

ACCURATE DATA:

The Key to Benchmarking Success



WHAT IS BENCHMARKING?



Benchmarking is the process of comparing current and historical utility performance data to help with efficiency goals. Internal benchmarking might consist of comparing performance from one year to another, while external benchmarking would compare a building's utility performance to other, similar buildings defined by the same attributes and geography. Benchmarking data would address two basic questions:



How does our utility performance measure today?



What could our ideal measurements look like in the future?



Benchmarking Has Made its Mark

Over the past decade, utility benchmarking has become increasingly popular among companies, building owners, and municipalities seeking to promote improved sustainability.

As of 2016, 14 U.S. cities, two U.S. states, and one U.S. county have enacted benchmarking policies – mandating the owners of certain types of buildings to publicly disclose their utility measurements. Some major cities with benchmarking disclosure policies include New York City, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Austin, San Francisco, Seattle, Minneapolis, Atlanta, Portland, and Kansas City.



The Growth in Benchmarking according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



The Importance of Data Accuracy

The widespread adoption of benchmarking techniques, both voluntarily by corporations and mandated by state and local law, produces a vast amount of data which—if you have the ability to effectively analyze it—can provide meaningful insights and valuable information for an increasingly efficient, high performing utility infrastructure.

However, if a building's utility data is incorrect in one month, the results relating to the whole year of data will be skewed. The most significant step to address and prevent this run-on problem caused by even just one inaccurate data point is a forensic bill audit. This audit focuses on optimizing billing data, tariffs, rules, regulations, and taxes to lower future bills and recoup utility spending by correcting historically inaccurate data.



UtiliSave—a True Benchmarking Partner

UtiliSave continues to lead the industry in forensic utility bill audits with experience panning more than 30 years—helping many clients to improve the accuracy of their billing and to optimize their benchmarking techniques. Managing over **16,000** buildings, and marching strong towards **\$1 billion** in found savings and refunds for clients—UtiliSave truly understands the importance of data accuracy and the methods by which we can achieve measureable and accurate data.



Case in Point

A UtiliSave client—a large hospital located in a major U.S. city—was awarded a significant adjustment on a one month bill by their service provider after UtiliSave identified an error in their data (illustrated in Figure 2).

Weather Normalized (WN) data takes weather conditions out of the picture when trying to evaluate energy savings by comparing how much energy would have been used in one year to how much energy was actually used in one year. This is a standard part of the benchmarking process. Figure 3 presents this hospital's weather normalized data with and without the error, and illustrates how each month's utility data measurement changed after the initial error was corrected.

Although this overbilling error only occurred during one month of a 12 month cycle, the utility data from all 12 months was affected when the whole data set was weather normalized.

Through UtiliSave's data analysis and advocacy for this client, the adjustment was awarded back to the hospital and the lesson learned was that a small error can make a large impact on long-term benchmarking measurements. Data accuracy is extremely important, and continuous analysis is imperative for data integrity.

Figure 2



Figure 3



● Original utility data measurement
● Corrected measurement

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Marching strong toward **\$1 billion** in found savings and refunds for our clients.

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