



Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge

The Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge, or Atlanta BBC, is a nation-leading public/private initiative. Led locally by the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Sustainability and managed by Central Atlanta Progress and the Atlanta Downtown Improvement District, the goal of the Atlanta BBC is to reduce energy and water consumption by at least 20 percent in participating buildings across Atlanta by 2020. Over 70 buildings, representing 48 million square feet, are now participating in the Atlanta BBC, with broader participation expected over the next few years.

A Record of Achievement

Maria Vargas, director of the Better Buildings Challenge for the U.S. Department of Energy, called the Atlanta BBC "a model for the rest of the country." Atlanta, she said, has distinguished itself from Better Buildings programs in other parts of the country by uniting business, government and nonprofits behind the program's aims to drive energy and water upgrades of commercial and institutional buildings.

Already, 20 million square feet have been assessed for opportunities to reduce energy and water consumption, with the remaining 25 million square feet scheduled to be assessed early next year. So far, the assessments have identified potential changes that would save more than 11 million gallons of water – enough to fill the Georgia Aquarium, with one million gallons to spare – and enough electricity to power 3,168 homes for one year.

Atlanta was the first city to complete its showcase project, the Boisfeuillet Jones Atlanta Civic Center. As a result of its complete energy overhaul, the city-owned property reduced its utility bill by 40 percent and will realize an estimated \$200,000 in annual energy savings.

Atlanta was one of the first cities, along with Seattle and Los Angeles, to join the challenge. The nationwide program now includes more than 30 cities, municipalities, school districts and state governments.

More than Green

While the environmental benefits of programs like this are self-evident, the Atlanta BBC can also yield important economic benefits. Investing in Downtown through programs such as the Atlanta BBC helps keep the buildings attractive places to do business, particularly for entrepreneurs and small businesses. In fact, assessments on the first 20 million square feet point to a potential \$4.7 million in utility cost savings annually, providing building owners with an important price advantage and freeing up cash business owners can use to grow their businesses.

Programs like this have an important effect on employment. For every \$1 million spent to improve efficiency in commercial buildings, approximately 13 jobs are created.

And building owners profit too: A growing body of research shows that energy-efficient properties have higher occupancy levels, lease-up rates and sale prices than less efficient properties.

Get Involved

Participation in the Atlanta Better Buildings Challenge provides many benefits to property owners, service providers and suppliers, including positive public recognition and educational resources to improve the water and energy efficiency of your organization. For more information, please visit www.AtlantaBBC.com or contact Central Atlanta Progress.