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NEW YORK TO BECOME FIRST U.S. CITY TO REQUIRE ENERGY GRADES TO BE PUBLICLY POSTED AT COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Legislation authored by Council Member Garodnick will require buildings above 25,000 square feet to post their energy efficiency scores and associated letter grades near public entrances.

Buildings contribute nearly 70% of greenhouse gas emissions in New York City, and roughly 19% of energy-related carbon emissions in the United States.

Buildings that annually benchmark energy usage have already [demonstrated](#) 8% emissions decreases.

In 2015, the Danish Energy Agency released a [report](#) finding that each letter grade corresponded to a statistically significant increase in sales price for homes.

December 19, 2017 – Today, the New York City Council overwhelmingly approved Intro. 1632A, a [bill](#) authored by Council Member Dan Garodnick requiring large buildings to post their energy efficiency scores, and associated grades, near their public entrances.

“As the federal government shirks its stewardship of our environment, it is up to cities to step in -- and with our energy grade legislation, New York is in the lead,” said **Council Member Dan Garodnick**. “Just as restaurants post their health grades and cars advertise their fuel efficiency, buildings will begin posting letter grades corresponding to their energy efficiency scores. This legislation will equip companies and individuals with the data they crave to make more informed decisions about the best place to buy or rent.”

Since the passage of Local Law 84 in 2009, New York City buildings over 50,000 square feet have been required to annually measure their energy and water consumption in a process called [benchmarking](#). In 2016, the City Council passed Council Member Garodnick’s bill expanding the number of buildings required to be benchmarked, by lowering the threshold to 25,000 square feet. Although Local Law 84 requires that property owners report energy performance data to the City, which then publishes the data online, it does not require property owners to ensure that prospective tenants or buyers are at any point presented with the information collected.

With the passage of Intro 1632A, buildings will be assigned a letter grade based on their energy score and landlords will be required to post that grade, along with the energy score, in a conspicuous location near the building's public entrances. This will make information about a building's energy use easily available to tenants and visitors, including prospective purchasers or lessees, and presented in the easily understood form of a grade.

This transparency initiative will equip consumers with already-collected data on a building's energy use. Consumers can use this data to make an informed decision when choosing an apartment or commercial space -- just as they weigh other specifications of a building. Landlords will be encouraged to make energy upgrades to achieve higher scores and attract environmentally conscious tenants -- reaping financial benefits while the City reaps environmental benefits.

This legislation, Council Member Garodnick's final bill over his 12 year career on the City Council, comes on the heels of an array of environmental measures he authored and passed into law over his tenure. He also authored and passed the first-ever [New York City Energy Code](#) to improve energy efficiency in buildings. He authored and passed the [Recycling Accommodation Act](#) to require newly constructed multi-family buildings to provide adequate space to store and sort recyclable material. He was also the leader of the [effort](#) to push New York City to buy easements to farmland in the Hudson Valley, protecting our regional foodshed from overdevelopment. Most recently, he authored and passed [legislation](#) to require building owners to disclose their water tank inspection reports for the health and safety of residents.

"As we continue to make our city greener and more sustainable, we must look at buildings, which contribute to 70% of our city's emissions. INT. 1632A will ensure that the public is aware of how each large building measures up in terms of energy efficiency. Knowledge is power - with the knowledge of energy efficiency scores for each building, New Yorkers can make more informed decisions about their own habits. Thank you to my colleague Council Member Garodnick for his leadership on this important bill," said **Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Environmental Protection Committee.**

"It will take an innovative and multi-pronged approach to reach the reductions in buildings emissions necessary to get to our 80x50 climate goal. This legislation is yet another step forward. It builds on the success of benchmarking by bringing the wealth of energy usage data the City has collected to a general audience and conveying that information in a way that is simple and easy to grasp. In New York's highly competitive buildings sector, we fully expect owners and developers to strive for the highest marks. NYLCV congratulates Council Member Garodnick on adding one final feather to his cap and we applaud him for his many years of environmental leadership on the City Council," said **Marcia Bystryn, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**

"Just as most people prefer to eat in A-rated restaurants, we hope New Yorkers will prefer to work and live in A-rated buildings," said **Russell Unger, Executive Director of Urban Green Council.** "And this will give owners an incentive and reward for energy efficiency. New Yorkers may not know exactly what the grade means, but who would want to live or work in an "F" building if they have a choice?"

"Once again, the New York City Council is demonstrating the important role that cities have in fighting climate change. These grades will showcase energy-efficient buildings, which are not only better for the environment, but are better for New Yorkers' wallets," said **Donna De Costanzo, Director of Northeast Energy and Sustainable Communities at the Natural Resources Defense Council.** "In addition to cutting climate pollution from the city's largest source, prospective renters and buyers will now be able to more easily incorporate building energy costs into their decisions."

"Nearly 70 percent of greenhouse gas pollution in New York City comes from buildings," says [Rory Christian](#), **Director, New York Clean Energy at Environmental Defense Fund**. "Requiring large buildings to post their energy efficiency grades is a natural next step in the evolution of the City's energy policies. It will catalyze energy upgrades, cut pollution and empower tenants to make more informed decisions. Hopefully, this important bill will serve as an example for the rest of country to follow."

"This is a pioneering piece of legislation that will empower New Yorkers to make more informed decisions about the properties they choose to purchase or rent. It also demonstrates New York City's continued commitment to leading the charge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our buildings at a time when such leadership is sorely missing at the federal level. History shows that when New York City implements innovative climate policies, other cities around the country follow suit. We hope this bill will have a similarly catalytic effect," said [Danielle Spiegel-Feld](#), **Adjunct Professor of Law at NYU School of Law & Executive Director, Guarini Center on Environmental, Energy and Land Use Law**.

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