

Seattle's New Building Emissions Performance Standard



A High-Impact Solution to the Climate Crisis

Why Reduce Building Emissions

Buildings are responsible for more than one-third of Seattle's greenhouse gas emissions and must be part of the solution to addressing climate change.

Seattle's new BEPS policy - signed by Mayor Harrell in December 2023 - is designed for action in existing nonresidential and multifamily buildings greater than 20,000 SF, which have the greatest emissions impact per building.

BEPS is projected to reduce building emissions 27% by 2050, making it one of the most impactful climate actions Seattle is taking.

Benefits of Taking Action

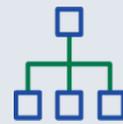
Climate change disproportionately harms people of color and people with lower incomes.

Improving buildings can reduce energy costs, as well as provide cleaner air and better heating and cooling to help residents cope with extreme heat and wildfire smoke.

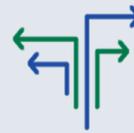
What is a Building Emissions Performance Standard?



Sets **carbon-emissions targets** that buildings meet over time.



Provides **framework to improve energy efficiency** and transition to cleaner energy.



Offers building owners flexibility to choose their equipment and strategies.



Identifies **long-term expectations** so owners can plan for upgrades.

Seattle's BEPS will benefit Seattle area workers and our local economy while expanding clean energy career opportunities.

Seattle is investing in programs to help building owners and early adopters via the Seattle Clean Buildings Accelerator program and adding funding for upgrades in low-income housing.

Learn more about BEPS

Contact cleanbuildings@seattle.gov or visit seattle.gov/building-performance-standards

Three Pathways to Net-Zero by 2050

The BEPS policy has flexible compliance pathways to accommodate buildings of many uses, size, type, ownership, age, and systems.



Path A: Meet standard or portfolio emissions targets at each 5 year interval

Compliance includes measuring energy & emissions planning and meeting 5-year targets and net-zero by 2050.

Paths A & B:
Early adopter incentives
and technical support



Path B: Minor modifications to standard targets

Options include extensions or exemptions, ability to deduct emissions from certain end uses, or a compliance payment for the first interval.



Path C: Special consideration and flexibility due to unique circumstances

Option to create a detailed Decarbonization Compliance Plan for buildings that meet eligibility criteria.

Timing and Compliance Designed to Achieve Net-Zero

BEPS compliance starts with reporting requirements to encourage owners to prepare for and begin emissions reductions, followed by meeting emissions targets in five-year intervals. Low-income housing and human services are given a longer lead time to prepare. In each subsequent interval, buildings are required to meet progressively lower emissions targets.

2027 – 2030	2031 – 2035	2036 – 2040	2041 – 2045	2046 – 2050
Verify Energy and Emissions Performance, Plan and Start Reductions	Nonresidential Buildings Meet 5-year Emissions Targets		Nonresidential Meets Net-Zero	
		Multifamily Buildings Meet 5-year Emissions Targets*		Multifamily Meets Net-Zero

*Low-income housing and human services exempt from meeting 2031-2035 targets.

Learn more about BEPS

Contact cleanbuildings@seattle.gov or visit seattle.gov/building-performance-standards