

2013 Better Building Federal Award Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Is it required that nominated buildings have metered data for both 2012 and 2013?

A. A building nominated for this competition *must* be using EPA's Portfolio Manager to track energy performance data. It must have a complete data set, which includes total facility Btu from all sources of power and total facility square footage for all months of the preceding year (2012), and must continue to use Portfolio Manager for each competing month of 2013. FEMP will be tracking building energy consumption each month during the competition and posting it on a competition website.

Q. Will energy intensive buildings be competitive against other types of Federal buildings?

A. The winner is not based on gross energy reductions, nor is it based on the lowest energy intensity (Btu/gross square foot). The winner will be decided by the greatest *reduction* in year-over-year energy intensity. In other words, your building's score is measured against your building's performance from last year, so no matter what kind of building you have; every competitor starts the competition on equal footing. The savings are further normalized by building size, so larger buildings have no advantage over smaller buildings. The final results are based on the percentage of energy intensity reduced from the prior fiscal year. This calculation should allow for reasonable competition between different building types.

Q. What if I don't use Portfolio Manager?

A: If you have not used Portfolio Manager in the past, you can still participate in the competition by opening up a Portfolio Manager account, setting up the building you wish to enter, and entering the square footage and utility energy data from last year. Even if you have never used Portfolio Manager before, the process of setting up an account and entering data is remarkably simple. After you have set up an account, you can later choose to explore some of Portfolio Manager's unique tools that help you baseline your facility, measure your carbon footprint, and calculate future savings and investment potential. Use of Portfolio Manager is highly encouraged for Federal agencies. A simple tutorial on setting up an account is available at http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=government.federal_agencies.

Q. Security is a concern to me, and I am reluctant to make energy use data public. Is there a way to participate without publicizing my energy use?

A: The competition website will feature information about the competing buildings, and will track month-to-month savings data. However, the only data necessary to publicly reveal for the competition is energy intensity savings, expressed as a percentage. So at the end of each month and at the end of the year, all the public will see is a percentage that represents the energy intensity savings from the prior year. No data that reveals characteristics about the building, such as square footage or gross energy use, will be revealed for this competition unless requested by the agency. The contest application asks questions about measures taken by the facility to reduce energy consumption. FEMP hopes that this information will provide a platform to share best practices and encourage conservation at all agencies, and therefore asks applicants to provide as much detail as they are comfortable with. FEMP will not, however, publish or release any information that an agency asks to remain undisclosed.

Q. Benchmarking for some building types is not available in Portfolio Manager. Are these building types eligible?

A. Any building is eligible as long as the building data is entered into Portfolio Manager for the prior and current year. The building does not need to be scored to compete.

Q. How do agencies determine the best candidates to nominate?

A. Agencies should select a nominee based on how well it expects the building to perform in 2013 as compared to 2012, considering a wide range of innovative or comprehensive energy management

practices being undertaken by the building, including energy-saving projects and technologies as well as educational and outreach activities that encourage behavior change. FEMP will select finalists from the pool of nominations to compete head-to-head in real time to determine which building will decrease its percentage energy consumption from 2012 to the end of the competition. Even if you are not 100% confident you will win, FEMP strongly encourages you to enter, if for no other reason than to obtain some well-deserved publicity for your efforts at energy savings!