

BOSTON'S REPORTING & DISCLOSURE ORDINANCE

On May 8, 2013, the Boston City Council passed a [Building Energy Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance](#), requiring all medium and large buildings to report their annual energy and water use to the City of Boston. The policy will educate building owners and tenants about their energy and water use, and help them identify ways to increase efficiency and cut costs by looking at similar buildings across the city. Armed with better information about their own performance and the performance of others, building owners will have new incentives to participate in local utility energy efficiency programs.

The Ordinance was inspired by Mayor Thomas Menino's Climate Action Leadership Committee, which is composed of public, private, and non-profit sector leaders from around Boston. It was designed as part of the City's Climate Action Plan to meet greenhouse gas reduction goals of 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. With the introduction of this policy, Boston joined seven other cities and two states in adopting building energy disclosure laws.

OVERVIEW OF THE ORDINANCE

All impacted buildings will be required to report their annual energy and water use, ENERGY STAR rating (if applicable), and greenhouse gas emissions through the ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager or an equivalent tool approved by the Air Pollution Control Commission.

The requirement will be phased in over the course of five years, beginning with all facilities owned by the City of Boston and ultimately applying to non-residential buildings that are 35,000 square feet or greater and residential buildings containing 35 or more units. The City of Boston will make all information available online so building owners can share and identify best practices. Buildings that do not demonstrate high energy performance, continual improvements, or meet other criteria will be required to conduct energy audits or other evaluations every five years in order to identify opportunities for energy efficiency upgrades. Building owners that do not abide by the reporting requirements will also be subject to fines, depending on the size and use of the building.

What the Ordinance does NOT do:

- Set energy efficiency requirements for buildings
- Require buildings to implement any energy efficiency upgrades
- Penalize buildings for their energy performance
- Require buildings to report information on individual tenants' energy performance

OTHER SUCCESSES IN BOSTON

The City of Boston has already made a number of important strides in promoting energy efficiency, and continues to push for new and innovative ways to save energy. In March of 2009, Mayor Menino launched the [Renew Boston Initiative](#) with ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implementing more renewable energy, and reducing electricity demand through energy efficiency. This initiative has coordinated partnerships among local utilities, job training programs, businesses, and non-profits to help residents, businesses, and other institutions save energy and money. Most recently, Menino launched a program under Renew Boston to encourage renters and middle income households to implement energy efficiency upgrades by offering free energy assessments, incentives for insulation improvements, and other services.