

B3 BENCHMARKING newsletter

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Improvements to Improvements tab

The Improvements tab has been enhanced to assist users in determining and implementing improvements. Additional features assist with prioritizing improvements, making it easier to take action, as well as complementing existing programs in the State. New tools assist with planning and budgeting which buildings are best suited for action via audits, retro-commissioning or other improvements. It also helps owners find rebates, incentives and programs to help fund improvements. The Improvements tab continues to track savings targets and be a repository for energy related documents.

Best of B3 Award Finalist Selections

The Best of B3 awards are given to organizations and projects that have shown leadership in improving their sustainability through their participation in the B3 programs. The Best of B3 Benchmarking finalists are based on year over year improvement in their benchmark ratio, an indication of improved energy efficiency compared to code-based benchmark. Last year's winners were: Ada-Borup School District, North Hennepin Community College, City of Newport, Renville County, and a tie between Department of Military Affairs and Department of Transportation. Further information on their successes can be found [here](#).

The categories this year are Public School, Higher Ed, Local Government (City and County now combined) and State Agency. To be considered, organizations need to have their sites Benchmark complete for both 2015 and 2016 by **July 17th**. Finalist selections will be made at this time so make sure your data is complete to be eligible.

Automatic Updates for Xcel Energy Customers

As previously communicated, a secure method of connecting to Xcel Energy to automatically update consumption data has been developed. Payment for this automation is now processed electronically through a secure third party via credit card. If you are an Xcel Energy customer and are interested in this service, please visit the [website](#) for further details.

Renewable Electric Meters

There are various different programs allowing organizations to benefit from solar energy. If you're participating or plan to participate, here's how to enter renewable energy into B3 Benchmarking.

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- **Owned onsite renewables** – PV panels and/or wind turbines onsite that are owned and operated by the organization. This energy often supplements grid purchased energy. At this time, Benchmarking does not have the functionality to track net energy production. If the site is fortunate enough to produce more than it consumes in a given month, enter only the energy consumed on site.
Within Benchmarking, there will be two meters... one renewable and one electric utility (if grid-connected). The renewable energy consumed by the site should be entered in renewable meter (PV or wind) and an electric utility meter will track any remaining consumption.
 - **Community Solar Garden** – Grid-connected users that purchase a subscription to a centrally located PV array and receive bill credit as if panels were onsite. Subscriptions may be a one-time fee or ongoing as part of the bill. Subscriptions may be a percentage of energy use or set amount of energy.
Within Benchmarking, there will be two meters... one renewable and one electric utility. In the renewable meter, enter monthly consumption equal to the subscription. This should be listed separately on the utility bill. The remaining consumption should be entered into the utility electric meter. If subscription is for 100%, then only the renewable meter is needed.
 - **Solar Power Purchase Agreement** – Organization allows vendor to install an array with no/low upfront costs and purchases energy generated at a reduced rate.
Within Benchmarking, there will be two meters... one renewable and one utility electric. Organization will receive two monthly consumption bills. The vendor will bill for solar energy which is entered in the renewable meter. The utility will bill for the grid-purchased energy which is entered into the utility electric meter.
 - **Purchased Green Power** – organization pays a premium to utility for renewable energy. Green power is often purchased in blocks or a percentage of energy use. The utility keeps the REC (Renewable Energy Certificate) but organizations can enter as a renewable energy source to receive the carbon benefit.
Within Benchmarking, there may be one or two electric meters... one renewable and one utility electric. In the renewable meter, enter monthly consumption equal to the subscription. This should be listed separately on the utility bill. The remaining consumption should be entered into the utility electric meter. If 100% green power is purchased, then only the renewable meter is needed.

Additional New Feature Highlights

In addition to the great improvements and enhancements listed above, we've also recently added the following to B3 Benchmarking:

- **Person normalization** is now available along with the default square foot normalization. To take advantage of this, the number of occupants may need to be updated via the building editor.
- **Event** comparison reporting.
- **Excel exports** are now more responsive to filters within the application.
- **Archived energy documents** are managed at both organization and site levels.
- **Baseline weather normalization** at the organization level.
- Updates to **Benchmark modeling engine**.
- **Security** updates with tighter password requirements.
- Additional **wastewater treatment plant** normalization reporting.
- **Site diagrams** coming soon to help visualize how buildings and meter are connected.

Optimize Your B3 Experience

As published in the previous newsletter, the Pareto Principle (80-20 rule) applies to potential savings. Through the B3 Benchmarking platform users have consistently found that within a managed portfolio of buildings, 70 to 80% of the savings can be found in only 20 to 30% of buildings. View the [full article](#) to identify how to apply the Pareto Principle to maximize building energy performance.

Upcoming Training

New Features Webinars

- Tuesday, July 11, 3:00pm CDT - [Register Now](#)
- Wednesday, July 12, 10:00am CDT - [Register Now](#)

New to Benchmarking? [Contact us](#) to provide an overview.