



Saving energy is now the law!

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Running your buildings efficiently always made sense - save money, help the environment and keep residents comfortable. Now there is one additional reason - it's the law!

May 1 is the deadline for the first annual reporting of energy consumption, as per New York City's Local Law 84. Buildings which are 50,000 s/f or larger must report annual energy usage into the Federal Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star benchmarking tool. The EPA's benchmarking tool tracks the amount of energy and water used and assesses the building's overall efficiency based on similar buildings.

As the deadline approaches, it is important to remember two items. First, benchmarking does not have to be a hassle. In fact, the process can be completely automated. For example, US Energy Group's USE-Manager Online software automatically gathers data and arranges precise reporting of water, electric and gas usage. Enhanced benchmarking is accomplished through information provided by the company's USE-Controller, which monitors and controls heating and cooling, and the USE-Verifier Digital Fuel Gauge does the same for oil usage. All three products are part of US Energy Group's Building Energy Management System (BEMS).

The second item to remember is that benchmarking should not just be about legal compliance, it should be about helping your buildings to perform at peak efficiency. Many property managers are planning to use the benchmarking process as a stimulus for building efficiency measures. For example, installing a BEMS can immediately begin reducing fuel usage. For example, the USE-Controller reduces fuel use by 15-35% with a payback within two years, and it begins improving a building's Energy Star Rating at the same time the benchmarking process is automated.

So if you are scurrying to gather up your fuel bills and worrying about entering data, there's definitely a better way. Automate your benchmarking process and use it as the motivation to drive building efficiency.

* EPA - The Federal Environmental Protection Agency's portfolio reporting platform that is required by New York City's Greater Greener Building Plan (Local Law 84).

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