

## EPA Kicks Off Third Annual Energy Star National Building Competition

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EPA

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Today, the **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Energy Star program** launched the **2012 National Building Competition: Battle of the Buildings** with a record 3,200 buildings across the country going head to head to improve energy efficiency, lower utility costs and protect health and the environment.

Commercial buildings in the U.S. are responsible for about 20 percent of the nation's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions at a cost of more than \$100 billion annually in energy bills. In 2011, the 245 participants saved \$5.2 million on their utility bills and prevented nearly 30,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, equal to the emissions from the electricity used by more than 3,600 homes a year. By improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings, such as schools, offices, hospitals and retail stores, competitors will reduce energy waste and save on utility bills while protecting the environment and people's health.

"This year the number of teams committing to increase energy efficiency through the Energy Star Battle of the Buildings is larger than ever before -- more than ten times as many as last year. We're expecting record energy savings as more and more buildings cut back on their energy use," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "We wish the best to the thousands of teams competing, but we know the big winners will be the American people, who will benefit from the innovative ideas that emerge from the competition. As in years past, these ideas will translate into new ways we can all cut energy use, save money on our power bills, and reduce the carbon pollution that is changing our climate."

More than 30 different types of commercial buildings are facing off in this year's National Building Competition, representing all 50 states, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia. The competitors range from a Kmart store on the island of St. Thomas to a crime lab in Phoenix to a federal office building in Nome, Alaska. The number of participants in the National Building Competition has jumped from 14 buildings in 2010, the competition's first year, to 245 in 2011 to over 3,200 this year.

Competitors use EPA's Energy Star online tool, Portfolio Manager, to measure and track their buildings' monthly energy consumption. Last year, the University of Central Florida won after cutting the energy use of an on-campus parking garage by more than 63 percent in just one year.

Throughout the year-long competition the public can keep track of the progress made by buildings on the web.

A list of buildings leading the competition at the half-way point of the competition will be released in Fall 2012. The winner along with top finalists in each building category with the largest percentage reduction in energy use in 2012 as compared to 2011 will be recognized in April 2013. Additionally, this year EPA's WaterSense program, in partnership with Energy Star, will recognize top water use reducers as a part of the competition.

Launched in 1992 by EPA, Energy Star is a market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. This year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Energy Star program. Over the past 20 years, with the help of Energy Star, American families and businesses have saved about \$230 billion on utility bills and prevented more than 1.7 billion metric tons of carbon pollution. To date, more than 1.3 million new homes and nearly 18,500 buildings across all 50 states have earned EPA's Energy Star certification. The Energy Star label can be found on more than 65 different kinds of products with more than 5 billion sold over the last 20 years.

List of competitors, social media updates (#ESNBC), interactive map of buildings and photos of the competition: <http://www.energystar.gov/BattleOfTheBuildings>

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