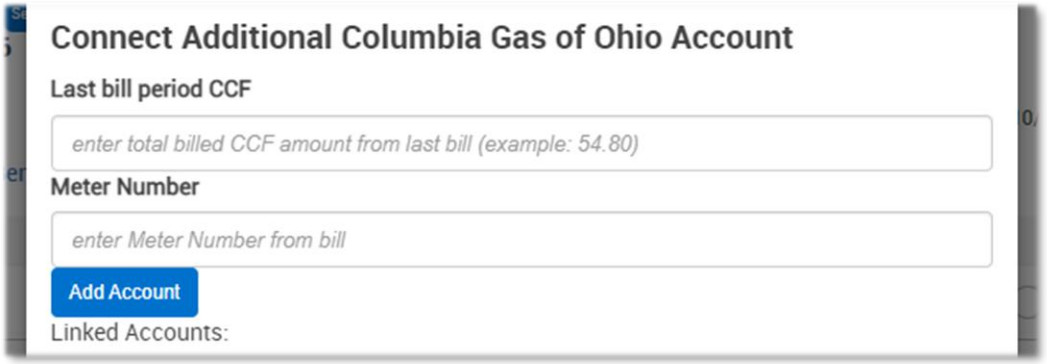


Step 2.4.1 Click on the 'Add Additional Account' widget link in the widget panel above the Dashboard.

Helpful Hint - If you do not see the "Add Additional Account" option, click on the gear: ⚙ symbol on any of the widgets to display all available options, and select the "Add Additional Account" widget.

The system will preserve your widget setting preferences for future login sessions.

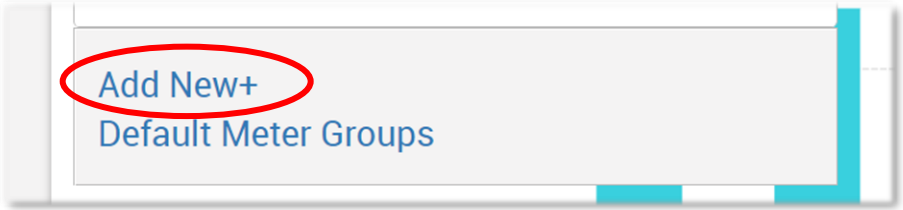
Step 2.4.2 Provide the last bill period CCF amount and Meter Number for at least one meter associated with the separate address then click 'Add Account'.



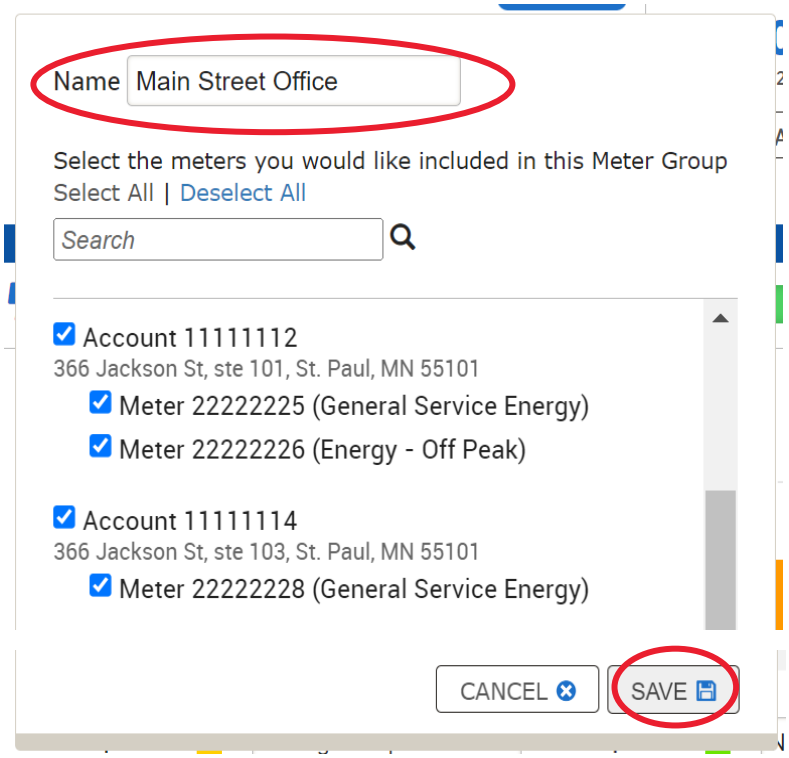
Step 2.5 Combine multiple meters to define a building (if applicable)

- If your building has multiple meters for gas service delivery, you can use the portal's Meter Group feature to combine all meters into one property for connection and data transfer to ESPM.

Step 2.5.1 Use the Select Property **tab and choose the 'Add New+' option at the bottom of the form:**



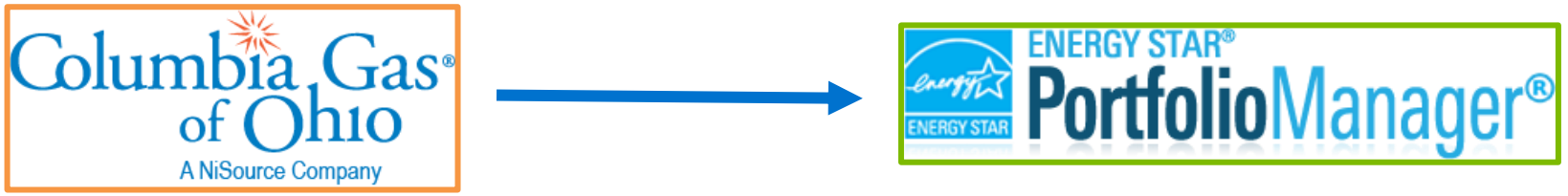
Step 2.5.2 Enter a 'Name' for your property and select individual meters to be grouped for the building, then click 'Save'.



Helpful Hint – You can use the search (🔍) field to limit the results displayed for meter selection by typing in values for street number/name, meter number, etc.

Step 3: Send Data from the Automated Benchmarking Portal to ESPM

- To automatically transfer monthly billed usage data from the portal you must first establish a connection between your Energy Star Portfolio Manager (ESPM) account and Columbia Gas of Ohio's web services account on ESPM.
- After the connection is in place you will be able to share your ESPM Property with the portal and initiate automated data transfer.

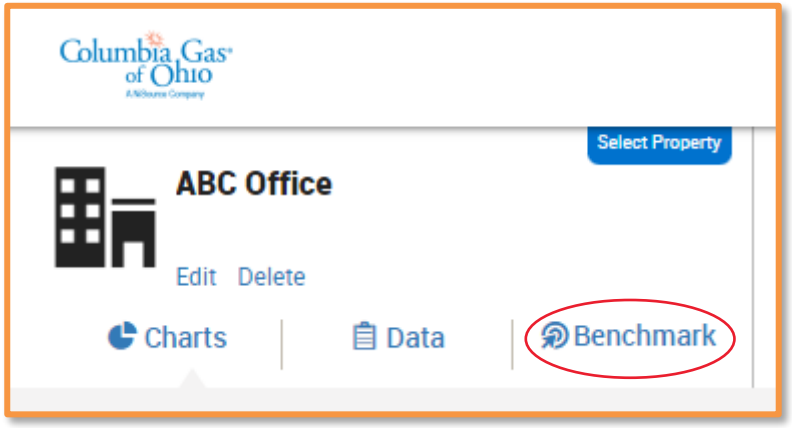


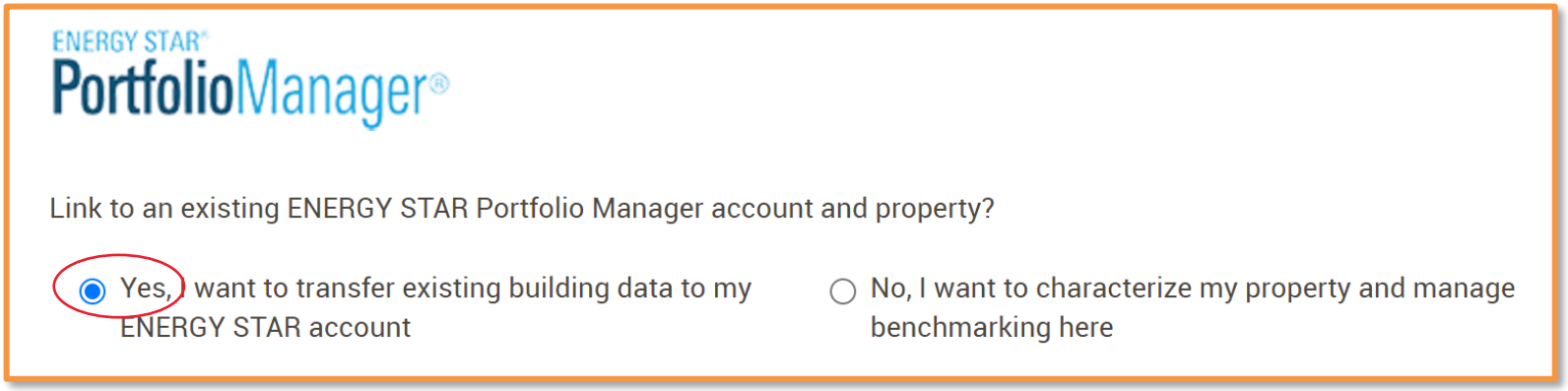
Automated Benchmarking Portal **ESPM**

Helpful Hint - In the following pages, images outlined in Orange are from the Automated Benchmarking Portal, and images outlined in Green are from the Energy Star Portfolio Manager (ESPM) site.

Step 3.1 Initiate connection to your ESPM account

- Select Benchmark from the Automated Benchmarking Portal Dashboard
- Select the radio button to answer ‘Yes’



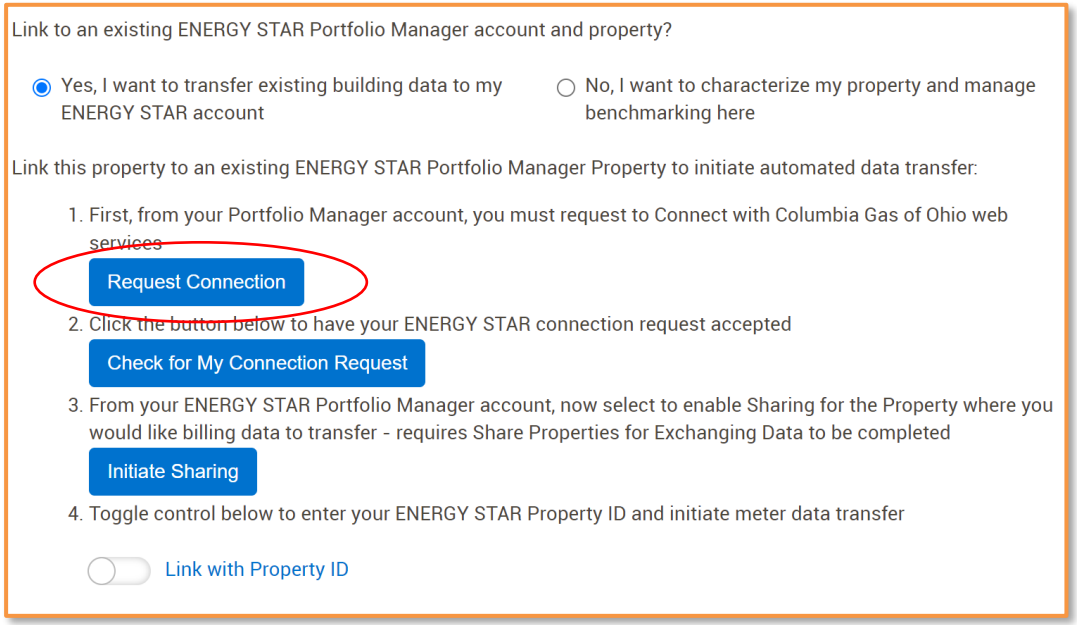


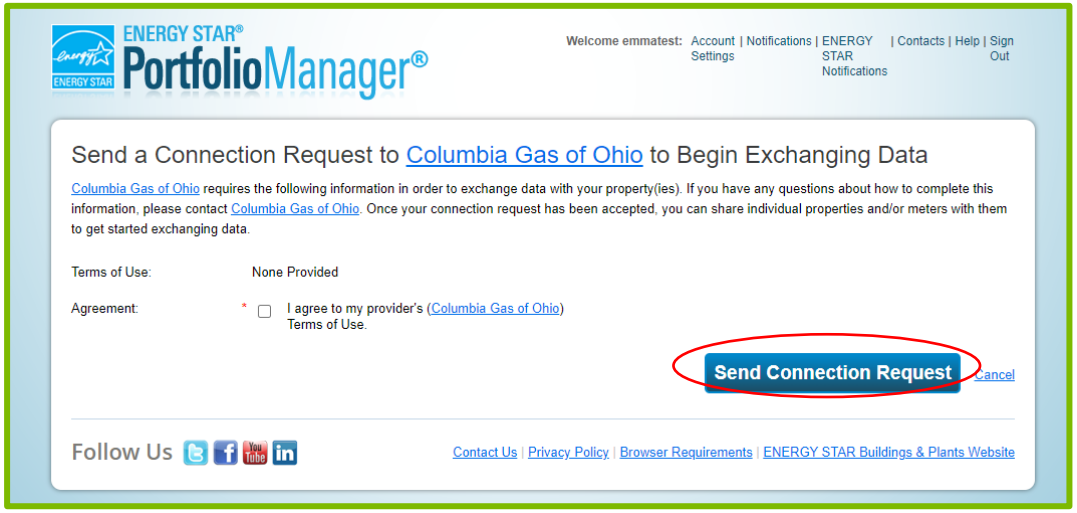
Step 3.2 Send and check for connection request

- Click on the 'Request Connection' button to open the Automated Benchmarking Portal's Connection Request page on the ESPM website. This will open as a new tab on your web browser.

Helpful Hint – If you are not currently logged on to the ESPM site, you may first be prompted to enter your username and password before you are transferred to the Connection Request page.

- Click 'Send Connection Request'

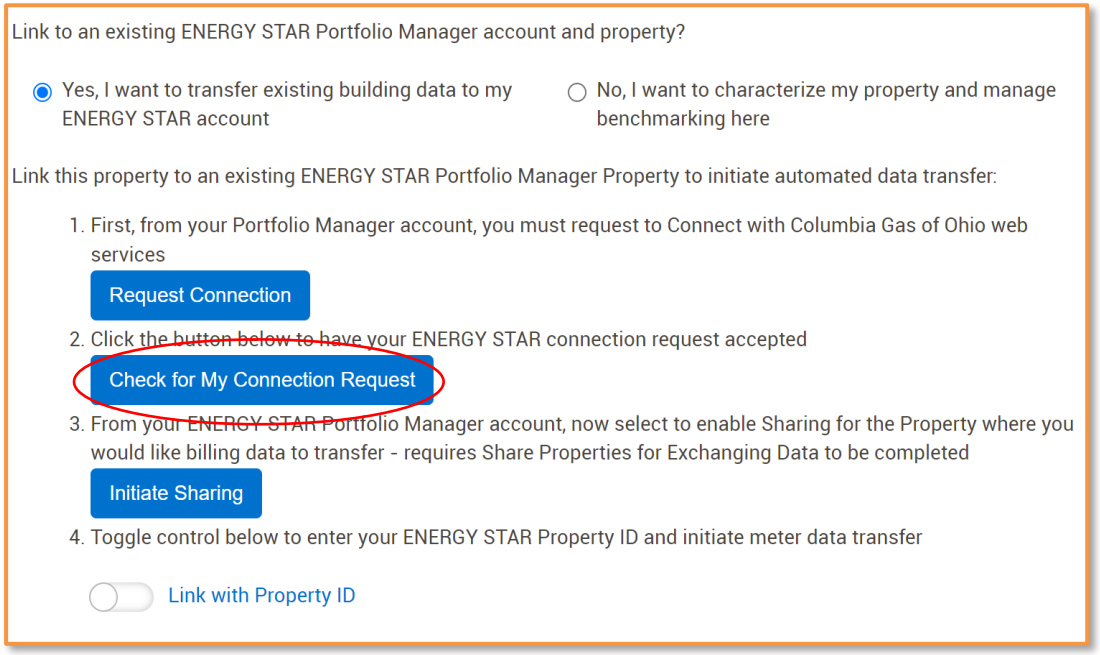




Step 3.2.1 Return to the Automated Benchmarking Portal (by selecting the tab on your web browser)

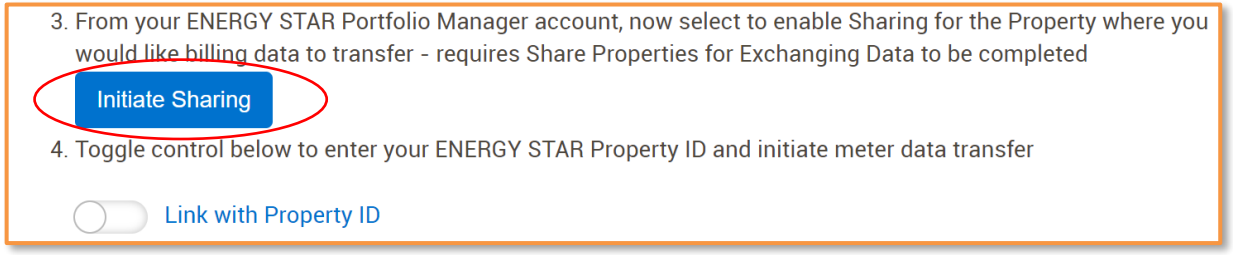
- Click ‘Check for My Connection Request’

Helpful Hint - A green checkmark will appear to indicate that the system has accepted any submitted and pending connection requests.



Step 3.3 Initiate ESPM Property Sharing

- Click ‘Initiate Sharing’ to link to the Share Properties for Exchanging Data page on the ENERGY STAR web site

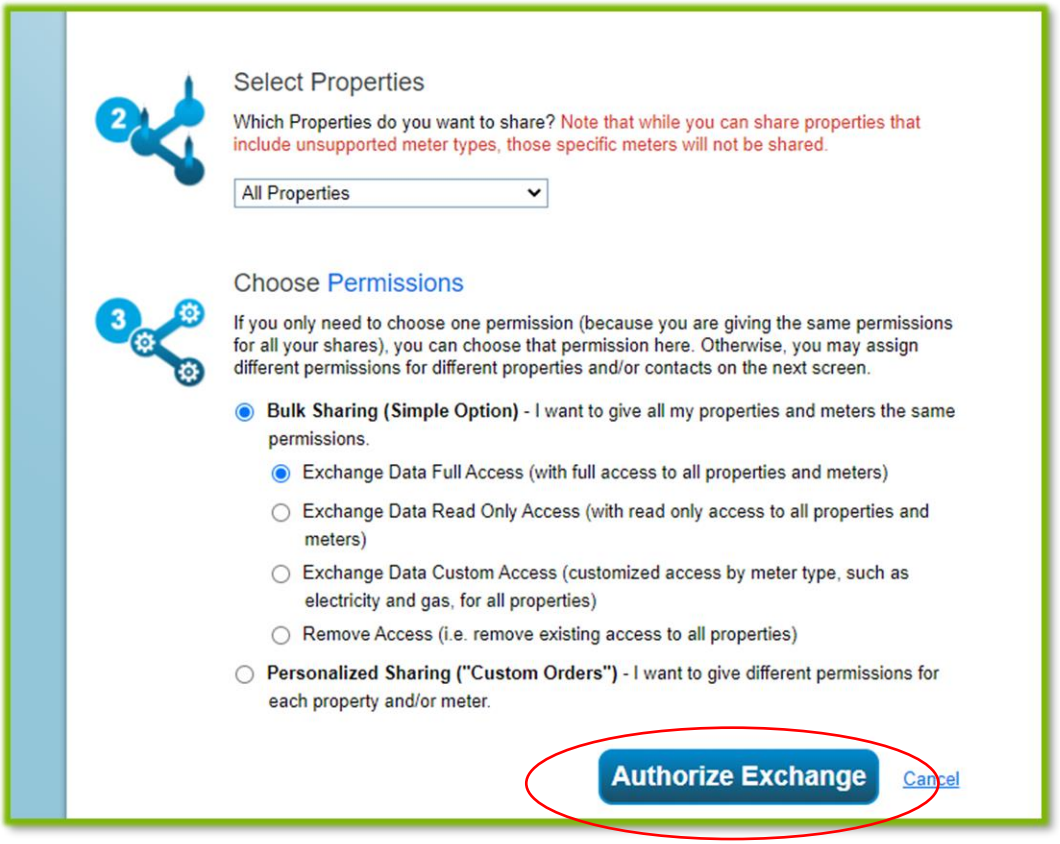


- Complete the form to select ‘One Property’ or ‘All Properties’ to share with Columbia Gas of Ohio

Step 3.4 Set ESPM access permissions

Helpful Hint - The easiest option to ensure successful data transfer is to opt for ‘Bulk Sharing’ and assign ‘Exchange Data Full Access’ permission.

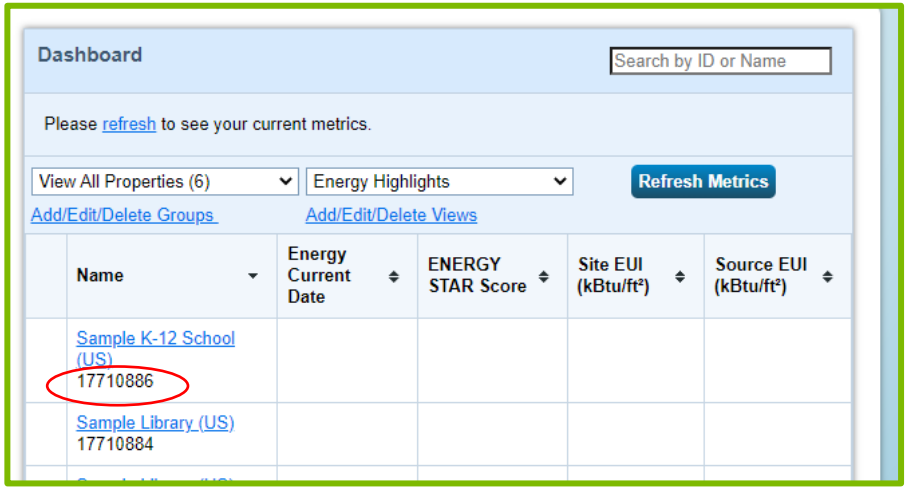
Custom settings may be applied if desired. At a minimum, the Columbia Gas of Ohio contact needs to be assigned ‘Exchange Data Full Access’ permission to Natural Gas Energy Meters and Property Information in order to transfer data to ESPM.



- Click the ‘Authorize Exchange’ button to complete the sharing process

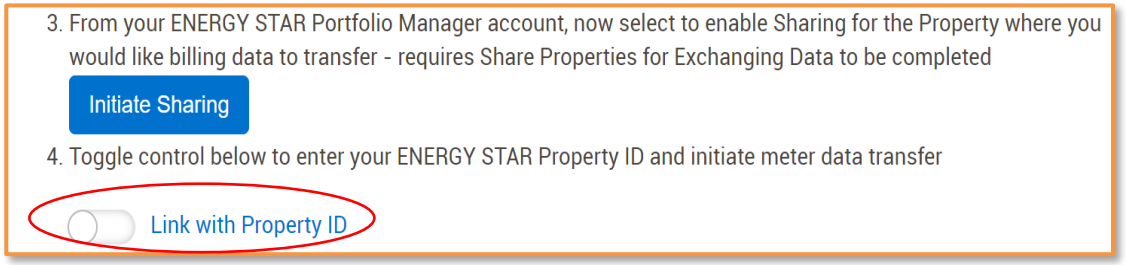
Step 3.5 Link ESPM Property ID to portal property

- Click on the ‘MyPortfolio’ tab to view your ESPM building list



- Find and copy the Property ID for the ESPM property you are trying to link to your Automated Benchmarking Portal property

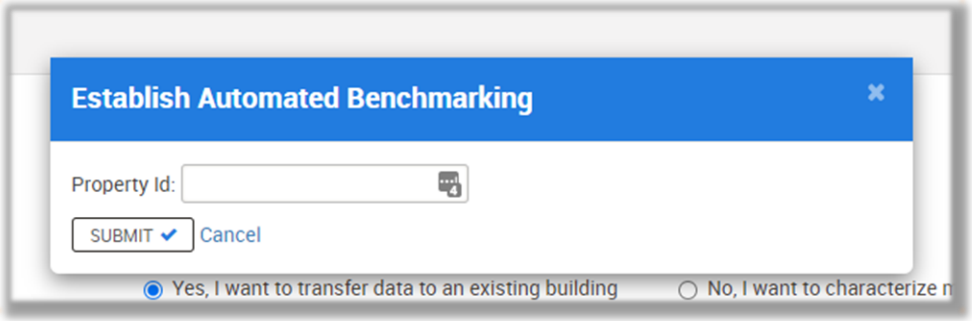
- Return to the Automated Benchmarking Portal and toggle the ‘Link with Property ID’ slider control on



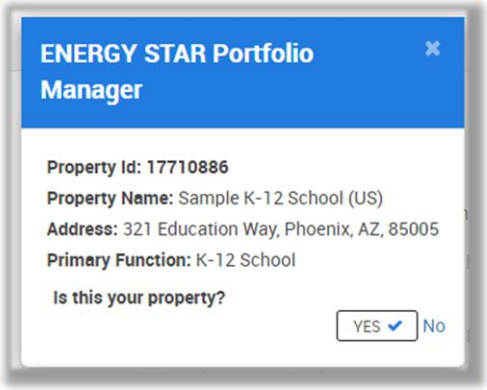
Step 1 | Step 2 | **Step 3:**

- Send Data from Automated Benchmarking Portal to ESPM

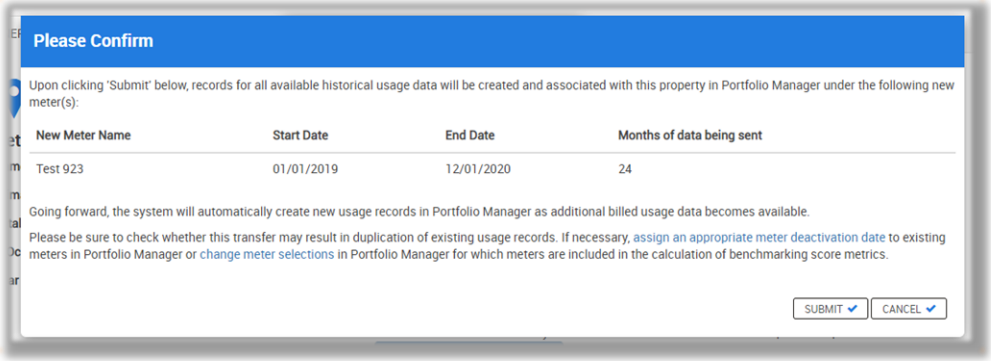
- Enter your building's ESPM Property ID and click 'Submit'



- Confirm your property's information and click 'Yes'



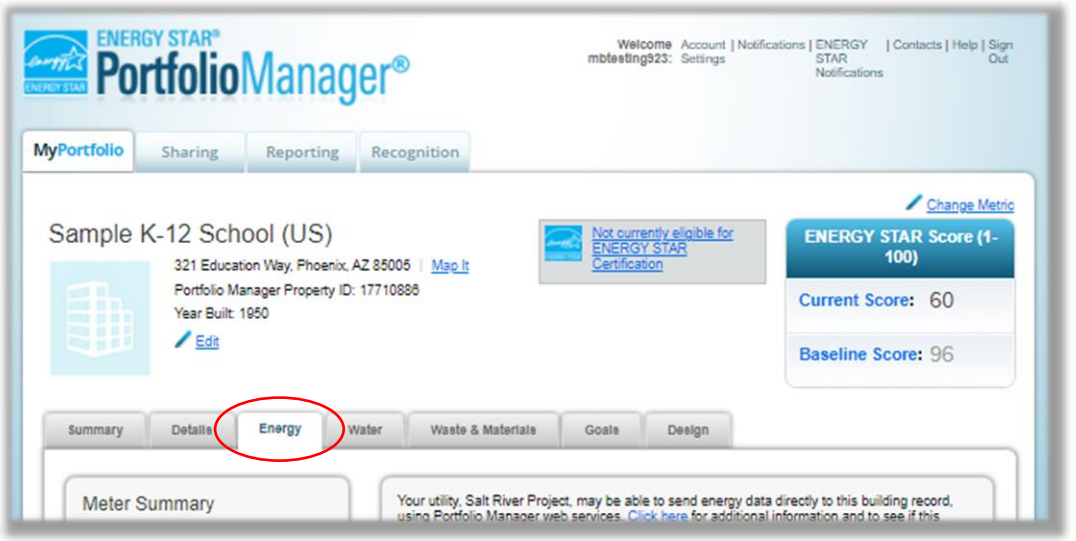
- Confirm the meter data to be transferred and click 'Submit' to initiate data transfer process



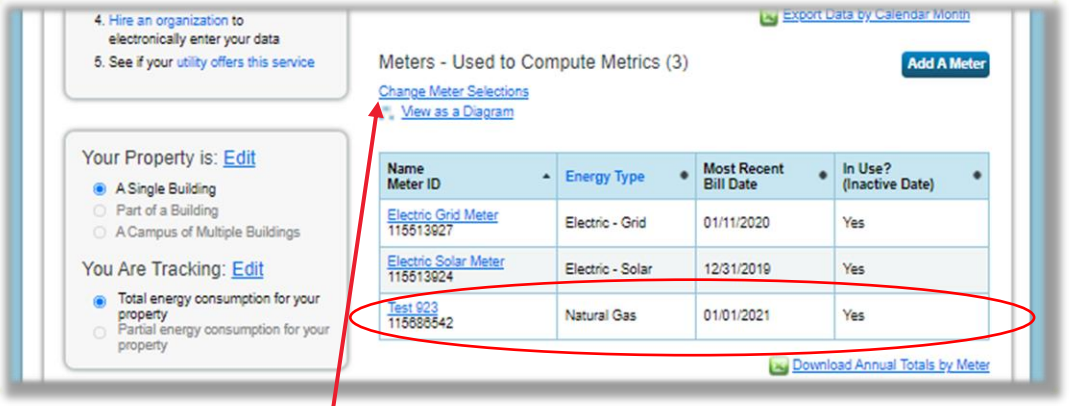
Congratulations! You have now established ongoing automated data transfer to ESPM to facilitate your building benchmarking.

Step 3.6 Confirm data transfer to ESPM

- Return to your ESPM account and select your target property from the MyPortfolio dashboard



- Select the 'Energy' tab for your property to confirm that the new Automated Benchmarking Portal meter is showing with recent bill information in the 'Meters' table



Helpful Hint - In the case that your billed natural gas usage had been previously entered manually on a separate ESPM natural gas meter, it may be necessary to use the 'Change Meter Selections' to only include the new Automated Benchmarking Portal meter and avoid double entry of historical usage. This is because the Automated Benchmarking Portal will transfer a full history of billing data to ESPM.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Problem: I am trying to add an account, but the Automated Benchmarking Portal keeps giving me an error message (e.g., “Meter number or Last Bill Period CCF does not match our records”).

Solution:

- Check that you are using the correct information on your bills – see Page 6 of user guide for a visual guide for where to find the correct information.
- Last Bill Period CCF: Make sure you are entering the consumption value from the last bill period on your bill. For example, if the current month is March, use the usage amount from your February bill.

Problem: The Automated Benchmarking Portal does not recognize my ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager® property.

Solution:

- Check that you have shared the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager® property with Columbia Gas of Ohio.
- See Step 3.3 on Page 12 of this User Guide.

Problem: Columbia Gas of Ohio has not accepted my PROPERTY SHARE request in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®.

Solution:

- You do NOT need to wait for the property share request to be manually accepted.
- You can move on immediately to the next step, and your share request will be accepted automatically.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONT.

Problem: After I click submit when sending my property's energy use data to ESPM, the screen freezes. No gas meters were created in ESPM, or I see that a meter was created, but no usage data was transferred.

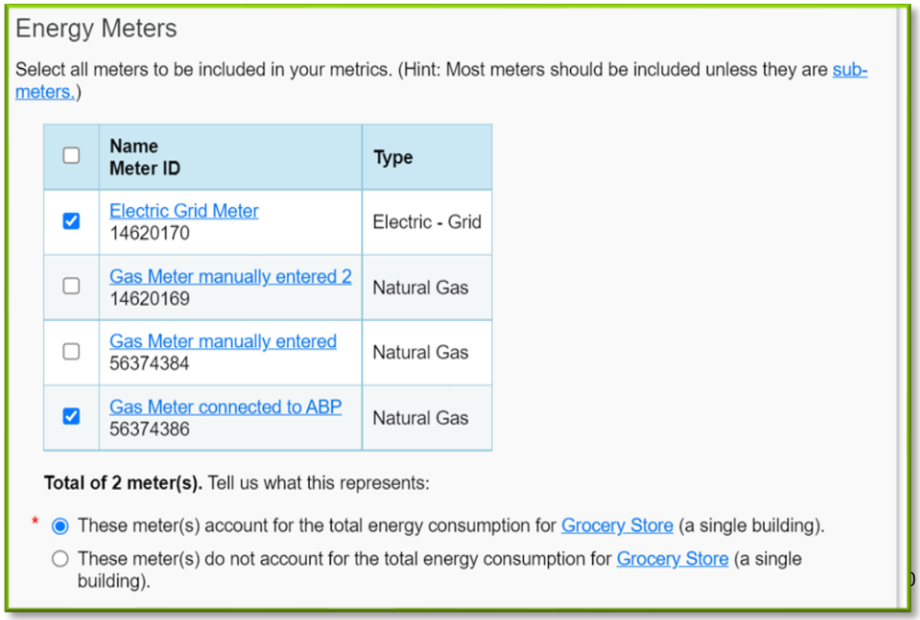
Solution: The transfer process was interrupted, and you must correct it by following these steps:

- In ESPM, delete any gas meters that have been created by the Automated Benchmarking Portal.
- In the Automated Benchmarking Portal, on the property tab, toggle the "Use Existing Account" slider back to the left.
- Restart Step 3 beginning on page 9 of this User guide.
- After clicking "Submit", PLEASE BE PATIENT AS THE DATA TRANSFERS AND DO NOT REFRESH YOUR SCREEN, EVEN IF THE SCREEN APPEARS TO BE FROZEN. Depending on the size of your building, the transfer process make take up to 10 minutes.

Problem: My data appears do be duplicating in ESPM. What is going on?

Solution:

If you previously had entered usage data into ESPM either manually or through spreadsheet uploads and you've connected the Automated Benchmarking Portal, you may see data duplicates. To prevent this, above the Meters table, click "Change Meter Selection". Then, tick the check box for the meter associated with the Automated Benchmarking Portal and uncheck the meter associated with previously entered data.



CONTACT INFORMATION AND USEFUL LINKS

User Support:

(855) 335-5835

cohbenchmarking@mncee.org

Automated Benchmarking Portal:

https://benchmarking.columbiagasohio.com/

THANK YOU!