

BOSTON'S BUILDING ENERGY REPORTING AND DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE

In May 2013, the City of Boston enacted the Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO). The ordinance requires large buildings to report their annual energy and water use and greenhouse gas emissions to the City, which will then make the information publicly available. Buildings will also be required to conduct an energy assessment or action every five years, with exemptions provided for buildings that are already efficient or making significant progress.

Energy tracking has been shown to be a key first step to understanding and reducing building energy use. Higher energy efficiency will save money for owners and tenants, strengthen Boston's economy, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IN 2019

Beginning in 2017, and every year thereafter, the following properties in Boston are covered by BERDO: Nonresidential buildings over 35,000 square feet, Residential buildings that are 35,000 square feet or larger or have 35 or more units, and any parcel with multiple buildings that sum to 100,000 square feet or 100 units must report on all buildings.

ENERGY STAR PORTFOLIO MANAGER

Buildings will be reporting their energy and water use through Energy Star Portfolio Manager, a free energy tracking tool developed by EPA. Building owners enter data on energy consumption, water use, and building use characteristics, which Portfolio Manager uses to assess the building's energy performance. The resulting report can then be submitted electronically, via Portfolio Manager, to the City in order to comply with reporting requirements.

WHOLE-BUILDING ENERGY DATA

The utilities Eversource (NSTAR), National Grid, and Veolia are making whole-building energy data available to building owners, so that owners will be able to obtain total gas, electricity, and steam consumption for their buildings without having to request data from individual tenants. However, buildings with three or fewer tenants, or buildings where one tenant is responsible for over half of the floor space or half of the energy use, will need to obtain approval from tenants for this utility information service. Commercial tenants are required by the ordinance to provide their energy and water use to the building owner, if their approval is requested.

RESOURCES

More information on Boston's energy reporting requirements is available at: boston.gov/berdo

A step by step guide on how to comply with BERDO is available at: boston.gov/berdo-report

Training and help with Portfolio Manager, with a helpdesk for user questions, are provided by EPA at: portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/pm/help

Questions about energy reporting in Boston can be sent to EnergyReporting@Boston.gov

ENERGY REPORTING CHECKLIST

The checklist below provides a quick overview of how to report building energy use to the City of Boston; a detailed how-to guide, with tips, screenshots, and FAQs, is available at boston.gov/berdo. The following is the suggested order of steps; as long as the data is complete before submitting, the order in which you enter information is flexible.

1. Collect data on water use and all types of energy used by the building, for calendar year 2016. This may include electricity, natural gas, steam, chilled water, fuel oil, or any other energy sources. You can obtain whole-building data from your utility if needed.
2. Create an account in EPA's Portfolio Manager, a free, online energy tracking tool. Go to <http://portfoliomanager.energystar.gov/>
3. Add your property, and enter information on building characteristics. Remember that gross floor area, as defined in Portfolio Manager, may differ from the area listed in the Assessing Records. (Details on what to include and exclude is in the how-to guide).
4. Enter the size and details of the property uses within your building. If you don't have any of this information, you need to request it from your tenants.
5. Set up your energy and water meters in Portfolio Manager, with the correct units. If you have whole-building data, you only need to set up one electricity meter, for example, to represent total electricity consumption.
6. Enter your energy use data. If you've received whole-building data from NSTAR, National Grid, or Veolia, these utilities are providing their data in a format that can be copied and pasted into Portfolio Manager.
7. In the "Property Notes" form, enter in any contextual information about your building's energy performance that you wish to be included in disclosures. You also need to note any use of default values, alternative data, or delegation of reporting – see the guide for details.
8. Add your Boston Assessing Parcel ID, under "Unique Identifiers."
9. Create your energy and water report. The template is available now at boston.gov/berdo/portfolio and will enable you to generate the report in your account. You may be required to log in again. Preview your report to ensure that the information is complete, and then click "Send" to submit it.
10. Retain the confirmation email that you will receive, as well as other records related to the energy reporting process.

The energy reporting webpage provides forms that you may need, such as for requesting tenant data or applying for an extension, in addition to the detailed how-to guide. See: boston.gov/berdo