

# Building Energy Rating & Disclosure Policy

## Proof Positive: Messaging Tips to Show Policy Works



As building energy rating and disclosure policies mature, the conversation among journalists, the building community and critics is starting to focus less on abstract policy goals and more on how policies are actually working.

Though relatively new, there is a growing body of evidence that existing policies are well on their way to meeting intended goals and producing great results. Proactively communicating these successes is essential to help bolster city efforts to adopt rating and disclosure policy and enforce existing policies.

This tip sheet provides messaging guidance to help cities and energy efficiency advocates demonstrate that rating and disclosure policies are working today to save energy and money and boost local economies.

### MESSAGING BEST PRACTICES

- ✓ Convey the **urgency for rating and disclosure policy**, what is at stake if the policy didn't exist, and the benefits it provides to owners and the public.
- ✓ Use **real-world stories of building owners and managers** already benchmarking and using insights to help lower energy use and costs.
- ✓ Talk about the **promising early outcomes of existing policies**.
- ✓ Highlight the **longstanding history of success of benchmarking in the private sector**.
- ✓ **Draw analogies to similar and familiar ideas** – such as MPG ratings on cars or annual health check-ups - which can help convey the value of rating and disclosure policy to uninitiated audiences.



## SAMPLE MESSAGES

### **Overall Message: Stopping Energy Waste = Economic Win for Everyone**

Energy waste in buildings drains millions of dollars from the economy every year. A first step toward eliminating waste is to identify it, and one way cities across the country are doing so is through building energy rating and disclosure policies.

Just like with doctor's visits, these energy "check-ups" lead to healthier, better performing buildings. The more owners understand how well or poorly their buildings use energy, the more likely they are to do something about it.

Building energy rating and disclosure policy works to provide owners and tenants valuable information on how buildings use energy and empowers them to take action to reduce energy use—which can translate into huge savings in energy bills. This, in turn, puts money back in the local economy and creates good local jobs that can't be outsourced.

### ***Making Cities Smarter***

*Cities with access to benchmarking data can direct energy efficiency spending to address the lowest hanging fruit. This helps ensure that taxpayer dollars are targeted on projects that deliver the biggest energy savings.*

### ***Long History of Success***

*Energy use tracking is a longstanding practice in the private building sector. Many owners regularly monitor their buildings' energy performance and use that information to improve building operations and make energy- and money-saving upgrades. These owners see benchmarking as a smart business practice that helps reduce operating expenses and improve property values.*

### ***Creating Jobs***

*Making buildings more energy efficient creates good local jobs in the engineering, construction and electrical trades that can't be outsourced. Building energy performance companies in cities with energy rating policies in place are already seeing a marked increase in demand for their services.*

### ***Benefits Abound***

*The movement to more accurately measure energy use in buildings is still in its infancy, and the successes we are seeing across the country are just the tip of the iceberg. As more building owners rate their buildings, the more buildings will be improved, saving energy and creating jobs across the nation.*