BENCHMARKING AND TRANSPARENCY

Buildings are the single-largest user of energy in the United States and can account for **50 percent to 75 percent of total energy consumption** in a city. When we make our buildings more energy efficient, owners and tenants can save money on utilities, businesses can reduce operating costs, and we can all reduce the pollution that threatens our air and climate. The wrinkle? To gain these benefits at scale across our cities, we need to know how energy efficient buildings are and share that information with the community. That's where a benchmarking and transparency policy comes in.

What is benchmarking and transparency?

Benchmarking means tracking the energy use in our buildings. This gives building owners the information they need to become more energy efficient, compare their energy use to similar buildings, and track their progress over time.

Transparency means reporting benchmarking information to the city, which is then shared with the community. Similar to miles-per-gallon ratings on cars or nutrition labels on packaged foods, this fills an information gap in the market, improving consumer choice and rewarding energy efficiency in buildings.

IT WORKS Several U.S. cities with these policies are seeing 3 percent to 8 percent reductions in energy use across participating buildings and saving millions of dollars in energy costs.

CHICAGO

↓5.2%

Energy consumption from 2014 to 2018

↑$15.1

MILLION

Savings per year

MINNEAPOLIS

↓3.4%

Energy consumption from 2014 to 2016

↑$21

MILLION

Savings per year

DENVER

↓4.5%

Energy consumption from 2017 to 2018

↑$13.5

MILLION

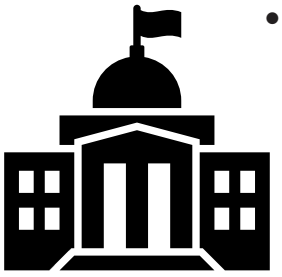
Savings per year

American Cities Climate Challenge

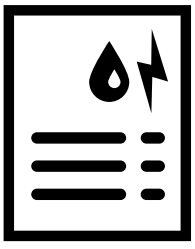
BENCHMARKING AND TRANSPARENCY

Who benefits?

- **Renters and business owners**, who can use benchmarking information to make choices that help them save on monthly energy bills
- **Building owners**, who can improve the value of their properties by improving energy efficiency



- **Local governments** looking to meet their climate goals and improve the efficiency and affordability of the building stock in their communities
- **Businesses and workers** trained in energy-efficiency improvements, electrical work, engineering, and more
- **Utilities** that can use the data to target and improve energy-efficiency programs and provide better customer service



- **Everyone**—we all benefit from cleaner air, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and healthier, more comfortable buildings

By the numbers

- According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), **30 percent** of the energy in buildings is used inefficiently or unnecessarily.

- The most energy-inefficient buildings use **three to seven times** more energy than the most efficient buildings, representing a huge opportunity for investment and resulting savings.
- Buildings that benchmarked consistently saved, on average, **7 percent energy use over a three-year period**, or 2.4 percent annually. For a 500,000-square-foot office building, this could result in cumulative **energy cost savings of $120,000**.
- Between 2010 and 2013, New York created **7,000** energy-efficiency jobs due to increased demand from benchmarking and transparency.

American Cities Climate Challenge