

Talking Points

Use these talking points to share news of your ENERGY STAR certification with your stakeholders, your community, the press, and decision-makers at your organization.

What is ENERGY STAR?

- For more than 20 years, the US Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR program has identified the most energy-efficient products, buildings, plants, and new homes – all based on the latest government-backed standards.
- The program was created in 1992 to help businesses and individuals save energy and fight climate change. Today, every ENERGY STAR label is verified by a rigorous third-party certification process.

What does ENERGY STAR certification signify?

- ENERGY STAR certified buildings and plants are verified to perform in the top 25 percent of buildings nationwide, based on weather-normalized source energy performance and many other metrics, including occupancy, hours of operation, and more.
- ENERGY STAR is the only environmental program in the United States that certifies energy efficiency based on actual, verified energy performance and objective measures of performance, providing a guarantee of savings.
- ENERGY STAR certified buildings and plants use an average 35 percent less energy, cause an average 35 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and are less expensive to operate than their peers, and they also meet strict requirements regarding occupant comfort.
- ENERGY STAR is recognized by more than 85 percent of the American public and tied with the Good Housekeeping® seal as the most influential consumer emblem in the nation.

How prominent is the ENERGY STAR?

- Since the first building earned the ENERGY STAR in 1999, tens of thousands of buildings and plants across America have earned ENERGY STAR certification.
- ENERGY STAR certified buildings and plants are located in all 50 states and come in all shapes and sizes, from the Empire State Building to small, locally owned businesses.
- Currently, there are more than 20 types of commercial and industrial facilities that can earn the ENERGY STAR, including office buildings, schools, supermarkets, retail stores, hospitals, medical office buildings, and more.
- More than half of the Fortune100® are ENERGY STAR partners, committed to protecting the environment through benchmarking and certification.

What does it take to earn the ENERGY STAR?

- **Commercial buildings** enter utility bill data and building information into ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®, EPA's free online tool for measuring and tracking energy use, water use, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions. More than 40 percent of U.S. commercial building space – encompassing 40 billion square feet – is benchmarked in Portfolio Manager, making it the most-used energy measurement and tracking tool for commercial buildings.
- **Industrial plants** enter key plant operating data into industry-specific EPA tools called Energy Performance Indicators.
- **Both tools calculate an ENERGY STAR 1 – 100 score** that compares individual facility performance to similar buildings nationwide. Facilities that score a 75 or higher are eligible to apply for ENERGY

STAR certification. Before facilities can earn the ENERGY STAR, a professional engineer or registered architect must verify that the information contained within the certification application is accurate.

What are the benefits of ENERGY STAR certification?

- **Lower operating costs:** ENERGY STAR certified buildings and plants use, on average, 35 percent less energy than similar buildings nationwide. The cost savings can be substantial. For example, ENERGY STAR certified office buildings cost \$0.50 less per square foot to operate than their peers. In 2015, ENERGY STAR certified buildings and plants saved \$1.7 billion, or an average of more than \$250,000 per building.
- **Connect with your community:** Americans are big believers in doing the right thing, and they expect the same of the professionals in their communities. More than 65 percent of adults like to do business with environmentally responsible companies³. More than 80 percent of workers are attracted by an employer with an environmental reputation. Roughly half of workers said they would forgo higher pay or a promotion to work for an organization with a good reputation⁴.
- **Higher occupancy rates:** ENERGY STAR certified buildings have higher occupancy rates when compared to similar buildings. A 2008 study conducted by the University of San Diego's Burnham-Moores Center for Real Estate showed that ENERGY STAR certification gave a roughly 4 percent boost to occupancy rates.²
- **Increased asset value:** Maintaining high energy performance over time increases the likelihood of higher building valuation due to higher net operating income from energy cost savings. Experienced managers of large portfolios of ENERGY STAR certified buildings interviewed for one study¹ confirm that ENERGY STAR helps increase building value. ENERGY STAR certified buildings generate more income when compared to similar buildings.²
- **Lease to federal tenants:** If you want to lease your space to a federal tenant, your buildings must be ENERGY STAR certified. (Executive Order 13514 mandates that Federal Agencies may only lease space in ENERGY STAR certified buildings.)
- **Hedge against future mandates:** Numerous cities and states have passed legislation containing energy efficiency mandates for commercial new construction projects and existing buildings. The vast majority of them incorporate ENERGY STAR and Designed to Earn the ENERGY STAR. The trend is growing every year as more cities and states seek ways to reduce costs and emissions. By earning the ENERGY STAR now, you're in a better position to respond to any future laws or mandates. See the [list of legislation and campaigns leveraging ENERGY STAR](#).
- **Protect the environment:** A building isn't environmentally friendly unless it's energy efficient. ENERGY STAR is the government-backed program for certifying energy-efficient buildings. That's why green building rating systems across the nation include ENERGY STAR. Whether you're pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), Green Globes, or the U.S. Guiding Principles for High Performance and Sustainable Buildings, ENERGY STAR certification will ensure your building uses less energy and leaves a smaller carbon footprint.

¹ [Summary of the financial benefits of ENERGY STAR labeled office buildings, 2006](#)

² [Does Green Pay Off? July 12, 2008](#)

³ [2007 National Technology Readiness Survey](#)

⁴ [2009 Kelly Global Workforce Index](#)