



Paul Alders - Local Law 84: Greener, Greater Buildings Plan

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N.Y.C.'s building energy efficiency program, the Greener, Greater Buildings Plan, is a major part of the effort to meet N.Y.C.'s greenhouse-gas reduction target of 30% by 2030. In December 2009, mayor Bloomberg signed the four legislative components of the plan, providing a comprehensive set of efficiency laws.

The four laws address the critical area of energy use in existing private and public sector buildings. Local Laws 85, 86 and 87 focus on the N.Y.C. Energy Code, energy audits and retro-commissioning, and lighting upgrades and sub-metering. Local Law 84, the Energy Benchmarking law, is the one that everybody's talking about right now. It aims to improve the energy (electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, steam) and water efficiency of N.Y.C.'s largest existing buildings.

All eligible property owners¹ must comply with Local Law 84's requirement to report on (benchmark) the annual energy and water use of their buildings through an online tool² called Portfolio Manager, which is maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Once the initial data is in Portfolio Manager, the tool allows you to streamline a building or property portfolio's energy and water data, tracking key consumption areas, performance and cost information.

The new legislation applies to residential and commercial buildings larger than 50,000 gross s/f, two or more buildings on the same tax lot totaling more than 100,000 gross s/f, or two or more buildings held in condominium ownership and governed by the same board of directors, totaling more than 100,000 gross s/f. The deadline for compliance is August 1. The state has announced an initial \$500 fine for properties that fail to file and additional fines of \$500 per quarter for further violations.

The responsibility falls to the owner, managing body or commercial tenant and may seem daunting at first sight. On the upside, Local Law 84 creates an opportunity to adopt a proactive approach to improving a building's energy efficiency. As energy costs continue to rise annually, it makes good financial sense to focus on energy efficiency measures. Benchmarking allows owners to get an accurate picture of energy and water consumption, to compare these controllable operating expenses with similar buildings and to plan for better future performance. With superior energy performance, a building could achieve an Energy Star rating.

For additional information, contact Paul Alders, Lead Facility Assessor, Faithful+Gould, at 212-252-7070 or paul.alders@fgould.com.

1. To determine if your property is required to meet the guidelines of Local Law 84, go to www.nyc.gov/gggbp or www.urbangreencouncil.org/resources/benchmarking
2. The tool can be accessed at www.energystar.gov/istar/pmpam

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