

# Energy Use Benchmarking for Chicago and Suburban Buildings

## What is Energy Use Benchmarking?

Energy Use Benchmarking meters, analyzes and compares a building's natural gas, electricity, and water consumption to similar buildings within its region.

Both the City of Chicago and the City of Evanston require owners of commercial, residential and municipal buildings over 50,000 SF to track and verify energy consumption using the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Portfolio Manager tool and to make publicly available specified information about their building to provide a reference point for benchmarking. Additionally, the City of Evanston requires city-owned buildings, 10,000 SF or greater in size to comply. Under an ordinance passed in 2023, the Village of Oak Park now also requires owners of commercial, residential, and municipal buildings over 10,000 SF to track their building's energy and water consumption using the Energy Star Portfolio Manager Tool.

Elara has provided energy use benchmarking services since its inception in 2001 and has the expertise to assist building owners/managers comply with City of Chicago requirements and to lower energy use and costs.

## How do Buildings Comply?

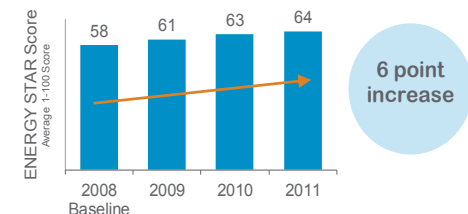
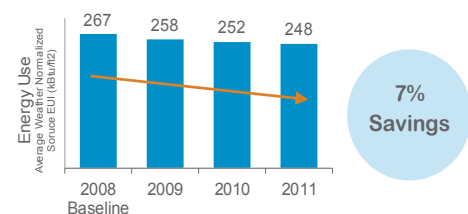
- Building owners/managers track their energy consumption and basic building characteristics using USEPA's online Portfolio Manager tool.
- Every third year, a professional verifies and updates the building's data.
- Buildings annually share a subset of their benchmark data with the City of Chicago.
- The City of Chicago annually reports on aggregate energy efficiency trends and is authorized to share building data with the public after a grace period.

## How does Elara Engineering Help?

- Compile one year of energy consumption data and enter it into Portfolio Manager (along with other relevant building data) to provide the building's Energy Intensity Value. This step includes communication with utility companies, as necessary.
- Compare the building's Energy Intensity Value to other similar buildings to assign an Energy Star score (0-100, with 100 the highest/best score achievable).
- Certify the information and upload the report to the City of Chicago.
- Train building personnel in the continued use of Portfolio Manager so energy usage data can be maintained between verification periods.
- Identify energy saving opportunities to lower energy use and costs and to increase the building's Energy Star score.



## Energy Savings in Portfolio Manager



7% average energy savings and 6 point ENERGY STAR score increase among Portfolio Manager buildings