



# Vermont Green Building Network



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## Why require commercial energy benchmarking in Burlington?

Vermont Green Building Network (VGBN) would like to see legislation in Burlington, Vermont requiring commercial building energy benchmarking. Benchmarking is a measure of a building's energy efficiency, like a miles-per-gallon scale for buildings. It lets building owners and tenants know whether their building is a guzzler or an efficient, green building. Just as auto consumers expect this information, prospective building owners or tenants should have it too.

Burlington has a large stock of inefficient buildings that need to be upgraded for optimal use and to address climate change. It is important for Burlington to require benchmarking for commercial buildings since it facilitates investment in our existing building stock to increase efficiency and function.

Through transparency and disclosure, benchmarking harnesses market forces. Building owners are encouraged to adopt cost effective efficiency levels without the need for energy mandates. Furthermore, small businesses can make more informed choices about location based on building efficiency.

The cost of compliance with benchmarking (1-2 hours per year) is minimal, and the benefits are high as energy efficiency provides positive economic benefits to building owners. A growing number of municipalities, including two states (California and Washington) and seven cities (New York, Austin, Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC), have enacted commercial building energy rating and disclosure policies. We think Burlington should follow suit, and that benchmarking will have economic and environmental benefits for our city.

*Our mission is to increase Vermont's participation in green building and to promote the environmental, financial, community, and health benefits of green design, construction, and building operation practices*

Website: [www.VGBN.org](http://www.VGBN.org)

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