



Michael Shor: Deadline for Local Law 84 extended

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New York City's building owners were given a reprieve late last month as the mayor's office announced that the deadline for this year's Local Law 84 energy benchmarking requirement would be extended from May 1 to August 1.

The move came as building owners scramble to understand the requirements of the new annual benchmarking law, which has just gone into effect this year. Though New York City was originally set to levy fines for non-compliance — \$500 per quarter — beginning May 1, the deadline was pushed back for this year only, giving building owners some additional time to get acclimated with the new law.

As part of mayor Michael Bloomberg's Greener Greater Building Plan (GGBP), Local Law 84 requires all city owners of buildings greater than 50,000 s/f to benchmark the past year's energy use for their building. The estimated 20,000 qualifying buildings' owners are required to enter their building's complete energy use data for each utility type consumed into the EPA's Portfolio Manager system, an online data collection tool.

Once required data is entered into the system, a standardized report is generated that assigns the building a numerical Energy Use Intensity score between 0 and 100, with any score over 75 considered "good" and eligible for Energy Star certification. This report is then submitted electronically to the city to satisfy the yearly benchmarking requirement.

In order to properly benchmark, owners must have access to all of the prior year's energy use data for each utility type. Con Edison offers a service to provide a whole building's energy use data for a nominal fee, but building owners may have to consult their own records for information on other sources of energy. Data collection and aggregation can be a time-consuming process, but there are numerous consultancies which offer services to assist in benchmarking. The city also set up a Benchmarking Help Center through their 311 service to assist owners and clear up any confusion.

Energy benchmarking is just part the city's plan to increase energy efficiency and improve sustainability. Benchmarking will be used in conjunction with the other Local Laws of the GGBP that are set to go into effect in the coming years which require energy audits and lighting upgrades and make changes to the city's energy code.

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