



## Staples

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced the release of an upgrade to its popular online energy management and tracking tool, Energy Star Portfolio Manager. The upgraded tool can help businesses achieve President Obama’s call to make commercial buildings at least 20 percent more energy efficient by 2020. The new Energy Star Portfolio Manager delivers a more user-friendly interface, enhanced data-sharing capabilities, better reporting, and for the first time, the ability to manage buildings across their lifecycle from design through occupancy.

Tens of thousands of organizations — including school districts, retail chains, hospital systems, and local governments — currently use Energy Star Portfolio Manager to measure the energy performance, water use, utility costs and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of more than 40 percent of the nation’s commercial building space.

“You can’t manage what you don’t measure,” said Janet McCabe, principal deputy assistant administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation. “The new ‘turbo-charged’ Portfolio Manager makes it easier than ever for building owners and managers to make strategic business decisions that are good for the environment and good for the bottom line. Consistent with President Obama’s Climate Action Plan, this tool helps businesses cut wasted energy, reduce harmful carbon pollution and save money.”

The Portfolio Manager will continue to deliver the nearly 150 energy, GHG and water performance metrics that owners and managers of commercial buildings use to make strategic management decisions. One of these metrics — the 1–100 Energy Star score, rates a building’s energy efficiency against similar buildings nationwide. A score of 50 represents median energy performance, whereas a score of 75 signifies that a building outperforms 75 percent of its peers. Buildings in the United States that score a 75 or higher and have their data verified by a Professional Engineer or Registered Architect are eligible to earn EPA’s Energy Star certification.

Energy Star-certified buildings use, on average, 35 percent less energy and generate 35 percent fewer GHG emissions than typical buildings. Studies have shown that they have lower operating costs,

increased asset value, and higher occupancy rates. Additionally, there are benefits to simply measuring and tracking a building's energy performance in Portfolio Manager — a recent EPA study showed that buildings that benchmarked consistently over a three-year period logged an average energy use reduction of 2.4 percent each year. For commercial building portfolios with annual energy bills in the millions of dollars and that emit tens of thousands of metric tons of GHG emissions each year, these reductions can be substantial.

Bob Valair, Director of Energy & Environmental Management“ The EPA's Energy Star program is an important initiative to Staples. Staples has enjoyed this great partnership and has worked hard to utilize these free programs to measure and reduce operational waste in our journey to become a sustainable leader. Our partnership with all the EPA's programs have been a win-win for our energy program.

"We are delighted about the upgrade of Portfolio Manager as this is the tool we use to benchmark all our facilities. One of the first steps in reducing energy, as well as continuing to evaluate usage of each facility, is utilizing Portfolio Manager. The EPA Portfolio Manager not only provides the benchmarking capabilities but helps us to identify opportunities within our portfolio on a consistent basis. Working with the EPA Portfolio Manager program has been a good experience and we are excited about the new enhancements."

Products, homes and buildings that earn the Energy Star label prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy efficiency requirements set by the U.S. EPA. In 2012 alone, Americans, with the help of Energy Star, saved \$24 billion on their utility bills and prevented greenhouse gas emissions equal to those of 50 million vehicles. From the first Energy Star qualified computer in 1992, the Energy Star label can now be found on products in more than 65 different categories, with more than 4.5 billion sold over the past 20 years. Over 1.4 million new homes and 20,000 facilities, including offices, schools, hospitals, and industrial plants, have earned the Energy Star.

Earlier this month, LG Electronics announced that sales for its products that attained the EPA's "Energy Star Most Efficient" designation jumped 75 percent in 2012, saving consumers more than \$150 million in utility costs and reducing GHG emissions by about 930 million pounds over the life of the products.



Jennifer Elks is Managing Editor of Sustainable Brands. She is a writer, editor and foodie who is passionate about improving food systems, closing loops and creating more livable cities. She loves cooking, wine, cooking with wine, correcting spelling errors in... [Read more about Jennifer Elks]

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