



Nanaimo Goes Full Disclosure!

Nanaimo joins leading local governments in building climate disclosure program.

June 2022 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — The City of Nanaimo has joined leading BC municipalities in Canada’s largest voluntary building energy benchmarking program - Building Benchmark BC.

The program supports cities as well as building owners and managers who opt into the voluntary climate and energy disclosure. In return for participating building owners and managers will receive a detailed energy and carbon performance report card, and a clear picture of where their properties rank on carbon emissions relative to their peers. This information will help them to save on utility costs and aid them in making more informed decisions on capital upgrades when the time comes.

Building Benchmark BC will also help City of Nanaimo sustainability and planning staff to develop programs and policy to better fight climate change. The program will provide staff with new insights and analysis, which until now they have not had access too.

When it comes to using data to fight climate change, Nanaimo is leading by example by pledging to also benchmark and publicly disclose their own municipal buildings into the program. *“We see Building Benchmark BC as a tremendous opportunity not only for us to gain new insights into our carbon emissions, but to also build carbon and energy literacy at the community scale.”* Said **Nanaimo Mayor Leonard Krog**. *“Further this is a real chance for us to engage with building owners and provide them with some really useful insights on how we can fight change as community.”*

"This type of measuring and management is only going to become more common in the future. We don't have a lot of time left to stave off the worst effects of climate change and it is great to see Nanaimo showing some real leadership in partnership with other BC local governments," Said, Open Green Building Society Director, Dave Ramsle. The Open Green Building Society is the host organization for Building Benchmark BC, in cooperation with 21 other local governments, and the Province of BC.

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Backgrounder: Building Energy Benchmarking

What is it, and why does it matter?

- Building energy benchmarking describes a process under which building owners and managers use ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager, a software platform maintained by Natural Resources Canada, to measure, report, and disclose their greenhouse emissions.
- In British Columbia, the fossil fuels that are burned in buildings—to provide occupants with heat and hot water—contribute about 11 percent of the province’s overall greenhouse gas emissions.
- Benchmarking is a critical tool to address climate change. It helps property owners understand how their buildings perform both over time and when compared with similar buildings located elsewhere, and it equips governments with fine-scale data to help them develop more effective and targeted retrofit incentive programs.
- Canadian companies already voluntarily benchmark the energy and emissions of more than 9,000 buildings.
- Studies by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Urban Land Institute, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology conclude that benchmarked buildings can achieve energy savings of between 7 and 14 percent within four years.
- In 2009, New York City (NYC) passed a bylaw that required owners of buildings larger than 50,000 square feet to measure, report, and disclose the energy consumption of the properties they manage, and the city expanded the requirement in 2016.
- NYC data revealed that the city’s multi-family and office buildings consume 87 percent of all energy used for buildings, with offices consuming the greater share of the two. This in turn allowed the city to develop effective incentive programs to support office building owners in reducing those emissions.
- Similar programs are in place in Boston, Seattle, Denver, and other cities. In Canada, the City of Edmonton, has been benchmarking since 2016, and the Province of Ontario has a regulation for benchmarking of large buildings.
- Though participation in Building Benchmark B.C. is currently voluntary, most climate and energy experts agree that jurisdictions will start to introduce new regulations targeting existing buildings to meet its greenhouse-gas targets.