

# Part 3: To Efficiency & Beyond! How to Benefit from Benchmarking Compliance with Strategies for Improving Energy Performance

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## Summary of Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Energy Management Methods

- **What is the difference between retrocommissioning and recommissioning?**
  - *Retrocommissioning* is the process of ensuring that systems are designed, installed, functionally tested, and capable of being operated and maintained according to the owner's operational needs. Retrocommissioning is the same systematic process applied to existing buildings that have never been commissioned to ensure that their systems can be operated and maintained according to the owner's needs.
  - *Recommissioning* is the term for applying the commissioning process to a building that has been commissioned previously (either during construction or as an existing building); it is normally done every three to five years to maintain top levels of building performance and/or after other stages of the upgrade process to identify new opportunities for improvement.
  - [ENERGY STAR Building Upgrade Manual Chapter 5: Retrocommissioning](#)
- **What is supplemental load?**
  - Supplemental load sources are secondary load contributors to energy consumption in buildings -- typically people, computers, lights, and the building itself.
  - [ENERGY STAR Building Upgrade Manual Chapter 6: Supplemental Load Reduction](#)
- **Is energy use intensity (EUI) the best metric for comparing energy efficiency between buildings of different sizes?**
  - EUI is widely considered the best metric for comparing differently sized buildings with different mixes of energy use.
  - [U.S. Energy Use Intensity by Property Type](#)
- **What steps can I take to identify cost saving opportunities within my organization?**
  - The ENERGY STAR Energy Treasure Hunt is a great opportunity for facilities and engineering staff, as well as non-engineering staff members in your organization to attempt to identify low and no-cost saving opportunities.
  - [ENERGY STAR Treasure Hunts](#)
- **How do I estimate the potential savings from the various O&M initiatives that my building could pursue?**
  - To evaluate the capital expenses and payback periods of an energy efficiency project, EPA provides several tools to help.
  - [Cash Flow Opportunity Calculator, Financial Value Calculator, and Building Upgrade Value Calculator](#)
  - Working with an ENERGY STAR service and product provider (SPP), which are companies that assist commercial buildings with benchmarking energy performance, improving efficiency, and earning recognition, can also help you identify potential savings.
  - [Most Active Service & Product Providers Directory](#)

### 2. The ENERGY STAR Score

- **Is the ENERGY STAR Score based on source or site EUI?**

- The ENERGY STAR Score is based on source EUI. EPA has determined that source energy is the most equitable unit of evaluation for comparing buildings to one another.
- [The Difference Between Source and Site Energy](#)
- [Portfolio Manager Technical Reference: Source Energy](#)
- **How often are the ENERGY STAR score models updated and what data are they based on?**
  - Most ENERGY STAR scoring models are based on the Department of Energy's Commercial Building Energy Consumption Survey (CBECS) data. For property types where there is not sufficient CBECS data available, the scores are based on industry survey data.
  - [FAQ: What source data \(CBECS\) was used to create the ENERGY STAR scores?](#)
- **Is building water consumption factored into the ENERGY STAR score?**
  - No, the ENERGY STAR score is only based on your building's annual energy consumption. However, some benchmarking laws require building owners to disclose their water consumption data.
  - [FAQ: How is water tracked in Portfolio Manager?](#)
- **Which property types are eligible for an ENERGY STAR score?**
  - [List of Portfolio Manager property types](#)

### 3. Resources

- **Does my property type have an ENERGY STAR Treasure Hunt checklist?**
  - If your specific property type is not explicitly listed [in this Treasure Map checklist](#), you may use the "All other commercial buildings" checklist.
- **Where do I find a list of ENERGY STAR Certified buildings?**
  - [ENERGY STAR Certified Building and Plant Locator](#)
- **How do I enter my onsite green power (solar/wind)?**
  - Onsite renewables have a unique meter type in Portfolio Manager that has different input fields from those of an electric grid meter. EPA has published several resources for benchmarking onsite renewables that can be found below.
  - [FAQ Series: Onsite Green Power \(that I Generate\)](#)
  - [Portfolio Manager Technical Reference: Green Power](#)