

MINNEAPOLIS' BENCHMARKING AND DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE

The Minneapolis City Council voted unanimously to pass a [Benchmarking and Disclosure Ordinance](#) on February 8, 2013. All large commercial buildings and many City buildings will be required to report their energy use, which will then be disclosed publicly online to help motivate building owners to implement energy efficiency upgrades.

This ordinance will help Minneapolis meet the City Council's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2015 and by 30% by 2025 compared to 2006 levels. Because commercial and industrial buildings accounted for over 44% of the city's emissions in 2010, improving the level of energy productivity in these buildings is critical to achieving these goals and helping businesses and taxpayers save money and energy.

OVERVIEW OF THE ORDINANCE

Building owners will be required to benchmark the annual energy and water use and greenhouse gas emissions of their buildings using the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. The data will then be transmitted to the City of Minneapolis and, after a grace period, published online.

Scope of the Ordinance's impact:

- Large commercial buildings (over 50,000 square feet) represent over 70% of the total commercial square footage in the city
- This provides significant opportunities for city-wide energy savings
- City officials estimate that the Ordinance will apply to over 600 commercial buildings by 2015

The policy will be phased in over several years, beginning in 2013 for all city-owned buildings over 25,000 square feet, and will ultimately apply to all commercial buildings over 50,000 square feet. The City of Minneapolis is also working with other public sector partners, including the Parks & Recreation Board and the Public Schools, to encourage their participation in the program. The Ordinance does not contain any requirements for implementing energy efficiency projects, but building owners who do not comply with the reporting requirements will be subject to fines.

OTHER SUCCESSES IN MINNEAPOLIS

The city's new Benchmarking and Disclosure Ordinance further cements Minneapolis' reputation as a regional leader on energy efficiency issues. In 2011, the City established a low-interest loan program to help Minneapolis-based businesses finance energy efficiency projects. Minneapolis has also partnered with a local non-profit, the Center for Energy and Environment, to provide [low-cost residential energy audits](#) and energy efficiency upgrades.