

HBO 101

HEALTHY BUILDINGS ORDINANCE

The Healthy Buildings Ordinance (HBO) helps Evanston's largest buildings reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve efficiency, and create healthier spaces.

Report annually. Meet performance standards. Reach net zero by 2050.



EMISSIONS IN EVANSTON

80% of all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Evanston come from building energy use

~50% of Evanston's GHG emissions come from buildings over 20,000 sq. ft.



The HBO is a key tool to reduce building emissions and help Evanston reach zero emissions by 2050, in line with the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP)

HBO BENEFITS

The HBO encourages building owners to improve energy efficiency and comfort in buildings, reduce emissions, and increase renewable energy usage.

Benefits include:

- Energy efficiency and increased comfort
- Improved air quality benefits public health
- Long-term building resilience
- Clean energy workforce opportunities
- Increased use of renewable electricity
- Targeted technical and financial support for Equity Prioritized Buildings

IS MY BUILDING COVERED BY HBO?

The HBO covers...



Buildings or groups of adjacent buildings over 20,000 square feet under common ownership



City-owned buildings or groups of adjacent buildings over 10,000 square feet

**Note: Certain properties are excluded, including condominiums under 50,000 square feet, federally owned properties, buildings with a demolition permit, buildings without a certificate of occupancy for the full year, and properties in financial distress*

[CHECK THE COMPLIANCE STATUS OF YOUR BUILDING](#)

HOW DO I COMPLETE ANNUAL HBO BENCHMARKING?

- 1 Report key building characteristics and annual energy and water use through ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager®
- 2 Retain your benchmarking data and supporting records for at least 3 years
- 3 Verify your building's baseline yearly performance data with a certified professional.

REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Report your building's previous year's energy and water use annually by June 30.
- ☐ Verify reported data with a certified professional as required
- ☐ Work toward meeting interim and final performance standards for energy use, emissions, and renewable electricity

HOW CAN MY BUILDING COMPLY WITH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS?

Covered properties must meet interim performance standards every five years starting in 2030, on the way to final performance standards by 2050. All building owners are encouraged to plan early, implement all no- and low-cost efficiency measures, and use equipment turnover and capital improvements as opportunities to reduce energy use and emissions.

TIMELINE

YEAR	MILESTONE
2016	Evanston Building Energy and Water Benchmarking Ordinance passed; annual energy and benchmarking required for large buildings
2025	Healthy Buildings Ordinance adopted; rulemaking process begins
2030	First year that properties must meet an interim standard
2031	First annual reporting of compliance with 2030 interim standards
2035–2045	Properties meet interim standards every 5 years (2035, 2040, 2045)
2050	Final performance standards fully in effect

CONTACT

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE DIVISION

- Call 3-1-1
- Email sustainability@cityofevanston.org

PENALTIES

Any person who violates any provision of the annual benchmarking requirements will be fined **\$250** for each offense. Every month a violation continues will be a separate offense.

The Healthy Buildings Accountability Board will decide penalties for not complying with interim and final performance standards.

ARE THERE OTHER OPTIONS IF I'M HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH COMPLIANCE?

If an owner is having issues with benchmarking compliance, they can visit the [BEAM Knowledgebase](#) for guidance. The HBO also gives owners the opportunity to propose an Alternative Compliance Plan (ACP) if an owner believes that a covered property cannot reasonably meet one or more of the applicable interim or final performance standards.

ACPs are tools that owners may use to adjust a covered property's performance standards, timeline, or both. All ACPs require approval from the City Manager or the City Manager's designee. When this application is made available, it will be on the [Healthy Buildings Ordinance](#)  webpage.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ANNUAL BENCHMARKING AND VERIFICATION

- [Healthy Buildings Ordinance](#) 
- [BEAM Knowledgebase Step-by-Step Benchmarking Process](#) 

IMPLEMENTING BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- [The Building Energy Hub](#) 
- [Building Performance and Decarbonization Guide](#) 
- [Illinois Green Alliance Network YouTube Channel](#) 
- [Resources for Building Owners and Managers](#) 
- [Resources for Building Architects and Engineers](#) 
- [Resources for Contractors and Service Providers](#) 

FINANCIAL

- [ComEd](#) 
- [Nicor Gas](#) 
- [Sustain Evanston](#) 
- [Financing Options by Building Sector](#) 
- [Database of Illinois Incentives for Renewables & Efficiency](#) 