Commonly Encountered Problems

Overview

The Mayor’s Office of Sustainability (MOS) is dedicated to supporting Philadelphia’s commercial building benchmarking program by providing guidance on issues regarding the law and usage of EPA’s free Portfolio Manager tool. This document has been prepared in response to early issues with benchmarking in Philadelphia, and may help resolve your questions before seeking assistance from the EPA or the City.

If you have an issue that is not included in this document, you’ll find more information at our benchmarking website, www.phila.gov/benchmarking, or you can contact us via email at benchmarkinghelp@phila.gov.

1. Cannot Identify and Enter OPA Number/Philadelphia Building ID

Your OPA number (sometimes referred to as Philadelphia Building ID in Portfolio Manager) is the unique identifier used by the Philadelphia Office of Property Assessment for tax purposes. This number should have been mailed to you as part of initial notice of your requirement to benchmark, but if you don’t have access to that letter, you can find the OPA number online at http://property.phila.gov.

Note: The OPA number is now referred to as an Account Number in the OPA search engine, and should be listed next to the building address at the top of your property screen.

Once you have the OPA number, adding it in Portfolio Manager is easy. For any existing property, go to the Details tab and find the Unique Identifiers (IDs) box (shown to the left). Click Edit.

On the next page, scroll down to the bottom and find Standard IDs. Click in the box there to find Philadelphia Building ID. Select this and input your OPA number in the box to the right. Click Save.

Your OPA number will now show up in the final report for this building.
2. **Energy Use Intensity (EUI) score or Water Usage missing in Custom Reporting Template**

There are several possible reasons why an EUI or water usage may not be reported to the City. Here are two quick places in your portfolio to check:

1) *Do your meters encompass every day of 2013?*

To be in compliance with the City of Philadelphia’s benchmarking regulation, your energy and water meters must account for every day of 2013, from January 1st to December 31st. **You may need to add bills from December 2012 or January 2014 to ensure you have encompassed the entirety of 2013.**

2) *Is your meter start date correct?*

If you have added bills to your meter before the “First Bill Date” you initially listed, **you will need to update that Date to reflect the new First Bill Date.** To do this, enter the Meters tab of a building, then select **Edit Basic Meter Information** in the Action drop-down menu. On the following page, you can update your new First Bill Date to accurately reflect the meter.

**Remember: This date should be on or before January 1st, 2013 for this year (2014)’s reporting.**
3. **Space Use Details Missing in Custom Reporting Template**

If you made an error when initially entering a building (for instance, listing Operating Hours as 60 rather than 65), use the **Correct Mistakes** tool to update this with the correct figure.

To do so, select **Correct Mistakes** from the Action drop down. On the next page, edit the value and click **Save Corrections** at the bottom of the page.

**Note:** The Current As Of Date should be the first date of operation for your building. If it is later than January 1, 2013, your data will not report to the City.
4. **Meters Not Appearing for Facility**

If you’ve entered meter data but still aren’t receiving an EUI in your Portfolio Manager main screen or through the Custom Reporting Template, you may need to manually “Add” your energy and water meters to a facility.

To do this, go to your building’s Meters tab and select **View/Edit Configuration**. On the next page, check the box next to **every meter listed**. You’ll also want to select “These meter(s) account for the total energy consumption for this property.” See below for the correct configuration for this page.
5. **Extreme ENERGY STAR Score**

While the Portfolio Manager-generated ENERGY STAR score ranges from 1-100, scores below 5 or above 95 should be double-checked for accuracy. Here are a few issues that may be skewing this score:

1) **Correct Entry of Meter Units**

Incorrectly setting the unit of measure for an energy meter could lead to inaccurate usage readings for your facility. The usual units for the primary utilities in the City of Philadelphia are as follows:

- **PECO:** kilowatt hours (kwh)
- **PGW:** 100 cubic feet (ccf)
- **Veolia:** 1000 pounds (K-Pound): *Note, this same unit on your Veolia bill may be known as an M-Pound, but an M-Pound in Portfolio Manager is the equivalent of 1,000,000 pounds of steam.*

To correct this issue, go to the Meters tab in your property, find the Action drop down, and select **Edit Basic Meter Information**. You can change units on the following page.
2) **Property Use Details**

In addition to energy usage, ENERGY STAR scores are impacted by inputted property usage information, including square footage, hours of operation, number of computers, and other sector-specific details. You can double-check that these figures were entered correctly by going to the Details tab of your property and clicking on the name of the specific use:

To correct these details, find the Action drop down and select **Correct Mistakes**.

**Still Having Problems?**

If you have tried each of these methods, re-submitted using the Custom Reporting Template, and are still having problems, contact benchmarkinghelp@phila.gov. We’re happy to help you troubleshoot your property further.