



## Energy practices and results watched by outsiders

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Buildings in NYC and elsewhere have undergone a "complete 360", when it comes to energy practices, costs, and usage. It used to be that buildings had no motivation to be more energy efficient; costs were just spread out to tenants who just accepted and paid the expenses as part of their rent or lease agreement. But as energy efficiency practices and technologies are available and energy costs are a greater percentage of overall building costs, energy costs have now come into the spotlight. More and more tenants want to know how much of their rent is devoted to paying energy costs and how this can be minimized to save their own costs. The breaking point in NYC may be Local Law 84, which requires large buildings (>50,000 sf) to input their electricity and fuel usage into a database for posting and for public availability for comparisons. Now potential tenants can more easily compare usage and costs that are passed on.

This is all on the heels of growing international pressure on companies from outside advocacy organizations to improve their practices, even in their supply chain and how products are made. Advocacy groups are observing companies and their outsourced manufacturing in farflung countries for environmental, safety, and labor law issues. And with social media so prevalent, it is easy to publicize supposed bad behavior globally.

Getting back to New York, what is a building owner/manager to do? In this information age, data is an important commodity and potential tenants now can compare energy usage and costs from different potential buildings. Energy is becoming an issue to rival location, space, and other parameters. A building's reputation is of extreme importance in this age of almost instant publication of information.

Therefore, there are two things a building owner/manager should do to come out ahead in this changing world. First, it is important that the energy data made available to actual and perspective tenants and the data submitted for LL 84 be accurate. By cutting corners, estimating data, etc., building owners/managers may actually be cheating itself either in terms of usage or reputation. It is therefore important to collect and compile energy data the right way and make sure it is as accurate and complete as possible.

Second, it is important for a building owner/manager to take a deeper look into your energy systems to determine reasonable ways to reduce usage and costs. If an energy audit has not been done in a few years, a quality one will show multiple, proven ways to reduce energy costs. There has literally been a revolution in technology in lighting, windows, insulation, and HVAC to reduce energy usage with reasonable paybacks. Reducing energy usage and costs, given that these costs are now public knowledge, will not only save you money, but also help you attract and keep tenants.

CCES has the experts to help determine your building's true energy usage to comply with LL 84 and LL 87 and to perform a proper energy audit to identify cost-saving options.

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