Montgomery County Building Energy Benchmarking

QUICK GUIDE: DATA VERIFICATION

A quick guide to <u>data verification for your energy benchmarking report</u>. Additional instructions are available in the full <u>benchmarking how-to-guide</u>.

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INTRODUCTION

What is Energy Benchmarking? Energy Benchmarking is the process of tracking a building's energy use and using standard metrics to compare the building's performance against past performance and to its peers nationwide.

The law requires the County and commercial building owners to:

- Track the energy use of buildings 25,000 gross square feet and greater in the county in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager,
- **Have data verified by a Recognized Data Verifier the first year and every three years thereafter, and**
- Report data to the County by June 1st annually for public disclosure.
- Meet long-term site energy use intensity performance standards.

This quick-guide provides instructions for **data verification for your energy benchmarking report**. Instructions on the full benchmarking process are available in the full benchmarking how-to-guide.

COMPLETE DATA VERIFICATION

Verification is considered an industry best practice and ensures that building and energy data entered into Portfolio Manager are accurate. The purpose of verification is to enhance the quality of data being reported collectively through the Benchmarking Law and ensure data are correct and useful to the building owner and staff. Verification requires review by someone with knowledge about Portfolio Manager and building energy performance.

DATA VERIFICATION OPTIONS

There are two options to complete data verification:

1. Achieve ENERGY STAR certification for at least 6 months of the calendar year being benchmarked. If using this verification path, please indicate this in the Property Notes field (found in the Details tab in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager) by stating "ENERGY STAR Certification used for verification" and the month and year certification was achieved.

2. Have a Recognized Data Verifier review and sign-off on your report.

WHO CAN COMPLETE VERIFICATION

Building owners must demonstrate that reported benchmarking data is verified by a Recognized Data Verifier. A Recognized Data Verifier is a professional with a current verification credential that is recognized and approved by the DEP Director (see table below). The verifier can be in-house staff or from a third-party firm.

Verification Credential	Institution / Association
Professional Engineer (PE)	National Society of Professional Engineers
Licensed Architect	National Council of Architectural Registration Board
Registered Architect (RA)	American Institute of Architects (AIA)
Certified Commissioning Authority (CxA)	AABC Commissioning Group (ACG)
Certified Energy Manager (CEM)	Association of Energy Engineers (AEE)
Certified Energy Auditor (CEA)	AEE
Certified Building Commissioning Professional (CBCP)	AEE
Certified Measurement and Verification Professional (CMVP)	AEE
Energy Management Professional (EMP)	Energy Management Association
Existing Building Commissioning Professional (EBCP)	AEE
LEED AP Operations + Maintenance (LEED-AP O+M)	US Green Building Council (USGBC)
LEED-Fellow – For outstanding APs	USGBC
Building Energy Assessment Professional (BEAP)	ASHRAE
Building Energy Modeling Professional (BEMP)	ASHRAE
Building Commissioning Professional Certification (BXCP)	ASHRAE
Operations & Performance Management Professional (OPMP)	ASHRAE
Certified Commissioning Professional (CCP)	Building Commissioning Association (BCA)
Associate Commissioning Professional (ACP)	BCA
Sustainability Facility Professional (SFP)	International Facilities Management Association (IFMA)
Certified Facility Manager (CFM)	IFMA
RPA/FMA High Performance Designation (RPA/FMA-HP)[1]	BOMI International
Systems Maintenance Technician (SMT)	BOMI International
Systems Maintenance Administrator (SMA)[2]	BOMI International
Real Property Administrator (RPA) with caveat requirements	BOMI International
Certified Property Manager (CPM) with caveat requirements	Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM)

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[1] RPA must have been achieved with the elective course, Asset Management OR achieved with completion of at least 3 of the 5 Sustainability/High Performance Experience Criteria. Submit documentation to energy@montgomerycountymd.gov.

[2] CPM must have been achieved with the following three functions selected and illustrated in the Experience Requirements: #3, #30, and #33. Submit documentation to energy@montgomerycountymd.gov.

Resources:

- [Montgomery County Green Bank Technical Assistance](#) program can connect property owners with a service provider to benchmark the building and provide data verification, and can provide financial support to help cover the costs. Follow the link above to learn more and apply for technical assistance.
- [Benchmarking Ambassadors](#): The list contains stakeholders, volunteers, and energy service companies who received an orientation to the Benchmarking Law on how to properly benchmark in Portfolio Manager to comply with the Benchmarking Law. Feel free to reach out to these Ambassadors as a resource. Many offer benchmarking and/or verification services to help you comply with the Benchmarking Law.

FOR THE BUILDING OWNER:

CONFIRM IF YOU NEED TO VERIFY THIS YEAR

All buildings must get their data verified for the first year they are required to report and every 3 years thereafter. Data Verification is required if:
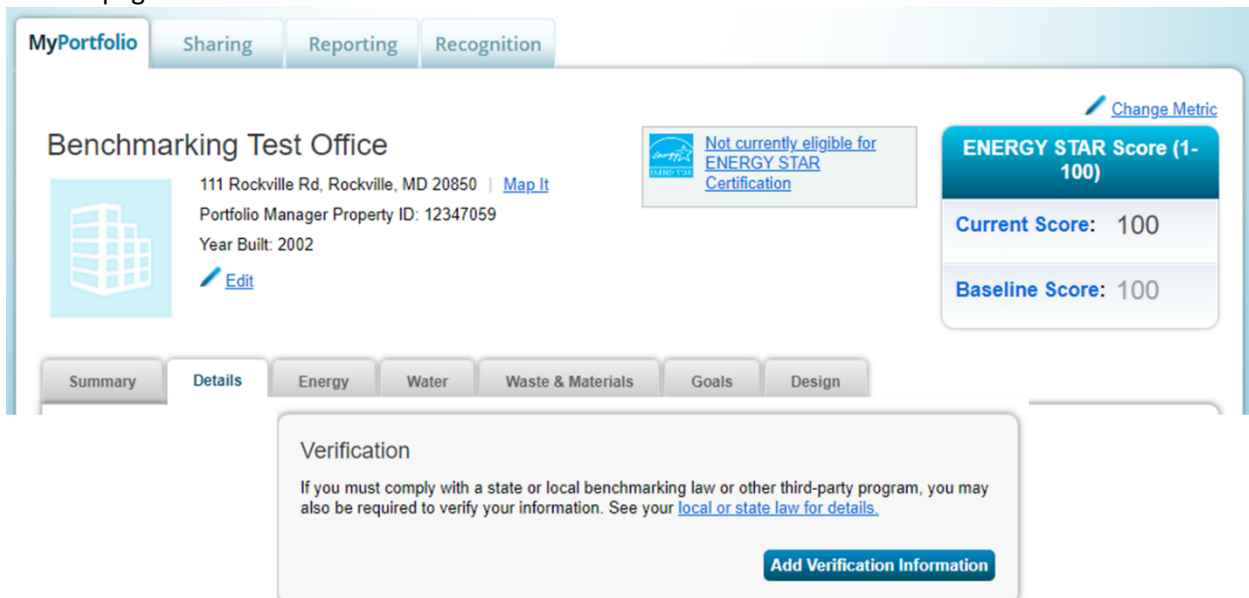
☐ Your building has never been reported/verified before.

OR

☐ Your building was last verified 3 years ago.

There are several ways to determine whether your property is due for data verification:

1. In ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, navigate to the Details tab and scroll to the bottom of the page to the Verification section:

If your property has not previously been verified, you will not see any details entered, as depicted above.

If your property HAS been previously verified, you will see details about the previous verification date, period, and verifier information. In this case, the last verification period was CY 2020, so the property is due to verify the CY 2023 benchmarking report submitted by June 1, 2024, as it has been 3 years since the property was last verified:

2. Navigate to the Montgomery County Building Energy Benchmarking Reporting Portal. Click the gear icon in the Actions Column, and choose Submission for the building in question:

Navigate to the Data Verification tab to see if your property is due for data verification:

3. Email Energy@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov to see if your building needs data verification. If data verification is NOT needed, you may go straight to submitting your report to DEP. Instructions on submitting your report can be found here.

SHARE YOUR DATA WITH YOUR VERIFIER THROUGH ENERGY STAR PORTFOLIO MANAGER
Your Verifier will need access to your Portfolio Manager account data. You will need your Verifier's Portfolio Manager username to share data with them.

CONNECT YOUR PORTFOLIO MANAGER ACCOUNT WITH THE VERIFIER

1. Click "Contacts" in the upper right-hand corner of the screen.
2. Click "Add New Contacts".
3. Search for the username of your verifier
4. Click "Connect".

Please note: Connection requests must be approved before you can share your buildings.

SHARE FULL ACCESS TO YOUR DATA WITH YOUR VERIFIER

1. Go to the "Sharing" tab in Portfolio Manager.
2. Click "Share (or Edit Access) to a property".
3. Select your properties and click "Apply Selection".

Please note: If you are sharing a campus with multiple buildings, you may need to share **both** the campus and the individual buildings within the campus. For guidance on buildings that share systems, see the FAQ section below.

4. Select your verifier's username as the recipient.
5. Select "Bulk Sharing ("One-Size-Fits-All")" and select "Full Access".
6. Click "Share Property(ies)".

For additional guidance on sharing properties within Portfolio Manager, click here.

FOR THE DATA VERIFIER:

STEP 1 - RUN THE DATA QUALITY CHECKER WITHIN PORTFOLIO MANAGER

The Data Quality Checker runs a set of basic data checks on buildings to help identify possible data entry errors and if the building differs from typical operational patterns.

1. Click on the "Summary" tab for each building.
2. Scroll down to the "Data Quality Checker" box and click on "Check for Possible Errors".

Running a data quality check will help identify possible issues prior to completing the Data Verification Checklist.

STEP 2 - COLLECT ANY INFORMATION NEEDED FROM THE BUILDING OWNER

Verification Actions	Information Type to Verify	Data Sources Typically Requested by Verifiers
Confirm gross floor area	Whole Building Gross Floor Area	• Blueprints, Architectural Plans, BOMA documents, tax records
Confirm breakdown of property types within the building, and gross floor area of each	Property Use Types; Gross Floor Area	• Architectural plans, rent rolls
Confirm unit count is accurate in ESPM *(residential only)*	Number of Units in the Building	• Rent Roll • Rental Unit Registration
Confirm that <u>all</u> energy consumption from all meters serving the building – both common area and tenant – are accounted for. Energy consumption may include delivered fuels like fuel oil or diesel as well as on-site renewables.	Number of Meters in the Building, Delivered Fuels	• Meter Numbers by Fuel Type • Utility and Energy Bills • Utility data aggregation platform (to review meters included) • List of Addresses Served by Shared Systems
Confirm all energy use is accurately reported in ESPM.	Annual Usage from All Energy Types: Electric, Gas, Steam, and Fuel Deliveries	• Online Access to Data Request Portals • Copies of Energy Bills

Please note: When requesting access to utility data sources, this may require login access to benchmarking portals or bill copies. This will help in confirming that any aggregate data was correctly requested for the **entire** building and entered by the owner.

Utility data is typically accessed in two ways.

1. If an owner pays energy bills for the whole building, usage data can be accessed through an online utility login or past bill copies.

2. If multiple owners or tenants pay energy bills, whole-building energy use for all meters associated with an address can be requested from Pepco, Washington Gas, Potomac Edison, BG&E (instructions can be found in the full benchmarking how-to guide).

It is essential that Data Verifiers confirm that all meters serving the property are included in the aggregated data if the property is obtaining whole-building aggregated data from the utility.

STEP 3 - REVIEW THE DATA IN PORTFOLIO MANAGER USING THE ENERGY STAR DATA VERIFICATION CHECKLIST
Use the ENERGY STAR Data Verification Checklist as a guide during the verification. The ENERGY STAR Data Verification Checklist can be accessed from the 'Reporting' tab within Portfolio Manager. Check off each section as you review it for correctness.

Please note: **The ENERGY STAR checklist does not perfectly align with what is required for verification with Montgomery County DEP.** The checklist contains some information that is not required for verification. For Benchmarking Law verification, you can omit the water, waste, and indoor environmental standards sections and a site visit is not required.
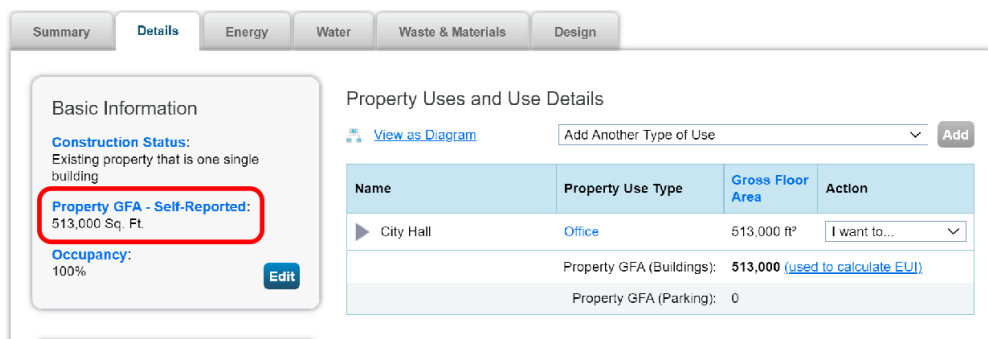
Here is a link to a sample ENERGY STAR Data Verification Checklist.

The following are a list of items that must be checked during the verification process.

- **Primary Function**: Confirm that the primary use of the building is correctly defined. Reference the ENERGY STAR property list types if necessary.
- **Location**: Confirm that the address is correctly entered for the building.
- **Gross Floor Area (GFA)**: Confirm the gross floor area is accurate for the building. This value should be verified via architectural drawings or other records.

    To view where GFA is entered:
    1. Navigate to the "Details" tab
    2. Locate the "Property GFA - Self-Reported" value under "Basic Information"
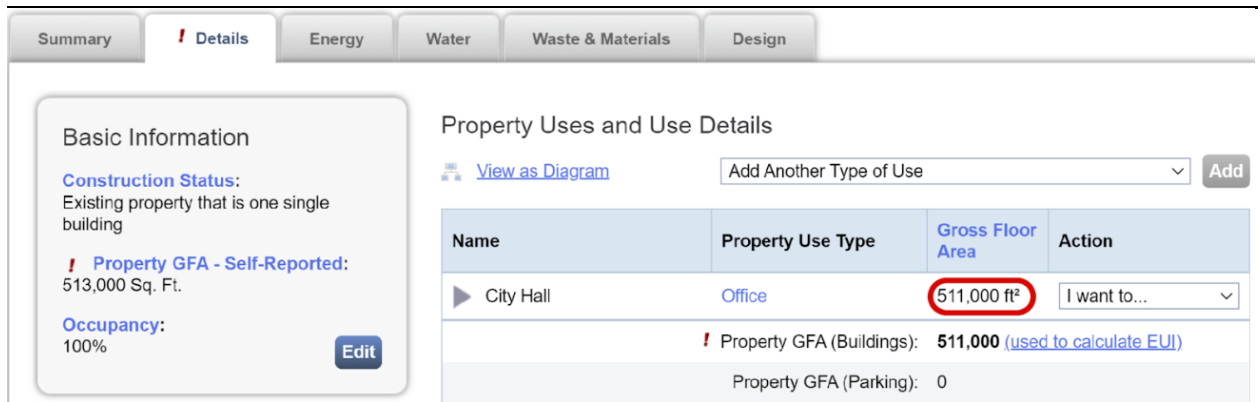
- **Gross Floor Area (GFA) for each building use**:

   To view where GFA for each building use is entered:
   1. Navigate to the "Details" tab
   2. Locate the "Gross Floor Area" column under "Property Uses and Use Details"
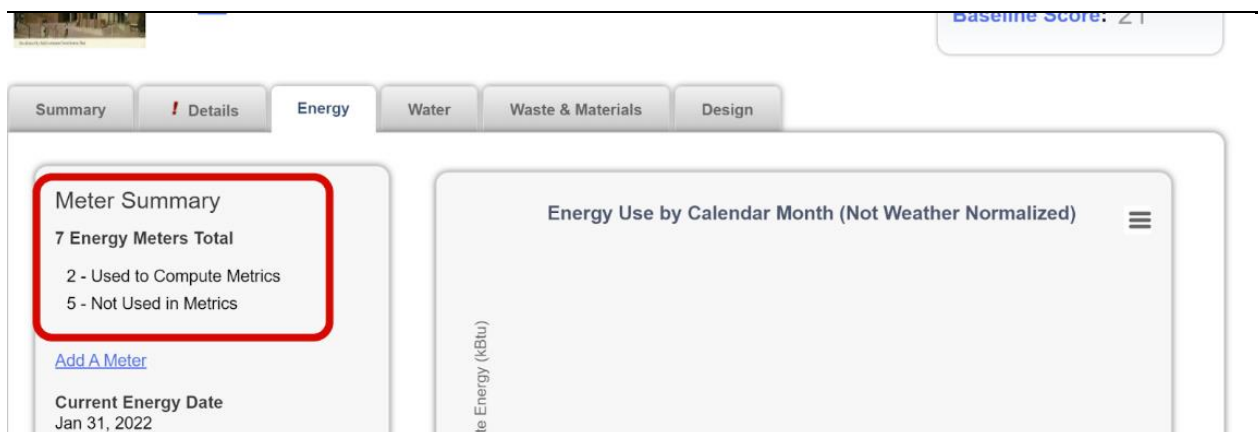
- **Summary of All Associated Meters**: Confirm that the meters shown account for the total energy use of the building. Confirm that any additional fuels or on-site solar or wind is defined if necessary.

   Please note: This total may differ from the total number of meters on-site. If whole-building aggregate data is provided from the utilities, this is often defined as one meter within ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager.

   To view which meters are being factored into the total energy consumption of the building:
   1. Navigate to the "Energy" tab
   2. Locate the "Meter Summary" box and the "Meters - Used to Compute Metrics" table

- **Total Energy Consumption**: Confirm that the total energy consumption is accurate for each meter.

    To view the individual meter pages:
    1. Navigate to the "Energy" tab
    2. Locate the "Meters - Used to Compute Metrics" table
    3. Click into the meter name to view data entries. Confirm a full calendar year has been entered for all meters for the year you are verifying.
    4. Confirm the meters have the correct and consistent units
    5. It is recommended that third-party verifiers compare a building's emissions or energy use intensity with similar buildings as a way to flag possible errors in reporting data.

- **Montgomery County Building ID**: A MBID must be entered in the Standard ID box for each building. Each building is assigned one unique MBID. To find your Montgomery County Building ID, reference the DEP Private Building Inventory. Without entering the MBID in Portfolio Manager exactly as it appears, the property will be deemed non-compliant.

    1. Navigate to the "Details" tab.
    2. In the "Unique Identifiers (IDs)" box, click "view" next to "Standard IDs"
    3. Verify that the MBID associated with the building is entered in the proper format.

Notify the building owner of any errors identified. The verifier should not proceed to Step 4 until errors are corrected.

STEP 4 - COMPLETE AND SIGN THE ENERGY STAR DATA VERIFICATION CHECKLIST

The signed ENERGY STAR Data Verification Checklist should be downloaded and emailed to the building owner. Advise the building owner that they must keep this signed document for their records. DEP does not collect your data verification checklist but may request it.

STEP 5 - ENTER YOUR CREDENTIAL INFORMATION INTO ENERGY STAR PORTFOLIO MANAGER

In Portfolio Manager, navigate to the Details tab and scroll to the bottom of the page to the "Verification" field. Information entered should include: Calendar Year of Data Verified, Date of Verification, Full Name, Title, Organization, Phone Number, Email, Postal Code, and your Professional Designation (Credential Name, Acronym, Certifying Number (if available), and State).

Note: If you possess an accepted verification credential not listed, please select Other and type in the certification name. Verification selecting "no professional designation" will not be accepted.

STEP 6 - CONFIRM THE BUILDING IS SHARED WITH MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEP IN ENERGY STAR PORTFOLIO MANAGER

The following two actions are required of all Montgomery County building owners in order to correctly share their building's energy use with the County.

- **Connect** their Portfolio Manager account with the Montgomery County's Portfolio Manager account.

- **Share** read-only access for their Montgomery County's buildings.

This process only needs to be completed one time. Once a connection has been established, there is no need for an owner to reshare their data in future years.

Please note: An owner can connect and share their data with Montgomery County at any time. They do not need to wait until their data has been verified by a third-party. The County will not complete its review until the building owner submits a report in the Montgomery County Building Energy Benchmarking Reporting Portal . It's a best practice for an owner to share data as soon as possible.

To confirm that the building has been shared with the County:

1. Navigate to the '**Summary**' tab of the building.
2. Scroll down to the "**Sharing this Property**" box and confirm that the building has been shared with "MontgomeryDEP" with "Exchange Data" permissions.

If the building is not shared with Montgomery County DEP, please notify the owner. Detailed instructions for connecting with the County and sharing buildings can be found here.

FAQ

IS THERE A COST TO FILE BENCHMARKING REPORT?

There is no cost with filing your benchmarking report (or for our help). There is one element to benchmarking that you may need to outsource if your company doesn't have a Recognized Data Verifier. The first year that a building reports and every 3 years thereafter, someone with a "recognized verification credential" must review and sign-off on your submission. They will review for accuracy in what's reported (building gross floor area, that all energy data has been reported, etc).

I SOLD/BOUGHT MY PROPERTY LAST YEAR. WHO SHOULD REPORT TO DEP?

The new owner will need to report, but per the law the seller must transfer the following records to the prospective buyer:

A. the benchmarking property record from the benchmarking tool; (instructions to transfer properties in ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager)
B. documentation of data verification; and
C. any other related records relevant to maintain compliance.

These other records may include copies of utility bills for the period during which the seller owned the building that the new owner needs to complete benchmarking, access to utility data aggregation sites, etc.

WHAT IF I PURCHASED THE BUILDING IN THE PAST YEAR?

Buildings that have transferred ownership are **not** exempt from reporting requirements. If a Building changes ownership, any outstanding compliance obligations and liabilities shall become the responsibility of the new Building Owner. Whoever owns the building as of the deadline for compliance with reporting requirements is responsible for submitting the report.

To help the new owner comply when a building changes ownership, per the law, the previous Owner shall provide to the new Owner any required data that has been collected and is necessary for completing the next required reporting.

Additionally, utilities may be able to provide historical aggregated data to cover the prior calendar year.

WHICH PROPERTY USES SHOULD I SELECT TO REPRESENT MY BUILDING?

Portfolio Manager has approximately 80 different property use categories. You should accurately represent all uses that are found within your building. A list of definitions is available here.

EPA has additional guidance on some examples of what property use types to select: https://portfoliomanagerhelp.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/30185852969755-Which-property-type-should-I-use-for

HOW DO I DETERMINE THE GROSS FLOOR AREA FOR A PROPERTY USE WITHIN THE BUILDING?

Gross floor area is measured as the space between the exterior surfaces of the building's enclosing fixed walls, subject to the inclusions and exclusions below.

- **INCLUDE** tenant areas, common areas, meeting areas, restrooms, elevator shafts, stairways, basement space, mechanical equipment areas, and storage rooms.
- **EXCLUDE** all parking areas, exterior loading docks, exterior balconies, driveways, unroofed light wells, and plenums between floors.

Building owners may have information on gross floor area from leasing, sale, or other transactional documents or may need to measure GFA from building drawings according to the Portfolio Manager definition.

HOW CAN WE VERIFY GROSS FLOOR AREA?

An accurate gross floor area measurement is critical to benchmarking as that dictates the key energy metrics like site energy use intensity. A few sources for data that may help:
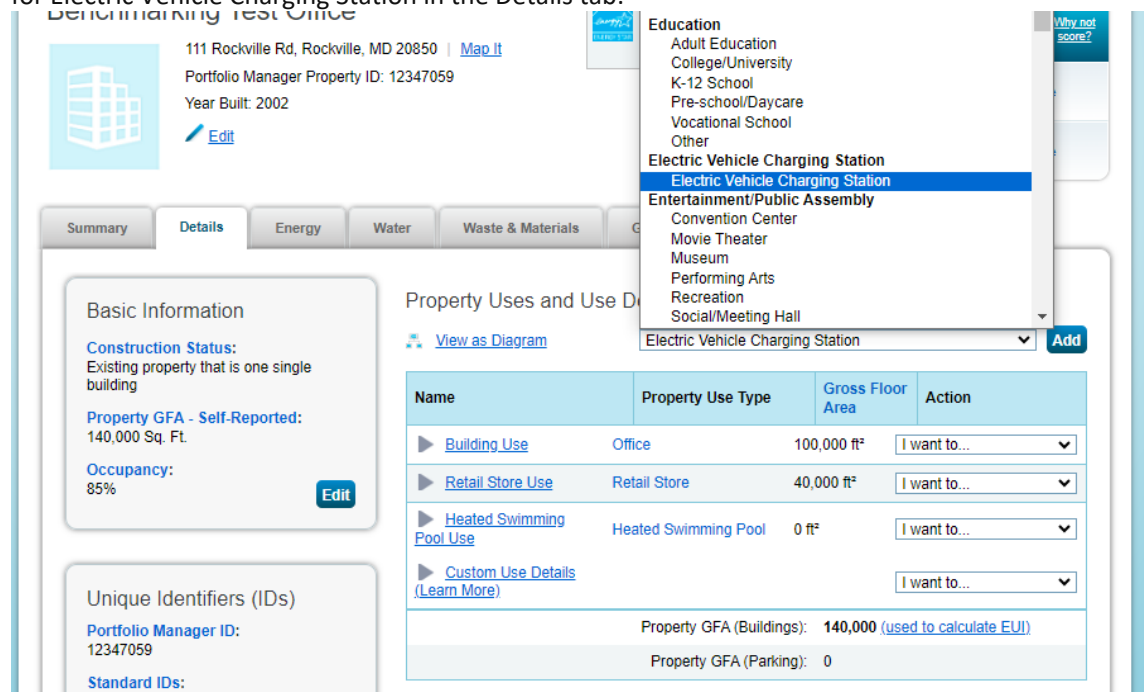
- SDAT real property look-up tool: https://sdat.dat.maryland.gov/RealProperty/Pages/default.aspx
- The plat/survey document for the property: https://guide.msa.maryland.gov/pages/viewer.aspx?page=plats-records (note you'll need the plat # from SDAT)
- If neither of these two options are available, a site visit and physical measurements may be necessary. The Green Bank Technical Assistance program may be able to connect you to a vendor to assist with GFA measurements and subsidize the cost of doing so.

ARE THERE ANY ENERGY USES THAT ARE NOT PART OF MY BUILDING'S ENERGY USE?

Cell phone towers, radio masts, and any external billboards used for leased advertising space as well as electric vehicle chargers are not part of building energy use and may be excluded if separately metered.

For **electric vehicle charging**, EPA's How do I benchmark my EV Charging Station? page provides helpful guidance. If the EV chargers are on a separate meter, omit that meter from benchmarking. If the EVs are on the building meter but submetered, you may deduct the EV consumption by adding a negative meter in Portfolio Manager.

If the EVs are part of the main meter and not submetered, EPA is working on an EV charging adjustment based on the number and type of EV charging stations present. If this case applies, add a new Property Type for Electric Vehicle Charging Station in the Details tab:

Enter the number of each type of EV charger included in your building's benchmarking report and the date that they were installed:

Name: * Electric Vehicle Charging St

Property Use Detail	Value		Current As Of	Temporary Value
Number of Level One EV Charging Stations		☐ Use a default	1/1/2002	☐
Number of Level Two EV Charging Stations		☐ Use a default	1/1/2002	☐
Number of DC Fast EV Charging Stations		☐ Use a default	1/1/2002	☐

Save Use   Cancel

This will allow DEP to deduct your building's estimated EV consumption from the building's site energy use.

HOW ARE DATA CENTERS REPORTED IN PORTFOLIO MANAGER?
Portfolio Manager defines a data center as a space "specifically designed and equipped to meet the needs of highdensity computing equipment such as server racks." You can add a data center as a property use type.

WHAT IF THE BUILDING IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION OR NEWLY BUILT?
A newly constructed building, if it meets the threshold for being covered by this ordinance, is required to report its energy use and complete verification for the first full calendar year after it becomes occupied.

HOW CAN I FIND A DATA VERIFIER?
While DEP cannot suggest a specific company, Montgomery County Benchmarking Ambassadors (PDF) have attended training about complying with Montgomery County's law and learned how to access data from utilities.

The **Montgomery County Green Bank's Technical Assistance program** can connect benchmarkers with vendors who can help obtain accurate gross floor area, complete energy benchmarking, and verify data. The Green Bank may be able to subsidize costs for these services.

IS THE SAME PERSON ABLE TO COMPLETE REPORTING ON BEHALF OF AN OWNER AND COMPLETE VERIFICATION FOR THE SAME PROPERTY?
Yes, as long as the reporter holds a valid Data Verification Credential verification in Montgomery County need not be done by a 3rd party.

WHAT IF SOMEONE LEFT THE COMPANY AND WE DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO ESPM ACCOUNT?
Unfortunately, DEP does not have access to your Portfolio Manager credentials. In some cases, DEP may be able to share the building with you (depending on how the building was shared with DEP) or be able to provide the username and email on the existing account to help facilitate a helpdesk ticket to EPA. You could create a new account for yourself and then request that those buildings be transferred to you. Here's more information:
- Someone left my company, how can I get access to their buildings in Portfolio Manager?

Additional guidance on transferring properties in ESPM:
- How do I transfer properties to another user?

HOW DO I REPORT IF THERE ARE MULTIPLE BUILDINGS WITHIN THE PARCEL?

If there are multiple buildings at the property, all larger than 25,000 gross square feet and all separately metered for all energy utilities with separate systems (e.g. no central heating/DHW), they should be reported as individual buildings.

If the community shares a master meter or system (like heating or DHW) for any utility, you'll need to report the gross floor area for any structures being served by those utilities (even if some are <25k gross square feet).

Feel free to reach out to DEP at Energy@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov or 240-777-7707 if you need MBIDs or are unsure of how to report.

HOW DO I SHARE THE NEWLY ADDED METERS AFTER SHARING MY PROFILE?

Please note that if you ADD new meters to your property, you will also need to share those with MontgomeryDEP. ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager will prompt you to share any new meters with existing connections:

Congratulations! Any energy meters you selected have been successfully associated to your property(ies).

Share Additional Meters with Web Services Provider

You have successfully created additional meters for your property. We notice that your property is shared with companies that exchange data directly through Portfolio Manager web services. If you want these companies to be able to access/edit your new meters, you must share these meters directly with them. If you do not wish to grant access to this meter, please select "None" as the permissions level and the meter(s) will not be shared at this time. To share in the future you will need to select "Edit Contact's Permissions" from the Sharing table on the Summary tab for your property.

Select the permission levels you would like to grant each web services provider below:

Washington Gas

The following information is required by Washington Gas in order to provide service to your property(ies). If you have questions about how to complete this information, please contact them directly.

Meter Name	None	Read Only	Full Access
Electric Grid Meter	○	○	○

Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection

The following information is required by Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection in order to provide service to your property(ies). If you have questions about how to complete this information, please contact them directly.

Meter Name	None	Read Only	Full Access
Electric Grid Meter	○	●	○

COMMON BENCHMARKING ISSUES

Missing MBID number

The Montgomery County Building ID field in your benchmarking report was blank.

The Montgomery County Building ID (MBID) is your building's unique identification number. DEP's Covered Buildings Inventory lists the MBID for each covered building.

For buildings that do not share a tax parcel with any other buildings, the MBID is the 8-digit Parcel Identification Number/Tax ID. The Parcel ID number is located in the upper right corner of your property tax bill. It would be the same as your account number. You can locate this number online by visiting the Department of Finance's Real Property Tax Account Information website. You can also use the online GIS map created from current Maryland tax assessment records to locate the parcel that your building sits on, and see what other buildings share your parcel.

For buildings that share a tax parcel with other buildings, the MBID is the 8-digit Parcel Identification Number/Tax ID plus a letter at the end. For example 01234567_A, 01234567_B.

Incorrect MBID number

The Montgomery County Building ID that entered into your Portfolio Manager does not match DEP's Covered Buildings List. The Montgomery County Building ID (MBID) is your building's unique identification number. DEP's Covered Buildings Inventory lists the MBID for each covered building.

Update this MBID number in Portfolio Manager—Under the Details tab, select "Montgomery County (MD) Building ID" from the "Standard IDs" drop-down menu, and enter your MBID. View helpful screenshot to help you Update Your MBID (PDF, 497KB).

If you need help determining your MBID, please contact us.

Missing data verification details

The Benchmarking Law requires that building owners complete a verification process the first year of compliance and every 3 years after. Your benchmarking report was not accepted due to:

- Recognized Data Verifier credentials were not entered/updated into the Verification fields on the Details tab in Portfolio Manager.

  -OR-
- Your property did not report achieving the ENERGY STAR building certification for at least 6 months of the calendar year being benchmarked.

Instructions on completing verification, a list of acceptable Recognized Data Verifier credentials, and how to enter Recognized Data Verifier credentials in Portfolio Manager are available above.

After verification is completed, please visit your property in Portfolio Manager and enter either verifier information into the fields provided on the Details tab in Portfolio Manager. Instructions and screenshots for doing so are here.

Missing property use information

Your benchmarking report will not be accepted if it contains the following alert messages:
- Alert - Property has no uses
- Alert - Gross Floor Area is 0 ft2

To fix these errors, you'll need to enter a Gross Floor Area figure for your entire building in Portfolio Manager and select use types (e.g., office, retail) for your property on the Details tab. Make sure the sum of gross floor area figures for each property use type equals the gross floor area for the entire property.

Missing 12 full months of energy data

Your benchmarking report will not be accepted if it has less than 12 full months of energy data for the year being benchmarked. If this occurs, your benchmarking report will reflect "Not Available" for all energy data metrics (e.g., Site EUI, Source EUI, Electricity Use).

Your energy bills must cover January 1 through December 31 of the calendar year being benchmarked, and you may need to enter your prior December or following January invoices to capture the full 12 months of calendar year data required for a complete benchmarking report.

Missing whole building data

If you received an alert stating that Metered Areas (Energy) do not reflect whole-building data, then your meter configuration may not be capturing all energy use in your building. Reporting energy data for portions of your building (i.e., only common space or house meters) means your benchmarking report is incomplete. You may need to change a setting on the Meters tab to indicate that all meters reported represent all energy used by the building OR collect/report additional energy meter information for your building such as tenant energy use. More information on how to select meters to be included in your metrics is available here.

Energy meters are not included in the report

If you receive an alert that no energy meters are included in the benchmarking report, then you may need to add energy meters (if none exist) or associate existing energy meters to your property. On the Meters tab of your Portfolio Manager record, you can add a meter or change meter selections. Additional instructions are available from the **Portfolio Manager help section**.

Energy meters have gaps or overlaps

If meter read dates have **gaps** in your energy data, that means at least one day in the calendar year is missing. This could indicate that energy data are not included in your benchmarking report. Instructions on how to fix gaps are available from the **Portfolio Manager help section**.

If meter read dates **overlap** in your energy data, that means the same day(s) within the calendar year are included in your benchmarking report. This could indicate duplicate energy data being reported. Instructions on how to fix overlaps are available from the **Portfolio Manager help section**.

Energy meters have a single entry that is more than 65 days long

If your benchmarking report contains an alert that one or more energy bill meter read dates is longer than 65 days, then weather-normalized data cannot be calculated. Please ensure you have entered each monthly utility bill separately or manually revise these utility bill meter read dates to be less than 65 days. More information from the **Portfolio Manager help section**.

Energy data is estimated

While Portfolio Manager allows building owners to use data estimates in their property record during the data collection phase of benchmarking, estimated data are not permitted in benchmarking report submissions. If the value you are entering comes directly from your utility bill, you do not need to check estimated, even though some utility bills may contain small estimates based on how they read your meter.

Before reporting annual benchmarking data to DEP, replace any estimations with actual data. Recognized data verifiers should not sign off on the Data Verification Checklist with estimated data unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as an energy meter malfunction.

Weather-normalized data are not available

Weather-normalized data may not be available for a number of factors, the most common being utility bill meter read dates being longer than 65 days or receiving too few fuel deliveries over 24 months.

If you are able to get a site and source EUI figure, but Portfolio Manager is not able to calculate weather-normalized site and source EUI, please try to manually revise these utility bill meter read dates to be less than 65 days. If that fixes the problem, great! Just generate a new report and resubmit it to DEP.

If that does not fix the problem, please email **energy@montgomerycountymd.gov** and let us know if there's another reason weather-normalized data is unavailable. DEP requires this data point in your benchmarking report, but if Portfolio Manager is not able to calculate it for a valid reason, we will accept a report without weather-normalized data.

An ENERGY STAR score is not included in your benchmarking report

If your **property type is able to earn an ENERGY STAR score** but your benchmarking report does not contain a score, DEP will request additional information from the building owner to explain this discrepancy.

Building is not covered under the Law

Based on the current Benchmarking Law requirements, you may have submitted a benchmarking report for a building that isn't covered under the Law. This may be because your building type is exempt from reporting, your building is not yet due to report, or your building is located in a jurisdiction that has not opted into the County's Benchmarking Law.

DEP is happy to accept your benchmarking reports each year, but you will not be required to report unless your jurisdiction opts into the Law or your building type becomes covered under the Law. Your data will not be included in the disclosed metrics. If you want to report a voluntary submission, please reach out to DEP so that we can create a Montgomery County Building ID (MBID) for you.